

Mp3 Jeza - Man In The Mirror



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Jeza's "Man in the Mirror" is a success on many levels. This is an album that will satisfy the hunger of open-minded music fans yearning for a rich stew in a world of musical junk food and imitation flavors. C M 15 MP3 Songs JAZZ: World Fusion, POP: Beatles-pop Details: CM played horn, keys and percussion on "Chasing After Wind", track #11 on "Man in the Mirror". Jeza played and sang on a different mix of the same song which is on his 2002 album "Lucidity" I am an eclectic guy when it comes to music and film and other forms of expression. Too much of the same thing, no matter how inspired or interesting that thing is, has diminishing returns for me as a fan or as an artist. So it will come as no surprise that I am particularly impressed by musical artists who can skillfully and gracefully draw from a broad array of styles and flavors, and blend those ingredients into an original and genre-defying musical identity. An excellent example is UK singer/songwriter Jeza, who in late 2003 released "Man in the Mirror", the follow up to his widely-acclaimed 1999 album "Wined Up". At first, I thought it a bit odd that Jeza included the phrase "crossover jazz rock pop" on the front and back of this album. Apparently, he knows many fans tend to categorize or label their favorite music, and Jeza's music doesn't fit neatly into any one or two standard genres, so he went ahead and gave us a label to use to describe what is inside. How accurate is this self-applied description? I'd say it works pretty well, better than anything else I could come up with. The jazz element is most evident in an overtly swing piece like "Sister J", but a pervasive jazz feel is also clearly reflected in many of the other songs: the chord changes and voicings ("Man in the Mirror"), the improvisatory instrumental work ("Dancin' in the Rain", "Chasing After Wind"), and Jeza's rich and adventurous vocal delivery ("One Fine Day"). Jeza obviously maintains a warm spot in his heart for classic rock, particularly of the 60's-era psychedelic variety. John Hoare's sinuous and haunting lead guitar soars and rings on several recordings, including "Darkness" and "One Fine Day". On the final

reprise "One Fine Night", John's more muscular tone puts an emphatic exclamation point at the end of the album. Jeza doesn't resort to big drum and bass sounds to satisfy his need to rock, sticking instead to much more restrained drums, trebly bass parts and liberal use of hand percussion, reminding me of mid-60's rock bands like early Grateful Dead or Big Brother and the Holding Company. The pop part of Jeza's self-categorization is certainly well-deserved. This is not "pop" in the mindless, mass-produced meaning, but instead the kind of pop whose litmus test is passing the critical "can you remember the hook?" test. I think "One Fine Day", "Man in the Mirror", "Tower of Babel" and "Chasing After Wind" all do well in this regard. Jeza happily dips into other popular music forms, delivering a convincing blues tune ("Watching the Cellphone"), an authentic reggae groove ("Never Go Away"), and a seductive bossa ("Dancin' in the Rain"). Even elements of dance/techno grooves show up unexpectedly ("Ballad of Killy Beggs", "Blues Evolution"). I should point out that this album maintains the level of intelligence and introspection established on "Wined Up". Jeza follows his lyrical muse through big political and philosophical topics and more intimate and personal subjects with equal passion and wit. Never does he get too overtly intellectual or preachy, though, managing to keep each song honest and humble, something the listener can relate to. By folding all this together with the term "crossover", Jeza gives the listener fair warning that in his world, anything can go with anything if it works musically. Proudly defying any particular genre restrictions, and refusing to "dumb-down" in an attempt to achieve lowest-common-denominator popularity, Jeza's "Man in the Mirror" is a success on many levels. This is an album that will satisfy the hunger of open-minded music fans yearning for a rich stew in a world of musical junk food and imitation flavors. C M

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