

## Mp3 Ron Kaplan - Lounging Around Redux 2006



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Classic Vocal renditions of Jazz Standards and Great American Songbook favorites with superior musicianship. 9 MP3 Songs JAZZ: Jazz Vocals, EASY LISTENING: Crooners/Vocals Details: RON KAPLAN One of today's finest singers of jazz standards, Ron Kaplan has carved out an exemplary career over the course of five albums by following in the footsteps left by legends such as Frank Sinatra, Mel Torme, Nat King Cole and Tony Bennett. One of Kaplan's best albums, LOUNGING AROUND, captures the mood and ambience of a small, hot jazz combo as if they were mesmerizing a martini-sipping crowd at an intimate lounge in any city, U.S.A. Although recorded before his last album, SALOON, the LOUNGING AROUND CD had limited distribution (mostly sold at concerts) when originally released and it eventually went out of print. Now remixed, remastered and substantially restructured, LOUNGING AROUND is receiving its first national distribution and full marketing campaign. Ron Kaplan's LOUNGING AROUND and his other CDs are available at online sites (such as cdbaby.com, towerrecords.com), digital download locations (including iTunes.com, rhapsody.com) and Kaplan's own ronkaplan.com. LOUNGING AROUND features a full band of talented jazz musicians who went into the studio and served up the perfect backdrop for Kaplan's rich, warm voice that is as tasteful as a fine wine, a bold and hearty vintage aged to smoothness like decades-old cabernet. The band members featured throughout are Larry Scala on guitar, Perry Thoorsell on bass and Guiseppe Merolla on drums. Special guests are Donny McCaslin Jr. (who has played on two other Kaplan recordings) on tenor saxophone on five tunes, Steve Czarnecki on Hammond B3 organ on three tracks, and Dmitri Matheny (a protégé of Art Farmer) on flugelhorn on How Insensitive. The musicians work well together (Scala and Thoorsell have played together for years) and each gets the chance to solo at some point. Kaplan was performing at the Santa Cruz Jazz Festival when Scala approached the singer about playing together and soon they did some gigs around Northern

California. According to Kaplan, LOUNGING AROUND is full of tunes reflecting lost love and relationships that don't work, but with an undercurrent of redemption and hope always present, which is especially reflected in the closing piece, What a Wonderful World. The whole album has a blue feel to it. Searching for love, finding love and often losing love affects us all so strongly. These are feelings that resonate with virtually everyone. Even though the songs would all be considered traditional jazz, the selections are quite diverse. There are several ballads, blues numbers ("Blues in the Night" and "No One Ever Tells You"), a Brazilian melody by Antonio Carlos Jobim ("How Insensitive"), Cole Porter's uptempo Just One of Those Things, the Lambert Hendricks & Ross self-pity wallow Moanin', and jazz perennials such as Duke Ellington's "Caravan." Kaplan is not afraid to perform songs which are strongly associated with other performers, especially What a Wonderful World, made famous by Louis Armstrong. Of course I have been influenced by the great male jazz singers, but many people are surprised when I tell them I have been equally inspired by female singers. Women seem especially adept at digging up great repertoire. Julie London was a big influence. On this album I do Arthur Hamilton's Cry Me a River that was made famous by Peggy Lee in the Fifties, but I especially loved Julie's version of it which had simple backing and really let her voice come through. On this CD I also sing I Surrender Dear which I first fell in love with when I heard it on a Julie London album. Ron has superb command of his flexible baritone that literally cocoons the listener within the cozy atmosphere of images he sings about and obviously believes in. His trademarks are his sophisticated phrasing and the mature tonal qualities of his vocals. In addition to his career as a concert performer and recording artist, Kaplan also is the founder and executive director of The American Songbook Preservation Society, a non-profit organization whose mission statement is: "To preserve our cultural treasure known as the Great American Songbook by performing this music at home and abroad as Ambassadors of Song." For more information, go to [greatamericansongbook.org](http://greatamericansongbook.org). "The Great American Songbook is full of what is known as popular standards -- great songs written generally between 1920 and 1960, most often for Broadway shows or Hollywood musical films, but sometimes simply in the Tin Pan Alley tradition of pianists and lyricists working together to create quality material for the big bands or the pop singers of the day." In the past few years Kaplan has performed in Las Vegas, London, Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco and Washington DC. He has made television appearances on "Musician's Weekly" and "BET on Jazz." He has played with musicians such as pianists Shelly Berg, Smith Dobson, Geoff Eales, Tom Garvin, Mark Levine, Dick Whittington and Jessica

Williams; bassists Art Davis, Stan Poplin and Tom Warrington; horn-players Paul Contos, Ted Curson, Kenny Stahl, Dmitri Matheny and Donny McCaslin Jr.; and drummers Dan Brubeck, Donald Dean, Tootie Heath, Peppe Merolla and Matt Wilson. Kaplan's other albums are HIGH STANDARDS (with piano, bass and drums as well as two sax players), DEDICATED (featuring piano and three saxophones as well as flugelhorn, flute and some strings), JAZZ AMBASSADORS (piano, bass and drums), and SALOON (Rons voice showcased with only Brazilian Weber Iagos piano). Kaplan was born in Hollywood and was immediately surrounded by music. His father played trumpet in jazz-bands in the Fifties and his mother had the radio or record player on constantly. From his toddler-days onward, Kaplan's parents indoctrinated him with the great singers of 1950s. His earliest influences were Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald, Nat King Cole, Mel Torme, Dean Martin, Sarah Vaughn, Sammy Davis Jr., and Louis Armstrong among others. Ron played drums and percussion at school. In junior and senior high schools he sang in musical stage productions, did standup comedy at talent shows and his uncle's bar, and competed in speech tournaments ("sometimes it was extemporaneous speaking which is sort of like jazz soloing"). Ron studied in an actor's workshop in Hollywood, and then went to Los Angeles' Valley College where he got his Associate in Arts degree. He taught himself to play guitar and piano, and started writing songs influenced by Bob Dylan, The Beatles and Cat Stevens. Ron also performed original material professionally accompanied by a viola player. In addition, Kaplan learned to play congas at Venice Beach and later played in drum circles every Sunday for a number of years in Griffith Park. Kaplan moved north to attend the University of California at Santa Cruz where he majored in psychology and received his Bachelor of Arts degree. From 1985 to 1995, Kaplan decided to immerse himself in instrumental jazz and began listening to classic material from 1950 to 1964 Miles Davis John Coltrane, Lee Morgan, Hank Mobley, Wayne Shorter and countless others. About a decade ago Kaplan turned to his first love, those songbook standards, and began his recording career with a style reminiscent of those great jazz vocalists he first heard as a child. Kaplan was mentored by pianist Smith Dobson and performed every Tuesday night for several years with him. Kaplan also has frequently sung for the past ten years with Don McCaslin, Sr. and his two groups, Warmth and The Jazz Geezers. "When you are working within any musical genre, the most difficult thing is to find your own voice," explains Kaplan. "I have had to purposely avoid Sinatra's phrasing, for example, to force myself to develop my own style. The other key is that I choose material that moves me, that means something special to me, that I can relate to. That way I can

get to the heart of the song and truly inhabit it. I am deeply committed to performing these great standards and doing what I can to keep this music alive and viable for new generations of listeners."

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