



Featured Artist: Anna Maria Flechero

CD Title: Journey Into The Fourteenth Hour

Year: 2004

Record Label: Independent

Style: Latin Jazz / Latin Funk

Musicians: Anna Maria Flechero (vocals), Ron Smith (electric guitar), Nelson Braxton (bass), Melecio Magadaluyo (sax, flute), Charles McNeal (saxophone), Michael Peloquin (harmonica), Rafael Ramirez, Sue "Suki" Kay, John Santos (percussion), Jeanie Tracy, Tony Lindsay, Margo LeDuc (background vocals)

Review: Every now and again, there comes an album that fulfills all the requirements of what can be considered as emotionally satisfying music, especially in the realm of vocal jazz. Nowadays, whenever an artist presents a CD that is said to be jazz, you have to wonder if it is real or something that is plain and artificial. In the case of **Anna Maria Flechero**, one need not question her latest release entitled '*Journey Into The Fourteenth Hour*.' Interestingly enough, this CD is an articulate and serious expression of vocal jazz at its finest; in addition, what is even more impressive is the freshness of her voice.

Although Anna Maria Flechero may not be a household topic of conversation in the purest sense of widespread recognition, it can be said that her '*Journey Into The Fourteenth Hour*' definitely satisfies the need for something more than generic sounding vocalese. In the traditional sense of what vocal jazz should be about, Ms. Flechero takes listeners on a magic carpet ride towards musical genius. She explores varying aspects of the human experience such as love, hardship, truth and a belief in one's ability to overcome any obstacle in life. With a voice that has semblances of **Sarah Vaughan**, coupled with some superb musicianship and orchestration, this recording fills the gap that has been left by the demise of some of jazz's best known female vocalists. The richness of Anna's voice is augmented by lush musical arrangements and some extremely dynamic melodies. The highly evolved interpretations of everyday life are creative and personal, which causes Anna's songs to touch the innermost regions of heartfelt emotions.

When listening to '*Journey Into The Fourteenth Hour*,' you have to be stimulated by this awesome display of original compositions. This 9-track CD is filled with contemporary vocal arrangements that are lyrically charged with spontaneity, improvisation and music that will make you want to listen over and over again. Make no mistake about it, this is vocal jazz at its finest, which will create a sense of amazement and awe for those seeking music that will titillate the listening palate.

Tracks: I Believe, Trouble On My Mind, Just Because, I Betcha Never Thought, Deep Within Me, Trust In Me, Quiet Time, Magical Moment (Strange Desire), Quiet Time (Instrumental)

Artist's Website: <http://www.annamariaflechero.com>

Reviewed by: Sheldon T. Nunn (February, 2005)