

AM 6175/76

Sarah Vaughan "LIVE" in JAPAN



BOB SHAD, SARAH VAUGHAN



JOHN GIANELLI—BASS



CARL SCHROEDER—PIANO



JIMMY COBB—DRUMS



SARAH VAUGHAN

SEQUENCE RECORD 1

SIDE 1 (A)

1. A FOGGY DAY 1:21
2. POOR BUTTERFLY 5:04
3. THE LAMP IS LOW 1:37
4. 'ROUND MIDNIGHT 5:37
5. WILLOW WEEP FOR ME 3:00

SIDE 2 (B)

1. THERE WILL NEVER BE ANOTHER YOU 1:34
2. MISTY 3:12
3. WAVE 7:03
4. LIKE SOMEONE IN LOVE 2:29
5. MY FUNNY VALENTINE 5:32

SEQUENCE RECORD 2

SIDE 1 (C)

1. ALL OF ME 1:56
2. (Where Do I Begin) LOVE STORY 5:05
3. OVER THE RAINBOW 7:01
4. I COULD WRITE A BOOK 2:15

SIDE 2 (D)

1. THE NEARNESS OF YOU 4:51
2. I'LL REMEMBER APRIL 3:25
3. WATCH WHAT HAPPENS 2:54
4. BYE BYE BLACKBIRD 5:53

*Please note these times do not include applause and conversation.

PRODUCED BY BOB SHAD
 'LIVE' AT SUN PLAZA HALL, TOKYO, JAPAN, SEPTEMBER 24, 1973
 ASSIST. PRODUCER: YUJI SATOH • MIXING DIRECTOR: MOMOSHIKE TADA
 IN CO-OPERATION WITH SUNNYLAND MUSIC CORP., TOKYO, JAPAN
 COVER PHOTOGRAPHY: AKIYOSHI MIYASHITA

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On September 24, 1973, Sarah Vaughan climaxed a tour of Japan with a concert at Sun Plaza Hall in Tokyo. Fortunately this is not one of these extraordinary musical events that endure only in the memories of those in attendance. The concert was recorded and the result ranks among the most durably rewarding of all of Sarah Vaughan's albums. In my own view, this two-volume triumph is matched only by a Gershwin set Sarah recorded some years ago under the aegis of Bobby Shad who also produced this album. Sarah's transmutation of Gershwin songs is no longer available according to the Schwann catalogue and therefore this Tokyo revelation of the full range of Sarah's prowess is all the more valuable.

First of all, Sarah has rarely had so flawlessly integrated a rhythm section behind her as the crisply swinging unit of pianist Carl Schroeder, drummer Jimmy Cobb, and bassist John Gianelli. Listen, for instance, to their ability to anticipate Sarah's whirlingly inventive improvisational turns. They not only listen well; they listen ahead.

Second, there is Sarah's striking sense of design. The basic framework of each song is carefully structured and personalized, and that makes her frequently stunning improvisations within that framework all the more absorbing. The fusion of freedom and resilient design is much more effective than either arrangements that are too tight or instant arrangements that are so slight they are barely perceived by the listener and present hardly any challenge to the improviser.

Third, seven of these performances last more than five minutes, thereby enabling Sarah to really stretch out. And fourth, she is very much in an expansive mood. As is evident from her cheerful bantering with the audience ("Just in case you don't know who I am, my name is Carmen McRae"), Sarah was clearly enjoying these

performances, at least as much as the audience was.

Fifth, as Sarah's previous Mainstream albums demonstrate, she is at that point in her career when the considerable technical demands she makes of herself have become as natural to her as breathing. Therefore, she goes beneath the notes to musical essences. Put another way, all her brilliant virtuosity is now organic to the way she develops each song. This is not agility for its own sake but rather the kind of fusion of skills and conception that mark the work of an artist in the full maturity of her powers.

Ever since I first heard Sarah at the beginning of her career, the textures alone of her singing have been almost palpably beguiling. I mean that she makes contact viscerally—as does, let us say, cellist Janos Starker. Hers is so resonant and rich a sound that you feel you can almost touch it. By contrast, Ella Fitzgerald, let us say, as musically as she is, does not have that quality.

