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Marlene del Rosario: Marlene LIVE with a little help from her friends (Blue Earth)

Posted by: editoron Thursday, June 05, 2008 - 08:57 AM

Review by John Stevenson

Ms del Rosario draws you in with an uncanny grasp of the jazz, blues and soul idioms - as demonstrated by the title track, with huge help from the Fab Four - and sensitively rendered piano chord choices exemplified on the Jack Gross and Walter Lawrence tune, Tenderly. One is also drawn to the triumphant manner in which she teases out the nuances of a ballad like Some Other Time. Mention should also be made of her own special song writing talents that emerge on Shoes for a Soul, Sintonado and Basic Rule.

Perhaps even more enamouring is this Filipino jazz sensation's timing: she never rushes the lyric or the melody for that matter. Like Bill Evans and Miles Davis, the silences between the notes are always as emotionally telling as the notes themselves.

A word about the sidemen: del Rosario's accomplished piano playing and vocals aside, trumpeter Greg Hopkins easily distinguishes himself for classy solos and first-rate accompaniment. The perfect foil for a singer. He reminds me of another similarly undersung New England phenom - Claudio Roditi. Drummer Brooke Sofferman is the percussive patron of the groove on this Lilypad live date with singularly appropriate brushes for the slower pieces and sizzling ride cymbals for the more fast-paced songs. Guitarist Patrick Mottag and bassist Dave Landoni, playing their respective stringed instruments, weave a comfortable rhythmic cushion around their leader's melodic efforts.

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