



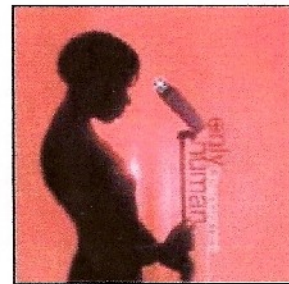
Review Courtesy [AllAboutJazz.com](http://AllAboutJazz.com)

## Only Human

Changamire | Sonnig Records

By [Todd S. Jenkins](#)

One of the “Queens of MP3”, the sultry Changamire emerges from the online shadows to titillate us with a wonderful offering. Changamire (the name means “like the sun” in an African language) has gradually built up a strong following on the MP3.com boards over the past few years, making her more than one of Washington, DC’s best-kept secrets. On *Only Human* she crosses over many lines: jazz, urban, adult contemporary. She’s a versatile vocalist with a distinctively personal sound, recalling Anita Baker, Erykah Badu and even Abbey Lincoln at times but staying true to her own vision in the long run.



The wide stylistic range of these selections keeps *Only Human* consistently interesting. A fascinating example is the mysterious soft rock of “Days Go By”, which exudes tropical essences beneath thunderclouds. This might fit well in the repertoire of someone like Fiona Apple or Sarah McLachlan. “9 to 5”, the very next track, is a completely different animal with its sparse Latinish beats and bluesy piano accents. “Together” has searing electric blues guitar, while “It’s Over” and the sultry title track float over buoyant string sections. “The Key” is a touching anthem of human understanding and love, meticulously crafted. Rapper Mista Forty sharpens the urban edge on the “Ask Me How I Know” re-mix, radically changing the vibe of the soulful original.

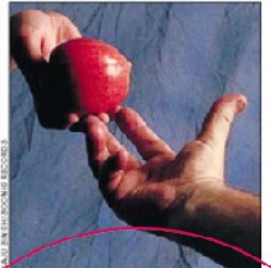
Changamire is most comfortable in a certain vocal range that still permits her the widest scope of expression. It’s difficult to nail down just what makes her voice so darn compelling. Maybe it’s the comfort and familiarity, maybe the confiding honesty. Whatever the case, it works exceptionally well. Changamire is a markedly original vocalist who deserves wider recognition, which hopefully waits just over the horizon. The music could use a lot more of her.





## Top Stops

FOR COMPLETE EVENT LISTINGS SEE WASHINGTONPOST.COM/ENTERTAINMENT



### CHANGAMIRE Cover Girl

Local jazz chanteuse Changamire put out the call to professionals and amateurs: Create my cover art; get a gallery show. On Friday, Changamire will announce the winner of the competition who best visualized the CD's title, "Love." Join her for a concert and an exhibition of the finalists' work.

→ *Parish Gallery, 1054 31st St. NW; Fri., concert at 6 p.m., \$15; reception, 7 p.m., free; 202-944-2910, parishgallery.com.*

### THE BEATDOWN #7 Doing It Their Way

Inner Loop Records bypasses the cutthroat and rapidly disintegrating major-label industry and puts on a scrappy showcase of its own with "The Beatdown #7." Both up-and-coming and established hip-hop producers and musicians perform directly for fans in a venue removed from corporate hype.

→ *Club Five, 1214 18th St. NW; Fri., 9 p.m., \$15; innerlooprecords.com.*

### SUSPENDC Hung Up on You

SuspendC creates community in its special way this weekend — by piercing and/or suspending willing participants. Join this spiritual, meditative community as either a participant or spectator.

→ *The Crucible, 1016 Half St. SW; Sun., 2-9 p.m., spectators \$25; suspension \$60-\$160; suspendc.com.*

### WHAT'S HAPPENING?

Please send press releases and photos to [expressevents@readexpress.com](mailto:expressevents@readexpress.com)

# Stretch Out the Jamms

At fourth and long, Stephen Malkmus refuses to punt

**MUSIC** | Stephen Malkmus' daughter has a cold. More than 15 years after appearing in the booklet for "Slanted and Enchanted" gazing pensively at his hands outside a jewelry store window, Pavement's frontman is married with kids and living in Portland, Ore. As play-at-home dad to two tinies, he'll likely be that rare musician who gets more sleep on the road than in his own bed. He should be rested and ready when his band, the Jicks, plays the 9:30 Club Friday.

