

Diane Schuur & B.B. King – Heart To Heart (1994)

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1. *No One Ever Tells You*
2. *I Can't Stop Loving You*
3. *You Don't Know Me*
4. *It Had To Be You*
5. *I'm Putting All My Eggs In One Basket*
6. *Glory Of Love*
7. *Try A Little Tenderness*
8. *Spirit In The Dark*
9. *Freedom*
10. *At Last*

11. *They Can't Take That Away from Me* Diane Schuur (vocals, piano); B.B. King (vocals, guitar); Tom Scott (tenor saxophone); Gary Foster, Daniel Higgins (saxophone); George Graham, Warren Luening (trumpet); George Roberts (bass trombone); Richard Todd (French horn); Doug Katsaros (piano, synthesizer); Randy Waldman (synthesizer); Paul Viapiano (guitar); Chuck Berghofer (bass); Vinnie Colaiuta (drums); Bashiri Johnson (percussion); Diva Gray, Vaneese Thomas, Karen Kamon, Jill Dell'Abate (background vocals).

B.B. King is more than just one of the greatest masters of electric blues guitar; he is also an extraordinarily gifted singer. His talents on his instrument are so great that they tend to eclipse his soulful and sophisticated singing voice, but any who might possibly have doubted his ability will do so no more upon hearing *Heart to Heart*. On this 1994 release, he joins pop-jazz balladeer Diane Schuur for ten surprising tracks. It is a very moody album, with the overall vibe being mainly of the down-your-broken-heart-in-gin variety. Some of the string and synth arrangements come off as a little unnecessary, as the music is ably framed by piano, guitar, bass, and drums. However, producer Phil Ramone should be credited for minimizing the schmaltzy moments on *Heart to Heart* as much as possible, as the music is already treading the fine line between sentiment and drivel. The fine vocal performances by Schuur and King carry much of the music, but drummer Vinnie Colaiuta does the rest. Take, for example, "It Had to Be You." With Doug Katsaros' synth prominently displayed and with the band limping through a

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Vegas-style funk groove, the drummer's extreme sensitivity and chops enliven the track and not only make it listenable, but one of the high points of the record. Fans of King's blues work may be very surprised by how effectively he slips into the role of balladeer and pop interpreter. To be honest, he does it far more convincingly than Schuur. --- Daniel Gioffre, allmusic.com

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