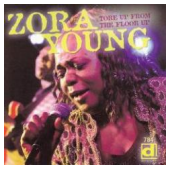
Zora Young - Tore Up From The Floor (2005)



1. Love Of Mine 4:30 2. Go Ahead And Take Him 6:37 3. I'm Gonna Do The Same Thing They Did To Me 5:14 4. Toxic 6:03 5. Til The Fat Lady Sings 4:51 6. Slowly 4:51 7. Ace Of Spades 3:27 8. Rainy Night In Georgia 5:32 9. Tore Up From The Floor Up 4:19 10. Since I Fell For You/Silhouettes 7:11 11. Handy Man 3:51 12. Two Trains Running 5:50 13. Interview 4:05 Personnel: Zora Young (vocals); Pete Allen (guitar); Bobby Dirninger (acoustic guitar, piano, keyboards); Hank Ford (tenor saxophone); Willie Henderson (baritone saxophone); Kenny Anderson (trumpet, horns); Lee "Mookie" Cain (bass instrument); Kerman Frazier (drums).

With her mix of blues, soul, and rock, plus the just tangible presence of her native Mississippi gospel background, Zora Young can be a powerful performer when the material is there. On the best cuts from Tore Up from the Floor Up, her third album and second for Delmark, she shows a kind of hard-earned wisdom and an assurance in her vocals that rises well above mere shouting, and tracks like the moody, dynamic "Toxic" and the romping title tune (both of which are Young originals) show her to be a solid songwriter as well. She also turns in fine readings on a pair of covers, turning atmospheric on Muddy Waters' "Two Trains Running" and giving B.B. King's "I'm Gonna Do the Same Thing They Did to Me" a saucy, determined sheen. Her take on O.V. Wright's "Ace of Spades" is surprisingly by the numbers, though, and while she certainly doesn't do a disservice to Tony Joe White's "Rainy Night in Georgia," it's a song that has been done to death and no singer on earth could possibly find a new way to approach it. The end result of all of this is an album that has some wonderful highs (the opener, "Love of Mine," simply soars and rocks) but also too many tracks that lack immediacy. It's worth noting, though, that Young's originals more than hold their own here, and that bodes well, because when her singing and writing intersect, sparks fly. ---Steve Leggett, Rovi

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