

LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL

Married to pop icon Elvis Costello, mum to twins and with a burgeoning career, jazz chanteuse Diana Krall tells **Sally Browne** she feels she is blessed

SHE'S married to one of the most well-respected songwriters around, she has happy healthy twins, counts stars such as Elton John among her friends and is 12 albums into a successful jazz career.

Life couldn't be better for Diana Krall. That's the way she sees it.

"I couldn't be more blessed or more thankful for the life I have right now," she says.

When we speak, the busy mum is at the airport heading from Lisbon to Berlin to promote her new album *Quiet Nights*, released yesterday. That means dad, British musician Elvis Costello, is at home in Vancouver looking after the little ones, boys aged two.

Krall and Costello met at the Grammys the year she was awarded Best Jazz Vocal Album for *Live in Paris*.

To give you an idea of how much respect her husband gets, US rockers Fall Out Boy recently had Costello guest star on their latest album, but lead

singer Patrick Stump was too nervous to meet him in person.

"Every young artist I meet, from Ray LaMontagne to the Jonas Brothers, they're all like, 'Oh Elvis!'" Krall says.

"What drew me to him is, he is a fantastic human being and a good man and funny and brilliant and unselfish and patient, and we just have a blast together.

"And he's a good father. We really share in our parenting because we want to. It sounds kind of corny, because it sounds like the storybook idea of the perfect life, and in my world it is."

Krall's state of contentment is reflected on *Quiet Nights*, which she describes as "womanly".

It's not about wild nights out but sensual nights in, and includes numbers such as *Walk On By*, *So Nice* and *The Boy from Ipanema*.

"It's not coy and flirtatious," she expands. "I guess it just feels more sensual. I've come through being focused on being a mum for a long time. It's the first studio album since before I was pregnant. I think it's my favourite record I've done in 10 years. It's just such a happy, settled, comfortable-in-your-own-skin place to be."

Quiet Nights trips gently through the bossa-nova rhythms of Brazil, and features Krall's piano-playing and her trademark sultry vocals.

She recorded it in Los Angeles with artists including arranger Claus Ogerman, who worked with Antonio Carlos Jobim, the original composer of *The Girl from Ipanema* and *Quiet Nights*.

"I'm working with people who are over 70 years old, and my age," Krall, 44, says.

"I'm working with the most extraordinary people who haven't stopped, who haven't retired.

"It's a very vivacious lifestyle. Everything from where we go to eat and the wine we drink — it's all part of it.

"It's like some old-fashioned idea that you would have in Paris where you all stay up late and discuss everything."

Krall has also recorded a live DVD in Brazil, which will be released later this year. During *The Boy from Ipanema*, Krall's gender-switch of the classic song, she was thrilled to hear the crowd singing back to her in Portuguese.

She also hopes to return to Australia at some point, with a full orchestra.

Becoming a mum was also significant to Krall, in that she lost her own mother a few years ago to multiple myeloma, a type of blood cancer. Krall and friends Elton John, James Taylor and Sarah McLachlan have raised millions at charity events dedicated to the disease.

"I don't think grief is something that

you just kind of grieve and then you get better," she says.

"It's something that you move in and out of. And people go through it in different ways. And for me, losing my mum was something that was really hard. It took me a long time. I think I've come through that.

"I still miss my mum, but it's a different thing now that I'm a mother. It's just changed. It's changed my whole feelings about the joy I have in my life."

It's doubtful that Costello is getting too many quiet nights at home these days with twin toddlers. And apart from pursuing his musical career, he has been hosting a Denton-style interview show called *Spectacle*.

Krall comments that you can see billboards for the cable show all over LA. Guests have included Lou Reed, Bill Clinton and the Police, and when it was Diana's turn to go on the show, they decided to get good friend Elton John to ask her the questions. (Krall and Costello married at Elton John's estate in 2003.)

"Elton interviewed me, and he's also like family for me. It was a really good interview, it was really fun," she says.

"It's been quite a year. Elvis and I said, 'We're going to look back on this and we won't believe it.'"

