In the Wonder of the Night

Liner Notes

By Scott Yanow, jazz journalist/historian and author of The Jazz Singers

Ever since she recorded her debut album in 2019, *The Night We Couldn't Say Good Night*, **Angela Verbrugge has emerged as one of the top jazz singers on the scene**. She has a beautiful and inviting voice, a solid sense of swing, digs into the lyrics that she interprets, and balances her power with subtlety. Her second release, *Love For Connoisseurs*, not only featured her singing but a full set of her originals, showing that Angela is also quickly becoming a **major lyricist** whose songs deserve to be covered by other performers. It was followed by the well-received *Somewhere*.

In The Wonder of the Night is a bit different in that it is a set of intimate duets with **pianist Ray Gallon**. "Ray and I have worked together a lot since we first met in 2016 and collaborated on my first album," says Angela. "We have performed together in Japan, Europe, the UK and Canada. Ray learned directly from John Lewis, Hank Jones, and Jaki Byard, and has performed with the likes of Ron Carter, Lionel Hampton, Art Farmer, Jon Hendricks and so many others. He always seems to be working, whether on the road or any number of venues, so his experience and ear are vast."

For this project, the duo performs fresh versions of six standards and five songs composed or co-written by Angela. An uptempo "'S'posin'" opens the set with her joyful singing (listen to how she spaces out the words during her second chorus) and Gallon's swinging piano playing. Of her original bossa "Paradise Defined," she says, "True human connection is my definition of paradise." Angela's ballad "I'm A Cliché" is about not being sure how to balance emotion and logic in the early lovesick phase of a relationship. The witty "I'm 99% Sure Of You," co-written with Angela's friend **vocalist Caity Gyorgy**, is sung by a character not quite convinced that she should take the plunge and give up her freedom.

Angela displays plenty of charm on the classic "Recado Bossa". Her lyrics and Ken Takata's melody for "On A Night Such This" make the "romance in the rain" song sound like a gem from the 1930s. "Moonlight Becomes You" is paired with "In The Wonder Of The Night" which has a boppish vocalese melody by Caity Gyorgy and Angela's lyrics. The "moon" theme is continued on three of the four remaining songs of the set: Irving Berlin "Reaching For The Moon" (a waltz turned here into Latin jazz), the one exception (a delirious romp through Cole Porter's "It's De-Lovely"), Porter's rarely performed "Goodbye, Little Dream, Goodbye," and a heartwarming rendition of "Moonlight In Vermont."

In The Wonder Of The Night is a perfect way to discover the beauty of Angela Verburgge's voice, her colorful songwriting, and Ray Gallon's consistently inventive piano.

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