

Mp3 Nancy Harrow - The Adventures Of Maya The Bee



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Original cast album of jazz puppet show in its 7th season at the 45 Bleecker Theatre in N.Y.C. 27 MP3 Songs KIDS/FAMILY: Children's Storytelling, JAZZ: Jazz Vocals Details: THE ADVENTURES OF MAYA THE BEE: A story in Jazz of a rebellious little girl bee who leaves the hive seeking adventure and encounters her own heroism. (originally released on Harbinger Records in 2000; reissued 2006 by Artists House -- features Daryl Sherman, Grady Tate Nancy Harrow - vocals; Roland Hanna, pianist arranger; Bill Easley, reeds; Music Lyrics by Nancy Harrow "Maya, the star of this Culture Project jazz-puppet play, is the sweetest little bee you're likely to meet. Consequently, when at age two (days) she feels compelled to leave the safety of her hive to explore the world all by herself, nobody in the audience is likely to guess the horrors she'll encounter. But hey, this is the insect world. Thanks to her good nature, Maya prevails and ends up saving her hive. The play is based on a German children's book; it features a terrific score by jazz singer-composer Nancy Harrow and wonderful puppets by Polish puppeteer Zofia Czechlewska. Ages 5 to 9." TimeOut "In addition to dazzling puppets, there is an inventive score by Nancy Harrow, who also conceived the production, wrote the lyrics and sings several parts. Her specialty is jazz, and the result is a children's musical that sounds as if Cab Calloway and Billie Holiday had a hand (or at least a voice) in it. Assisted by the singers Daryl Sherman and Grady Tate, Ms. Harrow evokes insects that are also very cool cats. The story, adapted by Rachel Klein, is whimsical but never sugar-coated. Directed by Will Pomerantz, 'Maya the Bee' is enjoying an open-ended run. Long may she buzz." Laurel Graeber, The New York Times. "There are three things that make New York kids more sophisticated than most: exposure, exposure, exposure. But parents who happen to be jazz fans usually have had to improvise when it came to entry-level music for the offspring. Jazz singer Nancy Harrow decided to do something about that when she adapted the 1912 German children's book The Adventures of Maya the Bee into a

jazz puppet show. Playing every Saturday at the 45 Bleecker Theater, the show includes 21 numbers over the course of a little more than an hour, running from torch-song cabaret to anthemic marches. Though pre-recorded, the piano, flute, saxophone, and bass offer up a complex texture of blues and swing to tell the story: A rebellious Maya takes flight from the hive to find her own place in the insect world, crooning "Haven't I got strength, and courage, and a sting" with venomous seductiveness. Along the way she meets a cricket, a dragonfly, a dung beetle (a crowd favorite), and a slew of other buggy types who display a mix of human failings. The rod puppets are fascinating to look at; they were designed in Poland, where puppet theater is taken very seriously. All the voices are performed by two actors situated behind the back row, and the music comes right off the CD, with many of the songs performed by Harrow herself. And if the introduction to jazz isn't enough, at the end of the show kids are treated to a hands-on demonstration by the puppeteers as the actors emerge from the back of the theater to show how it all comes together." Susan Avery, New York Magazine "Whatever it is that holds the young enthralled, this musical puppet show has it. Children are difficult audiences to decipher. We know they're mesmerized by "Pokemon," but why? This stage adaptation of a German children's fable (originally published in 1912) has a picaresque quality you'd suppose would make many youngsters antsy. To the contrary, the kids are rapt - even while mothers pass the stage to escort toddlers to the bathroom. Whether the reason is Zofia Czechlewska's beautifully designed puppets or Nancy Harrow's catchy jazz score doesn't matter. The grrrl-power storyline provides kids with an egalitarian female role model who's one of the people - not the all-powerful queen bee. Yet this is no touchy-feely Disneyfest: Harrow's lyrics don't shy away from the Grimmer aspects of insect life, like deception and mortality. But given that no tears or screams come from the wee audience members, perhaps these facts of life are more alarming to adults than to their worldly-wise offspring." Drew Pizarra, New York City, CitySearch "This CD describes an enchanting tale -- the adventures of a bee called Maya, as she rebels against a life she is expected to lead as a member of the hive. This life is laid down by her teacher Cassandra in "Rule of the Game": "It's the rule of the game, and it's always the same/For a bee's never selfish or mean/You fly away, but think of home/And remember you die for the Queen." The album was adapted by Rachel Klein from a children's book written in 1912 by the German author Waldemar Bonsels. It's a bee version of Gulliver's Travels combined with a tale of feminist defiance. This is the second jazz story released in 2000 by Harrow. The other, The Marble Faun, is based on a work by Nathaniel Hawthorne and is a bit more dark

and devious. However, while Maya is a charming story, it's no sugarcoated fairy tale. On her travels, Maya encounters death, disappointment, selfishness, and the horrors of war as well as bravery and compassion. There is a happy ending when, after engaging in her capers and satisfying her curiosity, she returns home to follow the "Rule of the Game." But she also is now the role model for the little girl bees in the hive. Once more, Harrow has gathered top-drawer musicians for her project. The extraordinarily talented Grady Tate is the narrator and sings and plays the drums. His storytelling manner keeps the listener riveted to the CD player. Singer Daryl Sherman is along in a singing role. Roland Hanna performs his arranging magic and plays the piano. Bill Easley's reeds and flute are critical in helping to give meaning to each of the songs. And the lyrics are reprinted in the liner notes. The story adaptation has been transferred to the stage as a puppet show, playing regularly in New York City. The CD is recommended." Dave Nathan, All Music Guide

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