

Mp3 Alicia Bay Laurel - What Living's All About



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Fun, funny, sexy, spiritual, cynical, hip, and anti-corporate, Alicia sings ten of her own blues, jazz and gospel tunes and breathes new life into two jazz standards. 12 MP3 Songs JAZZ: Jazz Vocals, BLUES: Acoustic Blues Details: Alicia sings twelve catchy jazz, blues, and gospel tunes, ten of them original, including her in-your-face protest song, America the Blues, featuring avant garde guitar hero Nels Cline. Gorgeously (self) produced, with three ensembles of top notch professional players in LA, What Living's All About emanates sex, spirituality, cynicism, humor, hip repartee, and occasional righteous rage. Other members of the cast include jazz upright bass legend John B. Williams (Nancy Wilson, Manhattan Transfer, Arsenio Hall Show Band, Tonight Show Big Band) and his red hot R & B vocalist wife Jessica Williams, who forms the gospel choir along with her daughter Vetia Richardson, and her friend Irene Cathaway (with whom she sings backup for Connie Stevens), gospel keyboardist Reverend Harold Pittman (Minister of Music at the Greater Ebenezer Missionary Baptist Church in South Central Los Angeles), woodwind wizard Doug Webb (who totally smokes on a different instrument on each of four songs), three fabulous top flight drummers: David Anderson, Kendall Kay, and Enzo Tedesco, fluid and cool jazz pianist Rick Olson, two rock-solid, multi-talented bassists: Kevin O'Neal and Chris Conner, versatile actor/vocalist Jody Ashworth, and soulful Liberian gospel singer Francis Nyaforh. The tunes: Floozy Tune: A 1920's trad jazz tune about a girl who runs off with the band. Will make you Charleston, even if you don't know how. America the Blues: A love song to America, rallying voters to save her from corporate greedheads. Turn up your speakers for the amazing solo at the end by Nels Cline. Aquarian Age Liberated Woman Blues: the ultimate free love hippie girl song complete with countercultural references. Zero Gravity: Atmospheric jazz conjures a predatory night scene in LA. Doctor Sun and Nurse Water: Gospel blues waltz about the life-giving properties of sunlight and water. What Living's All About:

Sex, of course. Mid-century modern jazz in the style of "Fever." Sometimes It Takes a Long Time: A blues waltz that starts folk, ends gospel, and is uplifting enough to be sung at a wedding. Nature Boy: A spacy, improvised version, for voice, upright bass and percussion. Showcases the great John B. Williams. Best of the Rest of You: Kick ass blues about the social mores of New Age bobos. I Could Write a Book: Stylish rendition with classic jazz quartet and shocking revelations read from literary agent Michael Larsen's book *How To Write a Book Proposal*. It's Not Fair: Jazzy blues bitch slap to an unfaithful lover and former creative collaborator. Great guitar solo by Nels Cline. Love, Understanding and Peace: Gospel love ballad that reflects upon Paul's letter to the Corinthians, Chapter 13, which Alicia wishes that some Christians would take a little more seriously. For those familiar with Alicia's first two CDs, this one may come as a surprise. It has a much lower glycemic index and is not recommended for children. Alicia widens her range as an actress, and addresses sticky issues personal and public. She also collaborates as musician and producer with some of the most gifted players in Hollywood. All three of Alicia's CD covers are about women in ecstatic union with nature; this one is a moonlit, wet, surreal image with soft edges. Alicia Bay Laurel is a baby boomer, hippie chick, earth goddess, and political activist, who wrote, illustrated and designed a bestselling back-to-the-land (freaky style) manual in 1971 that changed the way books look, forever. Lots of people still read *Living on the Earth*, and thousands of people read her blog at aliciabaylaurel.com. This is her third CD. A rave from *ejazznews* by London jazz critic John Stevenson: With a provocative title like this one, Ms. Laurel will certainly catch the attention of any reviewer! This is most certainly one of the most audacious, heartfelt and honest discs I've put in my CD player for the year. Alicia (who sounds like the artistic love child of Joan Baez and Tom Waits) brings a folk-singers sensibility to bear on jazz and pulls no punches: On *America The Blues*, she declaims: America, the beautiful/you're thorny as a rose:/Radiation, global warming/Poisoned food from GMOs./ She also sings a delightful version of Eden Ahbez's *Nature Boy*. The accompaniment from guitarist Nels Cline, bass player John B. Williams and pianist Rick Olson is divine. Review of *What Livings All About* by psychedelic folk radio DJ, Gerald Van Waes. His show, *Psyche Van Het Folk*, is on Radio Centraal, Antwerp, Belgium. Like one of my favourite heartfelt singer-songwriter singers (Heather McLeod with 'Funny Thing', 1997), also Alicia went to more towards (slightly standard) jazz territories, but as a former hippie, it is clear this is not done as a compromise to please/tease a public. Her interpretations (-most songs are self penned-) are with great feelings, and a certain light happiness beyond each other idea or

