

Life is so interesting...always filled with surprises, both good and bad. 🌸 I will tell you that this 2nd *Swingin' With Legends* album, while always a dream, didn't seem to be a realistic one. Creating enough arrangements, rehearsing a big band, and producing an expensive project like this is an overwhelming task. To do it in the middle of a pandemic...well, call it crazy. 🌸 But everyone should have a secret superpower, and mine is Ron Aprea... my husband, co-conspirator, and best friend. In the midst of all the fear and sadness, he decided to distract himself (and me) and do what he does best... create. 🌸 He wrote over 3 dozen big band arrangements, and then he even penned an autobiography. I am constantly humbled by his work ethic, and his musical brilliance. 🌸 It was his vision and persistence that allowed us to complete this album. I was thrilled to record Ron's stunning arrangements with 16 of the most talented musicians in New York, and to add the genius of Lew Tabackin, Ken Peplowski, and Randy Brecker was icing on the cake. 🌸 I am so very grateful to have had this opportunity, and hope that you enjoy listening to our music as much as we enjoyed creating it. To music, health, and happiness... ***P.S. A special thanks to our son Matt, for his encouragement and support.***

Angela DeNiro

One of the thrills of my life happened way back in 1997. I was at Power Station in New York City with Lionel Hampton, Frank Foster, Lew Tabackin and my big band, recording an album which featured my wife, jazz vocalist Angela DeNiro. This was my dream-come-true, and this dream started in Lionel Hampton's apartment. My friendship with Hamp began in 1969 when I joined his band and toured with that wonderful organization for several years. Our friendship continued over the decades and in 1997, during one of our many visits to his Westside apartment, I played some cuts from Angela's first album *Just For The Fun Of It*...and Hamp loved it. Half-jokingly I said "Let's do another with you." He said "yeah man!" That was all the encouragement I needed. I went home and

started writing, and in 1997 Angela DeNiro *Swingin' With Legends* was born. And it featured Angela singing Lionel Hampton's composition of "Midnight Sun" with him. The only singer to do that! I've produced a dozen albums since *Swingin' With Legends*, but for me, that album was the "daddy." 🌸 Fast-forward to 2020. The Covid 19 pandemic hits New York City, and like millions around the world, we're quarantined in our apartment. Sirens 24/7, total insanity and we're living in probably the worst "hot spot" on the planet, and now our building gets hit. A neighbor on our floor comes down with this dreaded disease, and the proximity of his door to ours made it impossible for us to leave our apartment. Okay, to keep my sanity, I'll write. I completed 25 arrangements before we were able to go outside, and another 15 as Covid deaths miraculously started to decline...and man, that outdoor air tasted like a steak. 🌸 Many of these pandemic arrangements were instrumentals, but most were vocal orchestrations of songs that Angela and I had performed with our small band. And some are just songs that we both love. 🌸 A few years go by and in 2022 with things starting to calm down with Covid cases, and with me chompin' at the bit to hear my pandemic arrangements, I scheduled a couple of rehearsals. I had trouble controlling my goose bumps as Angela and the band brought this music to life...and now I'm 100% convinced that this material must be recorded. 🌸 Like the 1997 effort, we'll make it a real party and invite several jazz legends. We thought long and hard about who our guests would be, and we're thrilled that Randy Brecker, Ken Peplowski, and Lew Tabackin have come aboard and added their musical genius to this project, and brought this effort to another level. How cool that my dear friend Lew was one of the legends on the 1997 release as well. 🌸 On October 26, 2022 at Mozart Studio in Little Falls, NJ in a room packed with world-class musicians, a new album to be titled Angela DeNiro *Swingin' With Legends Two* was born. Does this album top my 1997 effort? That's for you to decide. ***Angela and I would like to dedicate this album to all the families and friends of loved ones who were taken from us by Covid 19.*** *Ron Aprea*