

Macy Gray's voice is amazing; show with David Murray not so much

Written by Harry Colbert, Jr.



Let me state that I'm a huge fan of Macy Gray.

I love her voice. I love the uniqueness of her tone. "I Try" is one of my favorite songs.

Now that we've got that out of the way, saxophone player David Murray and his Infinity Quartet, with whom Gray sang, were really, *really* bad. OK, not the entire quartet was bad. In fact, the only player that sounded horrible was ... David Murray. Saying his sax playing was akin to a foghorn would be disrespectful to the foghorn.



The show I attended at the Dakota Jazz Club was the fourth in two days for Gray and the quartet, so maybe Murray's jaws were a bit tight, so I'll have to chalk up his lackluster playing to fatigue. As for Gray, who let's be honest, was the *entire* draw, she sounded amazing, but her performance was uninspired as well. Gray only sang five numbers (but changed outfits three times) and of the five, only one was a song of hers – and it was not "I Try." To quote a popular saying, "Who does that?"

In fairness, within the past week I had seen two *outstanding* shows at the Dakota in Hugh Masekela and Larry Willis and another with Ramsey Lewis and Dee Dee Bridgewater, so

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maybe I set the bar a bit too high for Murray and Gray. Then again, the bar should be high for Gray, at least. The woman has sold 14 million records. I would have loved to have heard some songs from the albums that sold 14 million copies. I get it, it was really Murray's show, but once again, who shows up without Gray on the bill? So work more of her music into the set is all I'm saying – *especially* when the sax playing was so, so, so bad.



After the show I had to run and listen to "I Try" just to remind me, again, why I like Macy Gray.