emotion. She describes the style mix well on the cover as "jazz, blues and other moist situations". With additionally a bit of New Orleans influence on "Floozy Tune", and a bit of gospel on "Doctor Sun and Nurse Water" (about what the environment of Hawaii did to her), she wrote inspired something between jazz and jazz-blues and something else soulful. I like the idea on "America the blues" saying "America, don't wave that flag to con us with your jive...".."we're all family on this planet".. (Just imagine how America is built upon so many nationalities and bought talents from everywhere, unfortunately mostly still chosen from what are seen as the trustworthy countries and areas (so practically still excluding preferably the French, Spanish, and several Arab-speaking countries and native Indians for economic concurrence, racist, nowadays partly religious, and a few other reasons).. Potentially I realize America still has all opportunities and a certain openness to experiment for those who succeed to start to participate in the system. This track, like a few tunes elsewhere has some, for me, rather amusing freaky electric avant-garde guitar by Nels Cline (Wilco). Alicia, for having experienced a certain earthbound process, matured, she still has the happiest aspects of the hippie; this sum must have benefited the soul and music of the singer, who on her recent photograph on the back cover still looks 25 or so, so I guess the message of this lies somewhere as a benefit hidden in the music. Rather brilliant as an interpretation I think is "Nature Boy" (originally by Nat King Cole, but also covered by Grace Slick), in an emotionally calm contrapoint-driven moody jazz style, with the help of John B. Williams on upright bass and Enzo Tedesco on other instruments. A really fine and enjoyable album. Comments from platinum-selling singer-songwriter Joe Dolce: I think this is a very creative record with a lot of wonderful ideas and performances and some pretty extraordinary playing, and endearing vocals all over the place. I like it a lot!! I liked all the songs much better on the second listen. A keeper. Good work. The album is eclectic, diverse musical styles. Therefore, I can relate to it! What holds it altogether is Alicia's musical personae the complex character she is creating, through her voice and ideas. As you get to know this character more and more, as the songs and ideas progress, you trust her more and it allows you to enter more easily into whatever type of musical style is coming next. (Also this trust is a reason to want to go back and listen again.) Also the IDEAS are clear. The lead vocals are strong with a lot of presence. The musicians are all brilliant and the soloing is tasteful and creative no cliches or stumbling around musically anywhere to be found. Re: "Nature Boy." I believe that if you can take the listener to a unique Hilltop, and give them a view that they will never forget, even ONCE in a recording or performance, that is enough.

One brilliant moment builds a bridge of trust between you and them that will allow them to be more open to whatever you do from then on, even if they don't relate or understand it. (You may never be able to take them to that High Point again but it doesn't matter it's like great sex or great playing- you may not be able to LIVE with that person, but you will NEVER forget that encounter.) This track took me to that Hill. I feel different now about the whole recording. Re: "I Could Write a Book." This track is the track where I first gasped: genius! What an amazing idea. A track like this makes me have to listen to the whole CD over again to see if I missed anything the first time around on those opening tracks. A totally inspired idea that works. No one else has ever done something like this with a standard. Perfect. I played this one for Lin. She liked it a lot, too. (She didn't think her publisher would like it though! ha ha!)

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