

Mp3 Lee John - Sensualiy



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Details: I started thinking about doing my first solo album ten years ago and even then, I really wanted it to be a jazz record. Over the years, Ive written certain songs that felt were right for a jazz-flavoured album but I just didnt feel that I was ready, either vocally or experience-wise So speaks Lee John, world-renowned recording artist and performer best known as the lead singer for Imagination, the internationally popular pop, dance and soul team whose sales of CDs, albums, singles, videos and DVDs now exceeds some twenty-million copies, starting with the double gold LPs Body Talk and In The Heat Of The Night and encompassing the classic hits Just An Illusion, Music And Lights and Changes. Time has passed and, with a slew of recent credits that include a starring role in the popular 2003 ITV show Reborn In The USA, Lee John who has written songs for such artists as MOBO winner Pete Hunnigale, Maxi Priest, Alison Limerick and Ultimate Chaos among others and has worked with top producers and musicians including Frankie Knuckles, Arthur Baker, Nick Martinelli, David Morales, Tony Humphries and Mike Pickering - has deemed himself ready for that first all-important solo set and the result is the brilliantly-crafted Feel My Soul, released on 2005 on Candid Records. I wanted to be with a label that understood the kind of music Im doing with this album, a company that understood my musical direction and didnt require me to compromise Recorded entirely in Rochfort in France (the location for the 1967 Gene Kelly cult movie, Les Demoiselles de Rochfort) with the co-production team of Eric Debegue, Francois Gaucher and arrangements by Lee, Feel My Soul is truly a musical tour-de-force featuring Leees highly expressive reading of classic standards such as Billie Holidays haunting Strange Fruit, Embraceable You and Cole Porters Someone To Watch Over Me along with exciting original material

including the standout opening cut, Sensuality, the coolhip Jazzmatazz, Now Is The Time (C'est Le Moment) and Thin Line. Released on Candid Records, the musical home for such quality artists as Jamie McCallum (ADD OTHERS), Feel My Soul is Lee's most personal and intimate work, revealing a new level of vocal artistry and competence long-known to music industry insiders but only being given full reign. The truth is that I've always had an affinity for jazz and there's a jazzy influence in my music. You can even hear it on early Imagination records : on the first Imagination album, I'm scatting on the song Tell Me Do You Want My Love. All the people who've grown with me over the years won't be surprised at the kind of album I chose to make as my first solo record. Featuring musical accompaniment from Lee's longtime musical director John Watson on keyboards and Dave Mansell on brass alongside talented French musicians Stephane Huchard (drums), Stephane Kerechi (bass) and Jean-Noel Goddard (percussion), Feel My Soul was recorded live in the studio with engineers Dee Vaz and Ludovic Guichard; the sessions were filmed by director Stephane Peyrolo for an accompanying DVD which includes additional recordings not included on the final album, interviews and other bonus material. For Lee, the timing for making the record was just right: After doing the Reborn In The USA tour (with Elkie Brooks, Tony Hadley of Spandau Ballet fame and Peter Cox from Go West among others), I was ready to do my solo project and everyone thought it would be a soul album. I'd even recorded songs like (The Temptations) Just My Imagination and Betcha By Golly Wow but I just knew I had to follow my heart and that meant doing this record, a record that allows audiences to see me as I am and incorporates all that I've learned musically and what I have to offer vocally. I was fortunate in working with the French production company M6 (CHECK NAME) to be given carte-blanche to do whatever I wanted creatively and while it was the most challenging experience I've ever had as a recording artist, it was also my biggest high. I was given the chance to truly breathe musically. Choosing what would comprise the final line-up on Feel My Soul was equally challenging for Lee, known for his dynamic and energetic onstage performances, The songs on the album had to be there not just because I loved them but also because I felt them and could show different variations musically. Talking about some of key tracks on Feel My Soul, Lee notes, Well, the song Small World (from the musical Gypsy) was one I heard when my Mum used to play the version by Johnny Mathis when I was growing up in London. The song has a certain innocence to it. I wanted to show I could be more percussive with my voice which is why I did Embraceable You the way I did. Someone To Watch Over Me was a song that I discovered through the

