

LAS VEGAS SUN

SHOWROOM

No stranger to Strip, Donovan back in town



MAKING A MOVE:
 MULTIFACETED
 ENTERTAINER LISA
 DONOVAN SETTLES
 IN LV VALLEY, PAGE 7

By **JERRY FINK**
Las Vegas Sun

Vocalist, comedian and dancer Lisa Donovan has joined the entertainment family of Las Vegas.

The vivacious performer — perhaps best known for her part in the syndicated game show “Face the Music” (originally airing in 1980-81) — moved to Southern Nevada a few weeks ago from Florida.

“I’m just getting settled in,” Donovan said. “I’m still unpacking my kitchen.”

The New York native is no stranger to Las Vegas.

Donovan performed here often in years past, opening for such legends as George Burns and Donald O’Connor at Caesars Palace.

Her last public performance in Vegas was in 1998, when she opened for Don Rickles at the Desert Inn.

Most recently, she performed for a private function at the Golden Nugget last year.

Donovan first worked at the DI in 1994, alternating performances with Keely Smith and Sam Butera. She was hired for a three-week engagement that stretched into seven months.

Donovan was to have performed at Paris Las Vegas in October 2001, but her engagement was canceled because of 9/11.

“Fate changed things for a lot of people,” she said.

Donovan has worked with several performers who have roots in Las Vegas, including Rich Little and Bill Acosta, who is appearing at the Sun-coast Friday through Sunday.

Settling into the Vegas entertainment world should be relatively simple for Donovan. She meets old friends everywhere she turns.

Today she is scheduled to be on Dennis Bono’s radio variety/talk show “Las Vegas Now.” The show is taped in front of a live audience at Sam’s Town for airing at 7 p.m. Fridays on KUNV 91.5-FM and at 2 p.m. Saturdays on KDWN 720-AM.

“Dennis and I worked at the same time at the DI,” Donovan said.

Bono’s music director and pianist is Bob Rosario. Bob Sachs is the bassist for the combo. Donovan said they played with her at the DI.

Fans of the game show “Face the Music” will recognize her as the vocalist who sang all of the songs that were clues to the solution of a question.

Donovan also appeared in the 1987 Broadway revival of the musical “Babes in Arms,” directed by Ginger Rogers.

She lived in Los Angeles for many years, where she appeared in more than 100 commercials and in episodes of several TV series, including the ’80s hit “Simon & Simon.”

After years of traveling around the world to perform, Donovan decided it was time to stay in one spot for awhile and let the world come to her.

“I have been doing so much traveling — and it gets harder and harder because of the threats of terrorism,” she said.

Donovan is looking for the right

venue for her energetic style.

“I would love to find a little room somewhere so that I could develop a following the way I did at the DI,” she said.

Donovan’s extensive experience allows her to adjust her performances to her audiences — if fans want jazz, she sings jazz. If they want Broadway, she does Broadway.

On “Face the Music” she sang everything from light opera to rock ‘n’ roll.

“My performances always go to what the audiences want,” she said.