Another aspect of this voice that is the most supple of instruments is its range. Listen, for instance, to the depth and fullness of her lower register and the gliding ascents to the very top of her exceptional range. I know of no other jazz singer with Sarah's startling scope.

A further element of Sarah's demanding art is her time. As is amply shown in this set, she is the equal of the most swinging of jazz instrumentalists. Sarah hits a groove from her very first note. So secure and deeply propulsive is her beat that Sarah, if the need should ever arise, can be her own rhythm section. Perhaps in future Mainstream sets, some space can be afforded to Sarah singing a *cappella*.

Rather than trying to point to the various interpretative marvels Sarah creates in each song, I would suggest that the best thing to do with this Tokyo concert is to just put it on a turntable, raise the volume so that you can hear all

of the interaction between Sarah and the rhythm section, and just enjoy what happens.

But if you do like to read liner notes to check your reactions against those of the scrivener, I would add that an additional dimension of delight in this album is Sarah's penchant, in a number of the songs, to start with the verse (some of which are seldom heard anymore at all). And listen to what she gets out of the lyrics, both verse and chorus. I remember a time when Sarah, undeniably brilliant, tended to pay less attention to words than to instrumentalized stunt flying. These years however, she has become one of the most perceptive illuminators of lyrics in all of jazz and pop music. To have all this prodigious technical capacity in addition to the quality of intelligence necessary for the kind of phrasing that enhances rather than distorts the lyrics is to be a masterful artist. And that's what Sarah is.

Still another pleasure here is Sarah's witty, crackling and quite exhilarating command of scat singing—a skill that sounds a great deal easier than it is. I would match the scat passages here with Ella's or just about anybody else's except for that antic spirit, Leo Watson. And there is also Sarah's ability to set and sustain a mood—all kinds of moods—from softly urgent declarations of love to swift spirals of pleasure in the act of letting her improvisatory abilities soar and swoop in patterns that, I expect, surprise even her.

In sum, this Tokyo adventure has resulted in a nonpareil illustration of a master singer at the peak of her expressive energies. This should be Sarah Vaughan's most successful decade because, as Helen Reddy observes, popular taste has moved "away from loud noise and back to melody and lyrics." And who can excel Sarah in vivifying a melody and luminously interpreting a lyric? Enough reading. Play the music.

—Nat Hentoff

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AM 6176

33 tours

FACE A



STEREO-G.U.

SARAH VAUGHAN

"LIVE" IN JAPAN

- | | |
|---|------|
| 1. ALL OF ME (Simons - Marks) | 1'56 |
| 2. (Where do I begin) LOVE STORY (Lai - Sigman) | 5'05 |
| 3. OVER THE RAINBOW (Arlen - Harburg) | 7'01 |
| 4. I COULD WRITE A BOOK (Rodgers - Hart) | 2'15 |

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FACE B



STEREO-G.U.

SARAH VAUGHAN

"LIVE" IN JAPAN

- | | |
|--|------|
| 1. THE NEARNESS OF YOU (Carmichael - Washington) | 4'51 |
| 2. I'll REMEMBER APRIL (Rays - DePaul - Johnson) | 3'25 |
| 3. WATCH WHAT HAPPENS (Legrand - Gimbel) | 2'54 |
| 4. BYE BYE BLACKBYRD (Henderson - Dixon) | 5'53 |

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AM 817576
MU 218 X 2

RECORD ONE

SIDE 1
A FOGGY DAY
POOR BUTTERFLY
THE LAMP IS LOW
'ROUND MIDNIGHT
WILLOW WEEP FOR ME

SIDE 2
THERE WILL NEVER BE ANOTHER YOU
MISTY
WAVE
LIKE SOMEONE IN LOVE
MY FUNNY VALENTINE



RECORD TWO

SIDE 1
ALL OF ME
LOVE STORY
OVER THE RAINBOW
I COULD WRITE A BOOK

SIDE 2
THE NEARNESS OF YOU
I'LL REMEMBER APRIL
WATCH WHAT HAPPENS
BYE BYE BLACKBIRD

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