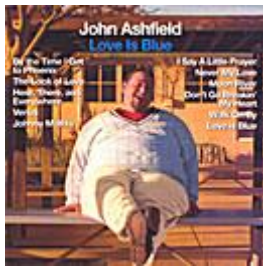


Mp3 John Ashfield - Love Is Blue



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A creative tour de force. 11 MP3 Songs POP: Beatles-pop, POP: Quirky Details: Limitations, boundaries, improvisation, creativity, Orff Schulwerk Love is Blue... or old titles, new songs! In 1968 Johnny Mathis released an album called "Love is Blue", containing "By the Time I Get To Phoenix", "Moon River" and other famous love songs of the time. My friend Mark played me the album (which he bought for his collection because his older brother had it while he was growing up). We were struck not only by Johnny Mathis's great singing but also the production values. The sound and feeling of the record quite perfectly embodies that late 60's mainstream sunshine-pop quality that was also on popular records by the likes of Glen Campbell, The Fifth Dimension, The Carpenters and the first 2 Partridge Family records. It struck me that I would never write any songs called "Here, There and Everywhere", or "The Look of Love". I mean "The Look of Love" on Johnny's album was the Bacharach/David tune but "The Look of Love" I recall most fondly was an entirely different tune by ABC! These titles are iconic! Because of this very fact I thought it would be fun to compose all new songs using those titles, put them in the same order and call the album "Love is Blue". I played some of my initial rough mixes of these new recordings for Mark -- himself a songwriter from the band ing (ingdom.com) and with whom I have been collaborating on many new songs (for future releases) -- and seeing my enthusiasm for this fast moving project, he took the concept a step further by demoing up his own song actually entitled "Johnny Mathis." Our final collaboration on that power pop tune really ties the CD together (I mean, Johnny's name was printed on the original album, after all and thus pays a fitting tribute to him as the point of inspiration for this project!). So be sure to "dig" that righteous pop rave up refrain: "File Under Easy Listening!" a reference to the words sometimes printed on the tops edge of old pop LPs which helped retailers and consumers categorize (pigeonhole?) their music in those heady proto-iPod days. However, the album starts with a

simpler lullabye called "I Say a Little Prayer For You" which I thought it should be little and humble. I had just got a MacBook with Garageband installed . I thought I'd experiment with it. Using the built in mic, acoustic guitar, and some Orff Instruments (special xylophones and glockenspiels) I wrote the first song. I then decided to make it a sort of Orff challenge. I teach elementary school grades 1-5 music using the Orff Approach. In this way of teaching the students have to create their own music and movement, based on poetry or a story, or something more unique to themselves such as the rhythms of their names. It is set of limitations and boundaries that leads to creativity and improvisation. It struck me that writing songs with set titles and sequence was along the same lines. Limiting myself to using the built in mic as the only input fit right in with this challenge. The built in mic is usually used for chat programs, but it proved surprisingly good at recording music. Soft music that is. Loud guitars and amps were out, but glockenspiels, vibraslaps, ukuleles and acoustic guitars were in. I experimented with how far or close the laptop had to be to the source and I used the built in Garageband effects to make the acoustics sometimes sound electric. I found myself using the lessons I teach every day. Limitations, boundaries, improvisation, creativity, Orff Schulwerk...Love Is Blue.

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