

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

By Tom Pierce

Songbirds, a group of music lovers devoted to vocalists, occasionally posts a list of "Recent Acquisitions" listing some of the CDs they have especially enjoyed.

I post them because I appreciate the fact that many of these CD's (and many others I've obtained in the 5 & 1/2 years I've been on Songbirds), have come directly or indirectly from comments of other Songbirders.

Unlike the last time I did this in August 2005, where I listed ALL of those I could recommend, I'm limiting this post to my DOZEN favorite vocal recent acquisitions. I've included the following brief comments:

- Year recorded
- Aspects I particularly enjoyed
- Songs I found most appealing

For more information, the sites I've found most helpful are Amazon.com, Half.com (by ebay), Allmusic.com and iTunes music store; as well as the artists' own sites, of course.

1. DENA DEROSE - "LOVE'S HOLIDAY" (2002)

- The sense of real LONGING she projects; her well-defined, easily identifiable style the impressive horns & rhythm section (including her piano)

- "Close Your Eyes"; "Lamp is Low"; "I Thought About You"

2. GLORIA LYNNE - "GOLDEN CLASSICS" (1959 - 1963, approx)

- The gradual building of songs' drama, without some of the excesses I recall from some of her 60's live performances. Her striking voice superbly meshing the best elements of Jazz, R&B and Pop

- "I Wish You Love"; "Folks Who Live on the Hill"; "I'm Glad There is You"

3. JO STAFFORD - "YES IN-DEED!" (1940 - 1950) 4 CD Box set I received as a gift

- Her understated, seemingly distant delivery still conveying emotional involvement; The almost flawless vocal craft that more than justifies her enormous popularity

- "It Could happen to You"; "I Didn't Know About You"; "Fools Rush In"

4. JOYCE BREACH - "LIVE IN LONDON" (2004)

- Superior ability to project melancholy without being maudlin. An intense but gentle intimacy that consistently hushes the audience

- "I Hadn't Anyone Till You"; "Heart and Soul"; "How About You"

5. LURLEAN HUNTER - "NIGHT LIFE" (1956)

- The fresh, exquisite timbre of her voice; the quiet, but undeniable excitement she engenders; the superb orchestral arrangements of Manny Albam, Al Cohn & Ernie Wilkins

- "It Could happen to You"; "This Time the Dreams on Me"; "It's the talk of the Town"

6. PATRICIA BARBER - "A FORTNIGHT IN FRANCE" (2004)

- The darkly captivating mood she establishes with her highly personal approach; the sharply swinging band, with fine solos from her piano & guitarist, Neal Alger

- "Gotcha"; "Laura"; "Call Me"

7. THE RITZ - "ALMOST BLUE" (1991)

- Excellent close harmony ENSEMBLE passages whether singing lead or background; beautifully melodic solos of Melissa Hamilton, Daryl Bos-teels & Val Hawk

- "Almost Blue"; "Heart's Desire";

"Last Night When We Were Young"

8. BOB DOROUGH - "JUST ABOUT EVERYTHING" (1966)

- A delightfully real "Hipness" coming across as sweet & witty, not affected or smug; the effective way his engrossing piano skills complement his original lyrics & delivery

- "Baby You Should Know it"; "But For Now"; "Just About Everything"

9. EDDIE JEFFERSON - "THE JAZZ SINGER" (1959 - 1965)

- Relentlessly enthralling swing; Charming tenderness; superb Jazz lyric writing, rivaled only by Jon Hendricks

- "Baby Girl (These Foolish Things)"; "Moody's Mood for Love"; "Now's the Time"

10. ERNIE ANDREWS - "GIRL TALK" (2000)

- His unhurried sense of time; Strong baritone with gentleness & clarity

- "A Cottage for Sale"; "It Might as Well be Spring"; "I want to be Loved"

11. GIACOMO GATES - "CENTERPIECE" (2004)

- Rich, clear, commanding tone; solid Jazz phrasing & rhythmic ease

- "All of Me"; "Milestones"; "Summertime"

12. KURT ELLING - "LIVE IN CHICAGO"

-Virtuosity in almost every respect: Resonance, dynamics, range, lyricism, breath control, imagination; drive; humorously engaging stage manner

- "My Foolish Heart"; "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes"; "For Sentimental Reasons"