wealth of material that's been done in various musicals. The song Flamingo Blue is an original tune I co-wrote with my MD, John Watson and it was meant for the film of the same name for which I did a cameo appearance in Blue Flamingo in 2002. We wanted to do a song that captured the feel of the 40s. Jazzmatazz is a tribute to all the jazz greats Billie Holiday, Ella Fitzgerald, Dizzy Gillespie, Sarah Vaughan and so on. I'd say the songs I wrote for the album are personal: Thin Line is written from a man's point of view in a relationship. I got the chance to be more of a storyteller, more a lyrical poet and that's something I didn't really get to do with Imagination. Speaking of the ever-popular group that first catapulted Lee to international recognition and fame in the early 80s with the major hit Just An Illusion (recently sampled by Mariah Carey as part of a duet with rapper Nelly for her multi-platinum 2005 album The Emancipation Of Mimi), he notes, The title track for the new record sends people back to where I came from musically and I worked on it with Tony Swain who produced the group's early hits. Of the other original material, we have You Never Know which is kinda coy lyrically, all about what goes on when you're flirting and dating and you don't know how everything's going to turn out. Now Is The Time is a very important song to me. It has a simple, positive message and I think it has a little of the old sound of Imagination but brought forward and updated. Of everything he recorded for Feel My Spirit, Lee says recording Billie Holiday's 40s signature tune Strange Fruit, with its references to the ugly side of racism was emotionally tough. Here I was, little Lee John from Imagination in North London and I took on doing this classic with a sense of pride. I wanted to make a contribution as a British black music artist. For almost everything we did on the album, we did three or four different approaches and recording takes. Strange Fruit was done in one and when the musicians stopped playing, we all just sat in the studio in complete silence. Singing songs like this requires a different discipline but at the same time, it's been such a liberating experience for me. Feel My Soul opens up a new musical chapter for Lee John who first formed Imagination in 1981 with bassist Ashley Ingram and drummer Errol Kennedy. Born in London, Lee spent some of his formative years in New York, exposed to the R&B and soul music of the 70s. He signed his first record deal as part of a duo with family friend Russell Fraser but it was after working with Grammy award-winning producer Trevor Horn on the track Got To Be Good with his new group Imagination that Lee came to the attention of producer Tony Swain who encouraged Lee to complete the lyrics and melody for the song Body Talk which would become Imaginations first Top 5 single. Subsequently, Imagination recorded seven albums, touring the world and establishing itself as one of the

most popular dance, funk/soul and pop acts in contemporary music throughout the 80s. By 1991, the original line-up had changed although Lee continued to tour globally throughout the 90s and beyond (with stops in India, Sri Lanka, Angola, South Africa, the Middle East, the Far East, Russia and France) in the process hosting his own British television chat show, Lees Place. Along the way, Lee worked with producer Arthur Baker on his Back Beat Disciple album Give Into The Rhythm and scored a major dance club hit in the UK and US in 1996 with the anthem The Mighty Power Of Love. In 1997, using the pseudonym Johnny X, Lee enjoyed another UK dance hit with Call On Me and he ended the decade as a roving reporter and interviewer for VHI as well as performing throughout the UK and France. Since 2000, Lee whose acting credits include roles in Dr. Who, The Chinese Detective and Stepping Out - has appeared in the musical The Hot Mikado, performed in Tahiti and of course, starred in Reborn In The USA which took him literally from coast-to-coast in America on sold-out shows in major U.S. cities. The recipient of numerous silver, gold and platinum discs and a Diamond Award, Lees list of career accomplishments includes performances for Prince Charles and the late Princess Diana, dinner at the home of Nelson Mandela and a rare Soul Train appearance in which he sang to the legendary Marvin Gaye. But for all that hes achieved in a career notable for its consistency and longevity, Lee is most proud of his much-anticipated solo debut, Feel My Soul, his 2005 Candid Records release: A whole new world is opening up for me in doing this album and Ive already started doing shows with this music. In some ways, I feel like Im walking the plank because I dont know how people will respond and I know some might say that if Ive spent my career in pop music, I dont have the right to be doing jazz. But Ive paid my dues musically. Im walking through a new door and Im singing with more confidence than ever. Bold, creative and a musically satisfying experience, Feel My Soul is just the start of a new and exciting chapter for Lee John, ever a pioneer, as he steps out with a compelling album that is intimate and truly made with heart - and much soul.

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