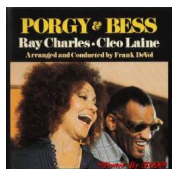


Ray Charles & Cleo Laine - Porgy & Bess (1976)

Written by bluesever

Monday, 15 August 2011 14:22 - Last Updated Monday, 17 June 2013 20:55

Ray Charles & Cleo Laine - Porgy & Bess (1976)



01. Summertime 6:12 02. My Man s Gone Now 4:40 03. A Woman Is A Sometime Thing 2:42 04. They Pass By Singin 3:01 05. What You Want Wid Bess? 2:20 06. I Got Plenty O Nuttin 3:47 07. Buzzard Song 3:21 [play](#) 08. Bess, You Is My Woman 5:25 09. Oh, Doctor Jesus 2:10 10. Crab Man 1:45 11. Here Come De Honey Man 1:24 12. Strawberry Woman (Instrumental) 0:56 13. Strawberry Woman 1:21 14. It Ain t Necessarily So 4:13 15. There s A Boat Dat s Leavin Soon For New York 3:20 16. I Loves You, Porgy 5:00

[play](#)

17. Oh, Bess, Oh Where s My Bess (Instrumental) 3:22 18. Oh, Bess, Oh Where s My Bess 3:33 19. Oh Lord, I m On My Way 3:15

Arranged & Conducted by Frank Devol Featuring: Harry "Sweets" Edison, trumpet J.J.Johnson, trombone Joe Pass, guitar Victor Feldman, piano The Rev James Cleveland Singers

Ray Charles left his own music behind to sing Gershwin with one of the most brilliant songstress of all time, Cleo Laine. The result was one of the most magical duet albums ever recorded! Beware! This is not one of your typically light opera versions of Porgy and Bess. This is the artistic interpretation of two accomplished artists who turn Gershwin's music into an unusual mix of spectacle and soul! Not since Ella Fitzgerald and Louis Armstrong has any artist attempted to put hot and raw jazz back into this magnificent array of songs. Cleo Laine's fine vocals with Ray Charles' raw soul is a perfect match!

Each song arrangement was perfectly matched to the artist by Frank DeVol with a 78-piece orchestra. Great instrumental artists like Joe Sample, Lee Ritenour, Joe Pass and Ernie Watts are just some of the many gifted in the orchestra. Many of the arrangements are so hot that they can stand on their own.

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The opening number "Summertime" swells into a gorgeously rich duet. Cleo Laine's finale in "My Man's Gone Now" is a vocal high. "I Got Plenty O' Nuttin'" is a cooking duet between Ray & Cleo. "Bess, You Is My Woman" is rich with tenderness and longing from both singers. Cleo Laine hits angelic gospelly highs in "Oh, Doctor Jesus". "It Ain't Necessarily So" is one of the funkier duets in the album. It scorches beyond belief! "I Love You, Porgy" is a sweeping tour-de-force for Cleo Laine. Ray Charles' earthy soul is full force in his version of "Oh, Bess, Oh Where's My Bess". The finale "Oh, Lord, I'm On My Way" hits the heavens with Ray's gospel vocal.

The lp was originally recorded in 1976 and the cd was digitally remastered in 1988. The vocals are marvelously recorded. You'd swear you were in the recording studio! The only downside of this cd is its limited release yet well worth the search. --- Beverly Praiswater

Charles and Cleo Laine duet on the songs from George Gershwin's opera, in a version arranged and conducted by Frank DeVol (who provides extra instrumentals) and produced by Norman Granz. The material is perfect for the performers, and they give it an effective, if unstudied, treatment. ---William Ruhlmann, All Music Guide.

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