

## Mp3 Christopher Martin - New Vintage



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New Vintage is a blend of Broadway, Jazz Cabaret standards interpreted in a truly unique style. Christopher Martin accompanies himself at the piano while singing some of the most beautiful and swinging tunes ever composed. 13 MP3 Songs JAZZ: Jazz Vocals, EASY LISTENING: Cabaret Details: by John Crossett johnc@soundstage.com Audiophiles everywhere will fall all over themselves fawning over just about any album by a female vocalist doing songs from that Great American Songbook. I myself have entirely too large a collection devoted to that very genre. (And before you think I'm complaining, I'm not.) And yet, I find nary a disc on my shelves that offers the same tunes done by a male vocalist. Why is that? Doesn't the male singer have as much to offer as the female? I can imagine Christopher Martin asking himself this very question. His response was to record New Vintage, an album dedicated to those hoary old songs we all seem to love so well. So who is Christopher Martin, and why should you be interested in his singing? Martin is a Broadway/opera/cabaret actor who finds the time for over 300 live performances every year. He's studied at both Oberlin Conservatory and the Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music. Having sung these songs on stage and in clubs for many years, he is uniquely qualified to interpret them. And the optimum word here is "interpret," as that is exactly what he does. These 13 tunes, ranging from "Brother, Can You Spare A Dime?" to "Until The Real Thing Comes Along" and "I Love Paris," are handled in a manner I've not heard before. This ain't your (grand)father's Great American Songbook. There is a real passion to Martin's singing -- of the sort that can only come from a lifelong appreciation for these tunes. On New Vintage, with only his piano playing for accompaniment, Christopher Martin not only reinterprets but, to an extent, reinvents these songs. While you can always follow the melody, Martin takes enough chances here to keep your attention. He isn't the most technically talented pianist I've ever heard, but he also knows enough not to overplay his hand. He kind of reminds

me of Patricia Barber in his playing style (and that's meant as a compliment). The piano sound here is rich and full. You can almost see Martin's fingers fly over the keys, although the sound of the hammers hitting the strings is a bit muted. Tonally, it sounds about right, or at least as right as a majority of piano recordings out there. It's not, however, going to make you believe a piano is in your listening room. Martin's tenor vocals sound as if they were overdubbed onto the piano sound -- not a deal breaker, but it is quite noticeable. I enjoyed this disc, mostly because, as I noted above, it gives me a male voice to help balance all the female vocalists on my CD rack. New Vintage is a nice choice for evaluating equipment. Mr. Martin's voice should come through as full, rich and round, going deeper into the lower midrange than almost any female vocalist; listening to it can give you a better indication of sound quality within that range of whatever piece of equipment you're listening to. I could recommend it on those grounds alone, but in truth, it's also a well-sung disc. If you're a fan of these songs, New Vintage is well worth looking up.

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