

Jersey Jazz CD Review

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Easy to Remember (Self-Produced – DOX104) is so easy to remember, and so is jazz-cabaret vocalist **JANE SCHECKTER**, whose work is well known to me and should be to you. This is Jane's fourth CD and I have been listening to it non-stop since receiving it. Jane displays a wonderful sense of color and texture throughout and has a delivery in her singing that evokes a sense that she is standing around the piano in your living room entertaining you. She has chosen a collection of tunes that suits her jazz sensibilities so well, and one can only celebrate the great foundation in her rhythm section, including Tedd Firth on piano, Jay Leonhart on bass, and Peter Grant on drums. This rhythm section works so well together and, with Firth's stellar arrangements, features a who's who of jazz musicians on the scene today including Bucky Pizzarelli on guitar, Aaron Weinstein on violin, Harry Allen on tenor sax, and Warren Vaché on cornet. Also invited to the party are guest artist Gil Chimes on harmonica and vocalist-pianist Tony DeSare with whom Jane sings a duet.

Jane opens *Easy to Remember* with Irving Berlin's "The Best Thing for You," a tune introduced by Ethel Merman in 1950's *Call Me Madam* on Broadway. Once you hear Pizzarelli's guitar and the Vaché and Allen's horns swinging you are instantly hooked. Next, she and Pizzarelli ease into a chorus of Ray Noble's "I Hadn't Anyone Till You" from the 1950 film *A Lonely Place*, and then the band swings into action. This is followed by Alan and Marilyn Bergman and Roger Kellaway's standard, "I Have the Feeling I've Been Here Before" which includes a moving cornet solo from Vaché. Aaron Weinstein's violin is featured on "I Was a Little Too Lonely (And You Were a Little Too Late)," a ditty introduced by Nat Cole in the 1957 film *Istanbul* from Ray Evans and Jay Livingston. Jane takes us into the title track, "Easy to Remember," a Rodgers and Hart song which Bing Crosby introduced in the 1935 film, *Mississippi*. Duke Ellington and Bob Russell's 1944 classic, "I Didn't Know About You" is next with Jane singing a rarely heard verse and Tony DeSare joining in this romantic tale. Moving on is Burton Lane and Yip Harburg's "Don't Let It Get You Down (Love is a Lovely Thing)" from the Broadway musical *Hold On To Your Hats* and features bassist Jay Leonhart, and following that is a swinging rendition of "Will You Still Be Mine" from Matt Dennis and Tom Adair featuring dueling strings from Weinstein and Leonhart. Next is Victor Feldman and Tommy Wolf's "A Face Like Yours," with Jane at her most exquisite. She opens the next selection with a rarely heard verse to Rodgers and Hart's "Where or When" followed by a swinging chorus and featuring a reflective solo by Gil Chimes on harmonica. All hands are on deck for swinging on "How Little We Know (How Little It Matters)" from Carolyn Leigh and Philip Springer and is followed by "Stuck in a Dream With Me" a terrific song from pianist-singer-composer John Proulx and lyricist K. Lawrence Dunham where Jane is simply divine. Jane swings with optimism and enthusiasm on Jimmy Van Heusen and Johnny Burke's "Accidents Will Happen," introduced as a duet by opera singer Dorothy Kirsten and Bing Crosby in the 1950 film *Mr. Music*. Pizzarelli introduces "I'm Glad There is You," the Jimmy Dorsey and Paul Mertz classic, and Jane's vocal melody is complimented by Grant's brush technique as the trio back her up beautifully. This next track is simply joyous with Jane and the entire ensemble swinging hard a "Along With Me," a Harold Rome tune from the Broadway show, *Call Me Mister*. Jane is again exquisite on Cy Coleman and Carolyn Leigh's "I Walk a Little Faster," and I can picture myself watching her sing this one at her next show in New York City with Firth at the piano. And, completing this excellent program is a bonus round of the Dennis/Adair "Will You Still Be Mine," featuring a variety of humorous references to modern society. In all, Jane Scheckter delivers a program of great tunes and displays her vocal versatility, with a great band featuring Firth's arrangements. Whether you prefer the swing of jazz or the storytelling of cabaret, *Easy to Remember* is just that – easy to remember. And Jane, well, she's simply hard to forget.

