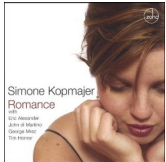


Simone Kopmajer □ – Romance (2005)

Written by bluesever (Bogdan Marszałkowski)
Monday, 20 July 2020 15:53 -

Simone Kopmajer □ – Romance (2005)



1 *How Do You Keep The Music Playing?* 3:35 2 *A Blossom Fell* 3:57 3 *We Kiss In A Shadow* 4:05 4 *Calling You* 5:25 5 *Whatever Happens* 5:41 6 *Exactly Like You* 5:43 7 *Someone To Light Up My Life* 5:20 8 *The Way You Look Tonight* 4:22 9 *A Time For Love* 5:34 10 *Where Or When* 5:16 11 *Just Squeeze Me (But Don't Tease Me)* 4:48 12 *Whatever Happens (Reprise)* 2:58 Bass – George Mraz Drums – Tim Horner Piano, Arranged By – John Di Martino Producer – Todd Barkan Tenor Saxophone – Eric Alexander Vocals – Simone Kopmajer

No one will accuse Simone Kopmajer of being one of jazz's forceful, aggressive belters. Her singing is subdued, restrained, subtle and understated -- an approach that serves the Austrian vocalist fairly well on *Romance*, which was produced by Todd Barkan and finds her joined by pianist John Di Martino (who handles the arrangements), acoustic bassist George Mraz, drummer Tim Horner and tenor saxophonist Eric Alexander. Improvisers who favor the sort of delicate vulnerability that characterizes the cool-toned Kopmajer have, in the past, been accused of not swinging, but Kopmajer does swing. She doesn't swing in the robust, hard-edged way that belters like Dianne Reeves, Ernestine Anderson and Kitty Margolis swing, but she swings nonetheless -- and emotionally, she gets her points across whether she is turning her attention to soul man Bill Withers' "Whatever Happens" or well-known Tin Pan Alley standards like "Where or When," "Exactly Like You" and "The Way You Look Tonight." Like Shirley Horn, Chet Baker, Carol Sloane and Helen Merrill -- four of the singers she inspires stylistic comparisons to -- Kopmajer demonstrates that a whisper can be as effective as a shout when it comes to jazz improvisation. Although tasteful and well-executed, *Romance* does tend to play it much too safe when it comes to material; Kopmajer picks too many warhorses that have been beaten to death over the years. "Whatever Happens" is a refreshing, unlikely choice, and Kopmajer needs to make more unlikely choices -- she needs to build a more adventurous repertoire and cut back on the warhorses. But all things considered, *Romance* is a promising effort for the Austria native, who was in her early twenties when she recorded this 2004 session. And the fact that she sings in flawless English is certainly something to be proud of. ---lex Henderson, AllMusic Review

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