

“Take Me Anywhere”

Marcus Goldhaber
with the **Jon Davis Trio**
Fallen Apple Records 2008

Reviewed by Blondy Van Weirden
www.blondysbump.com

The most cleverly written lyric – turned jazz standard – was penned by Haven Gillespie in 1938:

“You go to my head and you linger like a haunting refrain
And, I find you spinning 'round in my brain
Like the bubbles in a glass of champagne
You go to my head like a sip of sparkling Burgundy brew
And I find the very mention of you
Like the kicker in a julep or two”

A similarly clever new lyricist of love tunes has emerged from an acting career in the theater to pursue a calling to write and sing jazz ballads.

Now, it seems that Blondy’s motto of “No Ballads” may prove to be short-lived. Even as I approached the new release “Take Me Anywhere” – a bouquet of ballads sung by Marcus Goldhaber, I was resentful that I had to listen to it. And, the first time around, as I was previewing it while speeding down the freeway, I was rather dismissive of it. Then I brought it inside and put it on the stereo. Of the 16 + one tracks, the lyrics of seven were written by Goldhaber. And, Goldhaber took adept liberties in “re-tooling” the lyrics of the standards he covers on this CD.

Goldhaber’s voice falls somewhere between that of Chet Baker and Michael Franks, a soft voice – with the perfect pitch for poetry, about the pain of passion too unbearable to confront.

“And so I’ll sing this melody each night and day.
I find it helps remind the girls to stay away.
For I’ve done so much lusting that there’s o more
Room for trusting in love.”

Pianist Jon Davis collaborated with Goldhaber on the original compositions and in the re-arranging of the standards by such notables as Hoagy Carmichael, Cahn & Styne, Kurt Weill & Ira Gershwin and Irving Berlin. The Jon Davis Trio provides the backup to this singer’s light voicing by maintaining a graceful, though *loungey*, sound. Hendrik Meurkens’ harmonica adds a gorgeous solo on a tune that Goldhaber wrote about his own grandparents’ lifelong love affair.

The theme of this entire CD is “love”. Even the professional liner notes writer, Scott Yanow declares of this CD, “Love is impossible to avoid.” And while Blondy would rather bump, the cleverly written lyrics makes one ponder...

“Now if my heart could make its mind up,
Then I could choose that special one.
But every time I do, I wind up with a thousand questions,
Answers for which I have none.”

Each song tells a story, and the stories blend together into an epic tale of – you guessed it – a love affair. And, for all the pain and uncertainty that the dreaded concept of “Love” brings to this new lyricist, he manages to wrap it up with a pretty bow and a happy ending with the Buddy DeSilva and Jerome Kern standard, “Look for The Silver Lining”, and the Tin Pan Alley bijou, “When I Take My Sugar to Tea.”

When Valentine’s Day rolls around, you’ll be hearing this CD played on my jazz show and, no doubt, the programming of other jazz and sweet music stations.

Marcus Goldhaber – vocals
Jon Davis – piano

Martin Wind – bass

Marcello Pelletteri – drums

Hendrik Meurkens – harmonica (track 3)

Lieven Venken – drums (track 16)