



Brief Notes On New Jazz Releases

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“Gorgeous vocal delivery... Judy Whitmore is clearly having a good time.”

Judy Whitmore: “Isn’t It Romantic” – Vocalist Judy Whitmore tackles some of the great standards on her new album, *Isn’t It Romantic*. Joining her on this release are Tamir Hendelman on piano, Alex Frank on bass, Dean Koba on drums, Brian Kilgore on percussion, Rickey Woodard on saxophone, Mitchell Long on acoustic guitar, Lori Bell on flute, Larry Koonse on electric guitar, and Mike Rocha on trumpet. The album opens with “It Could Happen To You,” Judy Whitmore’s vocal performance is bright and cheerful. This track also features some excellent and lively work on piano. She follows that with “I Remember You,” featuring pretty work by Lori Bell on flute, and a warm lead on piano. One of my personal favorites is “You Go To My Head,” from that initial saxophone part to Judy Whitmore’s gorgeous vocal delivery. Ah, romance is still alive, and when she sings “You intoxicate my soul with your eyes,” we can hear the truth of it in the breathiness of the word “intoxicate.” It is like she loses a bit of control in that moment, for that person has truly gone to her head. Plus, this track features an excellent sax lead in the second half. Another of the disc’s highlights is “The Birth Of The Blues,” on which Peisha McPhee joins Judy Whitmore on vocals, the two delivering some wonderful work. Mike Rocha’s work on trumpet is another element that helps make this track stand out. I particularly love that moment when it bursts up to another level, completely unbridled and excited. This is a fantastic track from beginning to end. Then “Speak Low” features some really nice work on both flute and piano. There is something dramatic about her vocal approach to the album’s title track, and I love the way the saxophone supports her, engages in the dance with her. And that bass line is delicious. Then in the middle, the piano and saxophone have their own delightful moment. “Just A Little Lovin’” is yet another highlight, in part because of the song’s message. “This old world/Wouldn’t be half as bad/It wouldn’t be half as sad/If each and everybody in it had/Just a little lovin’/Early in the morning.” Absolutely. Imagine if everyone started the day with a little loving. Well, if you can’t manage that, at least try listening to some good music before facing the world. This track features some nice work on electric guitar, and Stephan Oberhoff on backing vocals. The album wraps up with a totally enjoyable rendition of “Hallelujah I Love Her So,” here “Hallelujah I Love Him So.” Judy Whitmore is clearly having a good time with this one. This album was released on September 14, 2022.



JUDY  WHITMORE