

Mp3 Mary Ellen Desmond - Darn That Dream



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A collection of ballad swing jazz standards delivered with clear, silky, emotive vocals the support of some of Philadelphia's finest in a rhythm section augmented by sax, trumpet guitar. 9 MP3 Songs JAZZ: Jazz Vocals, EASY LISTENING: Love Songs Details: This classically trained singer made her professional debut in 1988 by performing operatic arias at Philadelphia art openings. Simultaneously she was pursuing an interest in Country Western music by singing with local bands of this genre over the next five years, until she settled in her niche in the jazz repertoire. Her father played guitar and banjo in society orchestras during the 1940s - 1950s and as a child she grew up listening to this music around the house. Although she sought out classical voice training and experimented with country, the jazz repertoire was the genre she most wanted to perform within as a career. She has since found herself very fortunate to be working with accomplished Philadelphia-based jazz musicians such as pianist Tom Lawton, bassist Lee Smith, tenor sax men Larry McKenna Robert "Bootsie" Barnes, and trumpeter John Swana. Originally from Westfield, NJ, Philadelphia has been her home for nearly thirty years. She attended the Philadelphia College of Performing Arts and studied privately with operatic soprano Judith Rosenfeld. Later on she continued studying jazz piano studied briefly with Grammy nominated jazz vocalist Janet Lawson. Ms. Desmond's local club appearances include performances at Ortlieb's Jazz Haus, Chris' Jazz Caf, The Philadelphia Four Seasons Hotel, The Showboat Casino in Atlantic City, NJ, Philadelphia New Jersey area Jazz Vesper services. In October of 2001 she accepted an invitation to perform for two weeks in Nagano, Japan, where she will be returning this fall. In December of that same year she was the opening act for Patti LaBelle at a Toys For Tots sponsored event in New Jersey. In May, 2003, she released a Tribute CD to Peggy Lee Rosemary Clooney with another Philadelphia jazz vocalist Meg Clifton. This project granted them the honor and opportunity to perform as the opener for Linda Ronstadt

at The 5th Annual Rosemary Clooney Music Festival, in September, in Ms. Clooney's hometown of Maysville, KY. The Tribute CD also placed them on the roster of The Sonny Costanzo 2003-2004 Concert Series at Quinnipiac University in CT where they held a date scheduled between those held by Jane Monheit and Karrin Allyson. For the past two summers Mary Ellen has returned to her hometown to perform in their locally sponsored jazz festival, Westfield NJ's "Sweet Sounds Downtown." Earlier on in her jazz vocal career, Philadelphia writer Donald Van Deusen is quoted as saying "Plenty of good people sing in local bars these days, and Mary Ellen Desmond is one of them. She evokes memories of Mary Ford with her clear, sweet swinging voice and sings ballads with the jazz sureness of Maxine Sullivan." (Philadelphia WELCOMAT, 2/24/93). In 1998 Mary Ellen released her debut CD recording "Darn That Dream" to favorable reviews (see below), including being chosen as a top ten Critic's Pick in Cadence Magazine's 1999 Record Poll. Although she has not released any recording showcasing her classical voice, she keeps it and its repertoire in shape by singing with an operatic group on a monthly basis. She truly values her classical training and does not plan to abandon working within that style. Amongst critics and her contemporaries it is agreed that she is very capable of a successful crossover between jazz classical and back again. She feels each genre enhances the other in regards to physical stamina flexibility and emotive expression. "Miss Desmond can sing anything from light opera to rock, but she delivers jazz and classic pop with stunning style." (Donald Van Deusen, Philadelphia METRO, 8/1/03)

More from the critics... "Ms. Desmond's luxurious alto, suggests, with it's undertone of vibrato and exquisitely sustained overtones, formal voice training of a very disciplined sort. And, yet she would appear to be that exception to the rule, the vocal anomaly that successfully folds jazz feeling into what we often term 'legitimate' singing. She turns (Elvis Costello's 'Almost Blue') into first rate jazz balladry. Even the cotter pins holding my flinty old heart in place took a beating." (Alan Bargebuhr, CADENCE Magazine, 02/99) "Jazz fits Mary Ellen Desmond like a soft white glove. (She) comes forth as a consummate musician with a superb voice, incredibly controlled and yet with a lyrical, if subdued, expression of the meaning of the words and the tune. Her sense of pitch, rhythm, and timing is extraordinary, and the only vocalist I can think of who is in the same league with her is Johnny Hartman, whose phrasing was as impeccable as the best of the instrumentalists. Ms. Desmond knows exactly where to put the note. And her voice, like the saxophone of her somewhat namesake (no relation), Paul Desmond, is as he once quipped about his own sound, like a dry martini. Ms Desmond picked a great group of musicians for her

debut CD. I'm especially impressed with the piano work of Kyle Kohler, sensitive and well-attuned to Desmond's style throughout. John Swana's flugelhorn solo on 'Darn That Dream' is superb, reminiscent of some of Art Farmer's legendary soloing on that instrument, yet with a silky sound that is Swana's own. The selection of songs is very seductive and intriguing, drawing the listener into the 'dreamy' mood. I was deeply moved by a tune entitled 'Almost Blue' (Elvis Costello). The lyric, about how a new lover bittersweetly reminds the singer of a previous very special love, is very subtle for a 'pop' song, and Ms. Desmond weaves the words melody into a memorable moment of truth. Go buy this album and go hear (her) in person. You won't regret it." (Vic Schermer, allaboutjazz.com/REVIEWS, 5/2/98) "Mary Ellen Desmond has worked just about every club in town for a very old fashioned reason - she earned it. She's a first class singer you really must hear, and in fact has a CD called 'Darn That Dream.' The songs reflect her versatility, ranging from the title number to 'You Hit The Spot' and 'Midnight Sun.' When you hear (her) you get some understanding of what is meant by the phrase, 'It's the singer, not the song.'" (Donald Van Deusen, Philadelphia PRESS/REVIEW, 3/19/98)

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