



A TALANT EMERGES

Tierney Sutton '86 has cracked the Jazz Billboard Top Ten with her latest recording, *Dancing in the Dark*. Success has not come overnight, but it has come on her own artistic terms, which makes it all the sweeter.

BY WILLIAM L. HOLDER '75

The Algonquin was a turning point for the band. It was the first time the foursome had been ensconced in one hotel for an extended period, and they fell into a rhythm of preparation for each night's performance. Sutton, an adherent of the Baha'i faith since high school, was fasting from morning to sunset as part of an annual Baha'i observance. Her band members—

SUTTON DISDAINS THE
CULT OF PERSONALITY.
DURING PERFORMANCES,
SHE CLEARLY ENJOYS
PUTTING THE
MICROPHONE IN HER
LAP AND LISTENING
TO THE RIFFS OF HER
BAND MEMBERS...

“MY GOAL HAS ALWAYS
BEEN TO ADJUST TO WHAT
THEY WOULD CREATE.”

She had not set out to be a musician. At Wesleyan she was completing a major in Russian studies when she fell under the spell of the late faculty member and jazz musician Bill Barron, who brought first-rate musicians from New York to campus. She sat “amazed” as she listened to Benny Green and Betty Carter in concert on campus. In the music listening room she heard

Sutton, wearing a black gown, opened the evening with a song from her latest CD, *Dancing in the Dark*. The recording was inspired by the music of Frank

She obliges them with obvious pleasure. Her fans are the fifth member of the band, she says. She loves it when people tell her they don't normally like jazz but enjoyed her music. They are responding, she believes, to her goal of "creating something that's our own thing and is not derivative," of doing music on her own terms. 🍷

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