The other major triumph for Krall has been producing Barbra Streisand's new record. It was the first time Krall worked as a producer.

"I didn't start easy. I didn't start with a young new artist. I'm working with an icon who's a very, very incredible woman — accomplished, Academy Awards, and an actor as well as a singer," she says.

"It was really incredible to work with her ... and to play piano, work on the arrangements with her. She went a little bit out of her norm for the last few years and worked with a band that I work with. So we made a record in a similar way that I do. It's been very gratifying, I think, for both of us because we're both doing new things."

It's a busy life, a "kooky, crazy" life, Krall admits, but one that's fulfilling and rewarding. And perhaps that's why she and Costello are a perfect match.

"We both live our life very joyfully and our careers intensely and we don't sleep very much but it's the way we like it," she says.

"There's no routine. I think if you have a partner who understands that, that you're both the same way, then there's no conflict 'cause you're both cut from the same intensity."

Quiet Nights is out now. *The Live in Rio* DVD will be released in May.

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A full life: Despite a hectic home life Diana Krall is still breaking new career ground



WE BOTH LIVE OUR LIFE VERY JOYFULLY AND OUR CAREERS INTENSELY AND WE DON'T SLEEP VERY MUCH BUT IT'S THE WAY WE LIKE IT

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gig guide

Benjamin Hooper Singer/songwriter. George St end of Queen Street Mall, Brisbane City. Today, 11.30am, 12.30pm, 1.30pm. Free.

Brisbane Regional Youth Orchestra With St Stephen's Cathedral Boys Choir, Young Conservatorium Chorus and Warrigal Road State School. Holy Trinity Anglican Church, 68 Hawthorne St, Woolloongabba. Today, 2pm. Tickets: \$8. Bookings: 0414 483 009.

Ben Stewart Indie/pop. The Troubadour, Level 2, 322 Brunswick St, Fortitude Valley. Today, 8pm. Tickets: \$10. Door only.

Evan Dando Indie/alternative. The Zoo, 711 Ann St, Fortitude Valley. Wednesday, 8pm. Tickets: \$36.50. Bookings: 1300 762 545 or www.oztix.com.au.

The Rogues Indie. With guests Rock & Roll Revue, The Cairns and The Vagrant City Scandal. The Zoo, 711 Ann St, Fortitude Valley. Thursday, 8pm. Tickets: \$9.50-\$10. Bookings: 1300 762 545 or www.oztix.com.au.

David Campbell Swing/lounge. Concert Hall, QPAC, South

Brisbane. Thursday, 8pm. Tickets: \$59-\$99. Bookings: 13 62 46 or www.qtix.com.au.

James Sherlock Jazz guitarist. Jazzworx! Club, 4 Exhibition St, Bowen Hills. Thursday, 8pm. Tickets: \$10-\$15. Bookings: 3216 1110.

Abby Dobson Pop/folk. Currumbin RSL, Currumbin Creek Rd, Currumbin, Gold Coast. Thursday, 8.30pm. Tickets: \$18-\$20. Bookings: 5534 7999 or www.thesoundlounge.com.au; Kitty O'Shea's, 25 Caxton St, Milton. Friday, 8pm. Tickets: \$17.50. Bookings: 1300 762 545 or www.oztix.com.au; Bon Amici Cafe, 191 Margaret St, Toowoomba. Saturday, 8.30pm. Tickets: \$15. Bookings: 4632 4533.

LAB JACD Hip-hop, funk and world music. The Zoo, 711 Ann St, Fortitude Valley. Friday, 8.30pm. Tickets: \$13.50-\$15. Bookings: 1300 762 545 or www.oztix.com.au.

David Francey Canadian folk singer/songwriter. Clovelly Cellar Door, 210 Musgrave Rd, Red Hill. Saturday, 7pm. Tickets: \$20. Bookings: 0407 177 666.

Dan Auerbach Blues-rock. The Zoo, 711 Ann St, Fortitude Valley. Saturday, 8pm. Tickets: \$42-\$45. Bookings: 1300 762 545 or www.oztix.com.au.

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