They'll be supporting "Real Emotional Trash," Malkmus' fourth post-Pavement album is all about his guitar — jammy, squelchy with wah, content to lope through multiple meters until whenever. The 10 tracks average out around 5:30. "Cold Son" comes in at single

length only because it self-destructs with a clamor suggesting Scooby-Doo caught in a Pianola. The 10-minute title track works through spiraling stairstep riffs and elongated groove morphs but never wearies.

Live, the Jicks should stretch out even more, with bassist Joanna Bolme and keyboardist/guitarist Mike Clark playing into the power of arguably the best-credentialed drummer in indie-rock, Janet Weiss (Sleater-Kinney, Go-Betweens, Quasi).

Our singer has never been sure of his vocalizing. Lately, Malkmus has even expressed doubts about his

oft-lauded wordplay. But he's not yet ready to give up the mic. "The voice is a consoling focus of the music, and in this kind of music, generally that's what I'm drawn to," he says. "If it's me, I'm just less confident about my lyrics, I think."

Still, there's little gainsaying "Baltimore's" casual pop-surrealist imagery ("arboreal Sleestak lost in the sticks") and scissor-cut poetics ("The panic is reeking through every clear pore/Your animus weakened, acetyline [sic] torch").

"I think they work in our music, but they're not meant to jump over the music — the lyrics," Malkmus says. "They're meant to blend in and

kind of relate to the guitars and the whole sound."

When asked to play a game of Desert Island Decades (coconut headphones and two distinct 10-year spans), Malkmus goes for the obvious favorite, 1962-72. His second choice is more unexpected: "When was Bach rocking? In the mid-, uh, 19th century sometime?"

Didn't he die around 1750?

"Whoops. I was thinking of his great-grandson. Yeah, I would go with him," he says, settling on J.S. "I don't know if it was fun to be around then. Or even back to the 1600s or something, during the Medici times. I don't know if any music was being made, but it was pretty decadent."

Wait — wasn't Malkmus a history major?

"Well ... I didn't have a specialty," he explains. "I was just kinda taking random classes down in Charlottesville, and I amassed enough to be a history major."

"I kind of ended up with not much except for trivia." GLENN DIXON

→ *9:30 Club, 815 V St. NW; with John Vanderslice, Fri., \$20; 703-218-6500. (U.S. - Cardozo)*



## Woodridge Jazz Singer Launches CD Cover Design Contest

*Winning design will be awarded \$500*

Changamiré, a Woodridge based jazz and R&B singer, has launched a contest for the design of her next CD cover.

The winning design will be awarded \$500 and will be featured as the cover of Changamiré's upcoming CD, *Love*, to be released in 2008. Submissions are due by January 18, 2008.

Changamiré was inspired to become a jazz singer by listening to an aunt's jazz collection as a child. She developed her unique jazz and R&B sound in her teens and early 20's.

Changamiré describes her style as similar to the "longing, heartfelt style of Billie Holiday." Her music is primarily R&B, but very "smooth" and full of jazz influences.

Changamiré is an African name, which means "like the sun."

Changamiré's next performance is on December 19th at the Strathmore Mansion, 10701 Rockville Pike. For tickets and information call (301) 581-5100 or go to [www.strathmore.org](http://www.strathmore.org).

Changamiré moved to Woodridge in 2002. She saw Woodridge as a friendly neighborhood where she could afford to buy her first home. "I love it," she said. "I have

access to the whole metropolitan area."

Changamiré released her first CD, *Only Human*, in 2001. The cover features her nude silhouette in black and red. For her second release, Changamiré could not decide on a concept for the cover. Her solution was to launch an art competition.

"This visual art competition is a unique expressive blend of musician and artist in artistic harmony and will allow artists the opportunity to showcase their work to a broader audience," said Changamiré.

"When we release the new CD, we will not only promote the musical artist, but the visual artist as well," she said.

For information and to make a submission, go to Changamiré's website [www.whensunnygetsblue.com](http://www.whensunnygetsblue.com) and click on "news" or email [general@sonnigrecords.com](mailto:general@sonnigrecords.com). The competition is open to all artists 18 years and older.

Music clips are also available on the website.

Selection and notification of 12 contest finalists will be made by February 1, 2008.

The winner will be announced on March 28th. The March/April 2008 issue of *Brookland Heartbeat* will include the designs of the 12 finalists.

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Woodridge vocalist Changamiré

# changamiré

[www.whensunnygetsblue.com](http://www.whensunnygetsblue.com)

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