



Pure Pleasure AFP13712

Carmen Lundy: Changes

Format: 1LP 33rpm / gatefold sleeve

Manufacturer: Pure Pleasure

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Contemporary jazz vocalists, caught in the current trend to accelerate their careers, are often indistinguishable from the pack, the essence of their music lost in haste. With her release of "Changes", veteran singer Carmen Lundy proves that this premise does not apply to her, rising to that proverbial summit to enjoy the rarefied air of the chosen few.

Graced and gifted with a smooth, effortless voice, Lundy has been highly heralded since her landmark 2005 record, "Live at the Madrid (Afrasia)". Though she has done other records since, she is back with a supple encore of original compositions and novel directions. She states that she approached these songs with the guitar in mind and, accordingly, brought in premier guitarist Oscar Castro-Neves for his expertise in dealing with subtle, nuanced rhythms. Though he lays back on much of the recording, on "Sleeping Alone" he begins with his soft guitar sketching a distant samba. Lundy delivers the swaying tempo as only she can. They combine for another guitar/vocal duet on "Where Love Surrounds Us", where the acoustic arrangement is sublime.

There is a definite retro feel to this production, which hails back to a period of authentic recording methods when musicians took their time in composing, arranging and rehearsing. Pianist Anthony Wonsey plays a vintage Fender Rhodes on "So Beautiful" and "Too Late For Love", which features trumpet man Nolan Shaheed playing off of the vocals. The band is fully in tune under Lundy's spell and the result is stupendous.

Lundy attests that she is taking chances and making changes in her approach to songwriting and performing, and there is an underlying percussive element drifting throughout the selections. With a caressing style that blends intention with improvisation, "Changes" is that personal record she had within her. She has let it out for the world to hear.

Recording: June 2011 at Castle Oaks Recording Studios, Calabasas (CA), by Don Murray  
Production: Elisabeth Oei "Changes" - Carmen Lundy (voc, harp); Nolan Shaheed (flh, tp); Antony Wonsey (p, el-p); George Bohanon (tb); Oscar Castro-neves (g); Kenny Davis (b); Jamison Ross (dr, perc)