Lauren Mitchell - Desire (2017)

1 I Don't Need Nobody (3:11) 2 Soul Music (5:36) 3 Desire (3:59) 4 Jump Into My Fire (4:07) 5 Good To Me As I Am To You (4:35) 6 Feels So Good (4:17) 7 Stand Up Like A Man (3:15) 8 Today (4:24) 9 I Ain't Been (Licked Yet) (4:06) 10 Anti-Love Song (4:27) 11 Bridge Of My Dreams (4:46) 12 Lead Me On (6:02) 13 Brown Liquor (5:17)
Lauren Mitchell - vocals Johnny Lee Schell, Josh Sklair, Jose Ramirez - guitar Reggie McBride - bass Tony Braunagel - drums Jim Pugh - keyboards Lenny Castro - percussion Darrell Leonard - trumpet Joe Sublett - saxophone Maxanne Lewis, Kudisan Kai, Leslie Smith, Mellodye Perry - backing vocals

"I miss Etta a little less when I hear Lauren sing" ---Josh Sklair, Producer and Guitarist for Etta James

She’s got it. Don’t know how I missed her but Lauren Mitchell’s pipes are up there with the best. On this, her third release, it should be clear this ain’t no one night stand.

The meat of the matter though, is Lauren Mitchell’s smooth and smokey vocals. There is a Facebook post by her dad that says she grew up listening to lots of Bessie Smith, Muddy Waters, Blind Lemon Jefferson, Leadbelly, Robert Johnson, Son House, Ma Rainey, Big Bill Broonzy, Billie Holiday and Etta James. Mitchell herself is quoted as saying people recognize the Etta James influence and that she identifies with it on a musical as well as personal level. More on that comparison shortly.

There is plenty great material here for the listener to wrap their ears around. The opening track, “(I Don’t Need Nobody To Tell Me) How To Treat My Man, ” is immediately upon you with in your face sass, and a fervent delivery while the band cooks with fun, brassy horn configurations. The listener’s attention is grabbed immediately.

The Columbus, Ohio born, Florida based Mitchell flew out to L.A. for the recording of this project. On track 5, “Good To Me As I Am To You, ” she and the Braunagel assembled crew get down, reach back and flawlessly recreate that Muscle Shoals vibe.

Not many artists can successfully meet the challenge of covering songs of the ex wife of Miles Davis, Funk queen Betty Davis. On track 10, “Anti Love Song,” Ms. Mitchell pulls it off with forceful sway and sultry swag attentiveness.

Other bulls-eye tracks include track 4, “Jump In My Fire,” a ‘come on with it Daddy’ paean to the ultimate hookup. Don’t even get me started on the possible double entendre interpretation of track 9, I Ain’t Been (Licked Yet). Let’s just leave it at, that’s a hook for the ages.

The Gospel infused track 11, “Bridge Of My Dreams, ” exhibits Lauren Mitchell’s church background. Hers is a voice rooted in the believe of a Creator’s stirred up gifts and power as attested to in the artist’s personal note and quote in the liner notes.

This is a great album from one of the freshest “new” voices out there. Stellar, award deserving stuff. Stay tuned to Ms. Mitchell. This voice stands on its own without the Etta James comparison. ---bluesblastmagazine.com

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