Smooth Jazz All Stars – Smooth Jazz Tribute To Gorillaz (2010)



1. Feel Good, Inc
2. Dare
3. Clint Eastwood
4. Dirty Harry
5. 19-2000
6. Stylo
7. Kids With Guns
8. Every Planet We Reach is Dead
9. All Alone
10. Tomorrow Comes Today

As a huge Gorillaz fan and a new lover of jazz, I have to admit I had high hopes for this album. Could it really be a mixture of one of my favorite bands with a genre I'd recently come to love? Could it live up to my expectations?

Well, no, but there is more to this album than that.

Starting out with the negative, I think the main problem with the album is that the artists were afraid to really play with the CD. It felt like they tried too hard to stay within the confines of the original melody and really swing, and as any jazz lover knows, one of the best parts of jazz is improvisation. It's not even a huge problem, as the source material is already good; it just feels a bit "by the book" at times. Also, when they say "jazz" they mostly mean replacing the vocals/guitar with a saxophone and the bass with an electric piano/synthesizer, rather than an entire jazz band.

That's not to say the album has no good qualities. In several of the songs, you can really FEEL the artist pouring his soul into the music, especially when he goes off the tracks a bit, and little redeeming flairs can be found in even some of the more subdued songs. In fact, there are no songs on this album that are really bad; the weaker ones are great background music, at the very least, and the good ones are worth listening to with your eyes closed and your heart open.

In conclusion, the album, while not perfect, is a worthy tribute to the Gorillaz. While some of the songs feel a bit constrained, the album as a whole pulls through, revealing the real heart of the CD. If you like the Gorillaz, jazz, or both, you'll like this CD. ---Xodoro, amazon.com

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