

## Lorez Alexandria - Lorez Sings Pres. A Tribute To Lester Young (1956)

Wpisany przez bluesever

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Side 1 1. *Introduction* 2. *Fine And Dandy* 2:32 3. *Fooling Myself* 3:20 4. *D.B. Blues* 3:55 5. *You're Driving Me Crazy* 1:51 6. *Easy Living* 3:18 Side 2 1. *Polka Dots And Moonbeams* 2:50 2. *This Years Kisses* 3:40 3. *There Will Never Be Another You* 2:20 4. *No Eyes Blues* 2:20 5. *Jumpin' With Symphony Sid* 4:55

Bass – Earl May, "L.D." Young Drums – Vernal Fournier Piano – King Fleming Trumpet – Paul Serreno Trumpet [Bass] – Cy Touff Vibraphone – Charles Stepney Vocals – Lorez Alexandria Recorded in an intimate club in Chicago

In a small intimate club setting, Miss Alexandria's awesome performance promulgates quite emphatically a sterling empirical fact. In concurrence with the more erudite Jazz cognoscenti, she is indeed one of the three greatest Jazz Singers who ever lived. During this magnificent live set recorded in 1958, all of her superb artistic skills are in abundance even at this relatively early stage of her career. Her brilliant command of dynamics, formidable sense of timing and rhythm, her flawless phrasing, impeccable diction and intonation are all stunningly evident throughout her performance of these 11 tunes.

Miss Alexandria's astute and dynamic musicianship allows her to be in complete cohesion with her bandmates at every single moment and nuance of this album. Her tight interplay with her musicians, and total command of the musical environment gives the effect of her voice being just another instrument in the whole aggregate. Her consummate skills and control of her instrument allows her to scat so effortlessly and naturally, her voice sounds and feels like a beautiful Bermuda breeze on an exquisite summer day. Her extensive knowledge of the depths and intricacies of this complex and difficult artform, permits her to navigate deep inside the chord changes as if her voice were a horn and a finely tuned and calibrated laser beam performing complicated and complex musical surgery with us the patient experiencing a painfree euphoria and cultural bliss. God, what a magnificent singer!

Her partners in musical crime on this date is the wonderfully explosive King Fleming Septet, with whom she has worked from her early beginnings. The set opens with an intoxicating "Fine and Dandy" and boy is it just that! It seques into a beautiful ballad rendition of "Fooling Myself". Her velvety soft dynamics paint exquisite pastel colours that flow into a rambunc-tious "D.B.Blues. She scats playfully and rhythmically with the band underpinning her playful romp right through to "You're Driving Me Crazy". "Easy Living" is soft and easy, while "Polka Dots and Moonbeams" become her personal vehicle where she takes us on a breathless floating journey to the cosmos. Here the timbre of her voice and her phrasing clearly shows Sarah's influence on Lorez whom she idolized and adored.

Charles Stepney's vibes and Paul Serrano's muted trumpet create a exquisite palette for Lorez to paint these magnificent colours and textures resulting in a gorgeous latticework of golden embroidered elegance. She has made this ballad hers. Floating right on through "This Years Kisses", "There Will Never Be Another You", bouncing merrily through "No Eyes Blues"

and ending with a scatting tour de force with the entire band making "Jumpin' With Symphony Sid" a real live Jam Session. Rounding out the band is King Fleming on piano, Sy Hubb on bass trumpet, Earl May on bass, and Vernell Fournier on drums. There is no producer credited. This is a smokin' tribute to Prez.

Although highly regarded and admired by her peers, and devotedly adored by her fans, Miss Alexandria's struggle for proper respect and recognition for her work continued until her passing last year. She was disgracefully treated and horrendously victimised with racism by the powers that be, because of her strong nonobsequious personality and uncompromising sense of self and ethnic pride. As a result she was blatantly robbed of her rightful status in the industry. Systematically denied respect and exposure to a wide audience, she was banished and relegated to virtual obscurity her entire career which spanned over 45 years!

Blessed with a voice more melodic, controlled and unique than Carmen McRae, and far more refined and elegant than Billie Holiday along with a discography in excess of 30 odd albums, her treatment at the hands of the industry was deplorable and down right criminal. It absolutely astonishes everyone who is just becoming aware of this magnificent womans' gifts how someone so gifted and talented with such a wide body of glorius and stupendous work could be kept from being exposed to the wider world for some 45 years! Her illustrious body of work which includes her additional five masterpieces: "This Is Lorez", "Sing No Sad Songs For Me", "Deep Roots", "Alexandria The Great", and "More Of The Great Lorez Alexandria" securely and firmly establishes her place in the pantheon of the Queens of this African-American artform called Jazz, right beside the other two greatest singers of all time: Sarah Vaughn and Ella

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Fitzgerald. Everyone take off your hats and your shoes and genuflect to the uncrowned third Queen of Jazz, The Illustrious and Effulgent Miss Lorez Alexandria. Rest in Peace Lorez, you will finally begin to receive your just due. ---Abdul R. Hakeem, amazon.com

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