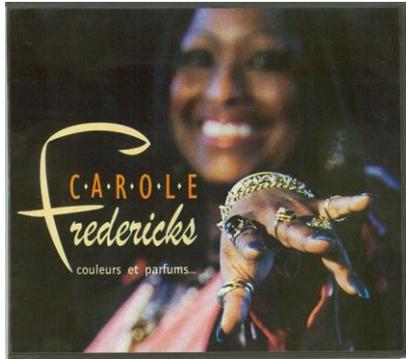


## Couleurs et Parfums Aldridge REVIEW and Sleeve notes:



These precious recordings represent not only an extremely adventurous musical career but also the end of that career, tragically cut short by the death of Carole Fredericks at just 49 from a heart attack in 2001.

It was obvious that Carole was a determined and strong-minded individual when, aged 27 in 1979, she decided to emigrate from California to France, on the urgings of patrons of a French restaurant in San Francisco where she used to sing in order to make ends meet.



She did this, despite knowing very little of the language, and although some would have labelled her as crazy she was convinced of her own ability to carve a singing career in her adoptive home. And so it proved – phenomenally so.

She quickly endeared herself to her new audience by becoming proficient in the language and being able to sing in French so convincingly that many who first heard her did not realise that she was in fact American by birth. Carole found that by introducing R & B, soul and gospel, music that she had grown up with, into French

popular music both her new found audience's and her own musical horizons were expanded to such a degree that she became a major box office draw wherever she played throughout Europe. And not only as a solo act but also as a part of the much-loved rock trio, Fredericks Goldman Jones.

Not just content with her fame in France she performed throughout Africa in order to help fund-raising efforts and raise awareness of the plight of modern day Africans. Here too she was adored by many new fans but, ironically, it was in Senegal on just such a trip that she succumbed to the fatal heart attack.

I've listened to this CD [*Couleurs et parfums*], only her second solo effort, countless times and what still amazes me is the fluid grace with which Carole moved from one "genre" to another, although of course it was all one music to her. Just listen to her sultry soul/gospel intonation at the start of "Qu'est-ce qui t'amène", the samples and blues rap (why does rap sound so sophisticated "en français"?) on "J'ai le sang blues" anticipating today's "nu-bluz" by ten years, the duo in the main Senegalese language Wolof with Nicole Amovin on "Kaai Djallema/Time After Time" (yes, the Cindi Lauper hit) and the West African reggae of "Respire", very akin to the Wassa reggae of Askia Modibo although in fact penned by Jean-Jaques Goldman. And that's just the first four tracks! The remainder of the CD is yet more in that vein with Carole even turning her hand to a duet with French boy band Poetic Lover on "Personne ne saurait" and as if that wasn't enough to convince you just wait till you hear the late-hours soul ballad "Tu es là". There is no filler on this CD just a huge variety of sounds – just what would she have been capable of had she lived?

Listen to this CD [*Couleurs et parfums*] with open ears and, more importantly, an open heart and you will understand how Carole Fredericks has touched so many people through her life and ultimately through the lasting legacy of her music - *Tant qu'elle chante, elle vit...As long as she sings, she lives.*

**Phil Aldridge**

**BBC Radio in the South Blues and World Music Hours**