

Mp3 Steven Santoro - Where I Come From



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Sounds like some of your funky favorites from the 1970's. Soulful ballads and funky up-tempo songs with thoughtful and pointed lyrics. 13 MP3 Songs URBAN/R&B: Blue-Eyed Soul, POP: 70's Pop Show all album songs: Where I Come From Songs Details: Steven Santoro, born Steven Kowalczyk, from Milford, Massachusetts, did not have to look far to find his new name. His grandfather, Libertore Santoro was a saxophone player and inspired Steven, the fourth grader, to play the horn as well. But during his freshman year in High School , Steven's musical interests took a turn. Even though he loved playing classic Big Band charts like Count Basies Queen Bee, he truly found himself while sitting in front of a piano writing songs. Soon his band director was lending him the keys to the Grand piano in the auditorium. Steven's songwriting and singing addiction eventually led him to the University of Massachusetts to study Afro American Music and Jazz with Dr. Horace Boyer. While learning to sing and improvise on classic 32 bar songs made famous in the Jazz and Swing eras, Steven wrote and arranged his own pieces. Some were inspired by the form and tone of the classics and others continued on the ever changing path of the pop music that pervaded. Steven's ability to authentically juggle the two styles is what years later, caught the ears of Ahmet Ertegun, the legendary founder of Atlantic Records. After a stint of teaching Special Education classes in Los Angeles, Steven recorded his first album, Moods And Grooves, for Atlantic Records with producers Ertegun and Shane Keister. Released worldwide, it rose to #20 on the Jazz Radio Charts in the USA while Kowalczyk toured the country as an opener for FOURPLAY (Bob James, Nathan East, Lee Ritenour, Harvey Mason). After parting with Atlantic Records, Steven played to eager audiences in London and Moods And Grooves shot to #1 on United Kingdom's Jazz FM Radio. Back home, Steven performed in New York's club scene and worked as a studio session singer, lending his voice to many national and international ad campaigns. He also

produced and arranged for other independent recording artists and kept on writing the songs he loved to write. At the same time he was able to take part in his other love, teaching. The Public School Repertory Company, a performing arts alternative High School located in the heart of Times Square, tapped into the talented, now more experienced Steven Kowalczyk. For three years he taught Songwriting, Music Theory and Vocal Technique to a creative and restless crew of NYC's Hip Hop culture. Under his guidance, his Songwriting class won the award for Best Original Song in the National Gospel Choir Competition.

Meanwhile, While on a session at Signature Sounds Studio in Massachusetts, Steven called in some of NY's heaviest players (James Genus, Clarence Penn, Nathaniel Townsley, Marc Ciprut, Jon Cowherd, Jeremy Manasia, Jon Smith, more...) to lay down the tracks to some of his original tunes. He took on his grandfather's name and this time with himself as producer, Steven Santoro created the album, Soul Of The Night . Here he infused the sophisticated harmony of Jazz with the sexy rhythms and vocal sounds of R and B and Pop. He sings of the pain and beauty of childhood, love, and life in the city. The album drew thousands of listeners online. Now Steven has packaged two new albums of originals. "Where I Come From" is an homage to the R&B inflected sound of the 70's. "Whisper My Name", is the newest studio endeavor, which brings Steven back to his Swing/Adult Contemporary roots. The songs, simply produced by Steven with quartet James Genus, Clarence Penn, Jon Cowherd and Marc Ciprut, are swinging and romantic, simple yet sophisticated. Thirty Tigers/BMG invited Steven to arrange and perform a cut on the "Song of America" release (Sept '07 3 Grammy Nominations so far) in which he and other artists such as Take 6, John Mellencamp, Black Crowes, Andy Bey and more, present a history of classic American songs that span 2 Centuries. And in the Fall of '07, Ivory Joe Cole, A new musical for which he is the lyricist, is being presented in workshop in conjunction with the William Morris Agency, under the direction of Kenny Leon (director of "Raisin In The Sun" with Sean Combs and Phyllicia Rashad). Steven is currently on faculty at the famed Berklee College of Music. SOME PRESS Steven Kowalczyk, at the Firebird Cafe, hails from Boston with a degree in African-American Music and Jazz from the University of Massachusetts, but there's nothing of the college egghead about him. He's a wildly accomplished blues-pop-jazz performer with a soulful intensity and movie-star sex appeal - soft, breathy, with an intricate sense of rhythm and an impeccable sense of time. He can swing, he can croon, and he scats like Mel Torme. His own compositions are fresh and unique. "My Lady Don't Dare" is a cool, snappy jazz tune in the old Bobby Troup style, while "Mother of Mothers" is a Brazilian free-for-all with a risky scat

centerpiece that defies gravity. But he's got his own spin on standards, too: "You Don't Know What Love Is" reduces the room to a stunned hush, then he breaks up Cole Porter's "You'd Be So Nice to Come Home To" into short, punctuated, husky-voiced phrases like the valves on a bass trombone. Accompanied by a first rate trio of Jon Cowherd on piano, Marc Ciprut on guitar and James Genus on bass, Mr. Kowalczyk takes risks and lands on his feet every time. I can't imagine who his idols are because he sounds completely original. All I can say is he knows more about music than a fellow so young has a right to know. The only thing wedged between Mr. Kowalczyk and stardom is his name, but his talent is so big you'll remember it, even if you can't pronounce it. - Rex Reed (New York Observer)

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