



CATHY ROCCO

YOU'RE GONNA HEAR FROM ME. Resonance Records RCD-1005. 5711 W. Adams Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90016. www.ResonanceRecords.org. *Autumn Leaves, Come Rain or Shine, Daydreaming, For Once in My Life, Give Me One Reason, I Never Went Away, Little by Little, On a Clear Day, Tea for Two, There Will Never Be Another You, Hello Like Before, You're Gonna Hear from Me.*

PERSONNEL: Cathy Rocco, vocals; Kuno Schmid, Tamir Hendelman, keyboards; John Beasley, organ; Michael Higgins, guitar; Dave Carpenter, bass; Vic Stevens, drums.

By Bill Donaldson

True to the name of the legal entity, Rising Jazz Stars, that encompasses it, Resonance Records continues on its mission of introducing or enhancing awareness of worthy jazz talents deserving of greater recognition. One of its recent ambitious initiatives is the release of Cathy Rocco's first album on the label, *You're Gonna Hear from Me* - perhaps a hoped-for fulfillment of conviction from the singer and the company. Fittingly enough, "You're Gonna Hear from Me," the song, concludes the CD in dramatic fashion before a live audience with spare though rousing accompaniment, a seamless key change, a succinct solo by guitarist Michael Higgins and multiple repeats at the ending. Though "You're Gonna Hear from Me" certainly confirms the strength of Rocco's voice, it doesn't suggest its range. The rest of the album does that.

Rocco benefits from complex and effective arrangements on the songs at the beginning of the CD. Obviously, arrangers Kuno Schmid and Tamir Hendelman were considering her range and style when they wrote them. Starting off with "Autumn Leaves," Rocco takes up Schmid's bass-clef vamp and Higgins's descending lines before she leads into the swing of this version. Her influence by Nancy Wilson immediately is evident as she swoops and attacks notes—dramatizing their intent by, for example, infusing "but I miss you most of all" with aching suggestions of longing. The back-up band, appropriately enough, sets the mood for the pieces with accents and harmonic reflection, and then it holds back when Rocco sings the lyrics. The same approach occurs on

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"Come Rain or Shine," which utilizes a larger instrumental group. After the whirling reed introduction, Rocco delivers the first chorus accompanied solely at first by now-deceased bassist Dave Carpenter and drummer Vic Stevens. At the end of the second chorus, the trombones insert a Latin phrase as a connective element for what follows. Rocco obviously is comfortable with such elaborate accompaniment, actually reveling in it, and she and the band come together for the sudden, unified shout of an ending.

Equally appealing—if not more so—is Rocco's immersion in their version (sounding against like Wilson during the introduction) of "On a Clear Day." The loping swing, pushed with ease by Carpen-

ter, allows Rocco to relax, delivering lyrics with relish and ending on a major seventh that glides into an exclamation before she introduces the graceful guitar solo. As if not wanting to end the song, Rocco keeps scatting, quoting "Johnny One Note" and "I Can See Clearly Now" before the final fade.

Rocco's approach to ballads sometimes involves slowing the tempo of faster songs to bring out the words' meanings more perceptively, and in the process understanding their emotions from another perspective. The most notable conversion of pop song to ballad is Stevie Wonder's "For Once in My Life," introduced by a delicate rubato accompaniment from Higgins while Rocco sings about the "strange and welcome change in me" during the brief verse. Rather than focusing on rhythm and quick appeal, Rocco helps the listener reconsider the words, which after all conclude with the universal sentiment of being needed. Even more surprising is the tenderness of Rocco's version of "Tea for Two," which has been treated to innumerable interpretations throughout the years. Hers, though, provides comprehensive exploration of the lyrics, in which the set-up for the song's title moves into its scene of get-away-from-it-all romance "far away from the cry of the city." With a piano trio back-up, Rocco relaxes as she provides full note value to words like "alone" or "telephone" and treats the song as a full narrative.

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