Carol Sloane - Romantic Ellington (1999)



1.A Flower Is A Lovesome Thing (5:20) 2.Daydream (5:43) 3.Tonight I Shall Sleep (4:46) 4.Don't You Know I Care (3:58) 5.In My Solitude (4:28) 6.Lush Life (3:47) 7.All Too Soon (4:24) 8.Prelude To A Kiss (4:43) 9.Sophisticated Lady (4:26) 10.Take Love Easy (5:11) 11.I Didn't Know About You (5:59) 12.Lotus Blossom (5:03) 13.Come Sunday (4:00) Carol Sloane - vocals Benny Golson - saxophone Mike Renzi - piano, arranger Dean Johnson - bass Ron Vincent - drums Barry Finclair, Belinda Whitney-Barratt, Jill Jaffe – violin

Carol Sloane's Romantic Ellington lives up to the title's promise, collecting some of Duke Ellington's most romantic songs, including "Come Sunday," "A Flower Is a Lovesome Thing," "Prelude to a Kiss," "In My Solitude," "Lush Life" and "Tonight I Shall Sleep." Sloane's vocals are both sultry and accomplished, completing the album's aura of worthiness. --- Heather Phares, Rovi

Ellington at the Millennium. A flood of Ellingtonia has been released in this year of the maestro’s centenary. This is the first completely vocal collection I have come upon (Tony Bennett’s Sings Ellington Hot and Cool not withstanding). Carol Sloane of Hendricks, Lambert, and Sloane fame releases her first recording for the DRG label after several productive years on Concord Jazz. Romantic Ellington is a well-chosen collection of Ellington/Strayhorn ballads that more often than not arrives on the road less taken.

Ms. Sloane’s voice is described as “sultry”, an overwrought word that really has no meaning. I prefer the descriptive “accomplished”. That is more like it. She croons with a definite authority,

never resorting to (inappropriate) vocal gymnastics. She treats these Ellington chestnuts lovingly without pampering them, purring through the familiar (“Flower”, “Come Sunday”, “Sophisticated Lady”) and the unfamiliar (“Tonight I Shall Sleep”, “Don’t You Know I Care”).

A piano trio, three violins, and a cello support Ms. Sloane on Romantic Ellington. At first glance, I thought that the string accompaniment would be a little thin, but it turns out to be perfect. This small string section provides just enough support without the saccharine melodrama that larger section is often reduced to. Benny Golson devotes his considerable tenor talent to four or the compositions (superb accompaniment on “Daydream” and “A Flower Is A Lovesome Thing”. The result is a satisfying collection of ballads, deftly preformed by and accomplished and underrated talent. --- C. Michael Bailey, allaboutjazz.com

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