

Liz Magnes - Reviews

Magnes uses rumbling but unostentatious bass lines to create a rolling undercurrent that gives a sinuous flow to her performance of well chosen pop standards by Berlin, Carmichael, Lane and Gershwin. It is a style that is quietly but so insistently rhythmic that when she applies it to as familiar a bossa nova as "The Girl From Ipanema", the piece acquires an unexpected head-long energy....Miss Magnes takes a jazz approach to such music of the Middle East as an Israeli Hora and a 14th Century Moroccan prayer. A Turkish prayer provides the basis for such an exuberantly driving display of boogie-woogie that one is apt to wonder if this is where the eight-to-the-bar piano style came from.

--The New York Times

An album of solo piano improvisations based on the compositions by Alexander "Sasha" Argov - the legendary Israeli composer. Liz Magnes should be admired both for her creativity, which is obvious to anyone listening to the material included on the album, and for her courage to tackle this difficult material, without being banal or trivial.

--Ha'Aretz, Israel

Liz Magnes

Piyutim

...these very personal expressions of liturgical poems / prayers are like an open window onto a musical landscape...

It seems unimaginable at first to attempt building a bridge between two musical forms so isolated from each other, as medieval Jewish liturgical music and jazz. These recordings show, that human creativity and musical talent will always go beyond the unimaginable. The beauty and elegance of this music will delight and gratify each listener.

--JAZZIS

The stars of the show happen to be among the very best entertainers we know in Israel or in New York. Liz at the piano is a sound and sight to behold... If you haven't been lucky enough yet to hear...I urge you not to miss this chance.

--From a letter by American Ambassador Samuel Lewis to His Excellency David Goss, Ambassador of Australia

Liz Magnes created piano settings that are truly amazing. She combines the strength of a classical pianist with the head and heart of a great jazz musician.

--The Cincinnati Post

No ordinary solo performer, Liz has developed a unique style of orchestration in which she is her own best accompanist. Through the use of bells, beads and a miniature bow, Liz elicits music from the piano imitating the sounds of sitar, guitar, bass and harp. Liz uses the total piano - strumming and plucking the interior, drumming and tapping the frame - creating a totally new and different solo piano concert.

--Ha'Aretz, Israel

Liz Magnes is one of the few professional artists performing today who has focused her talents on the very special art of accompanying silent films. Liz's music is original and imaginative, both complementing and enhancing each film projection. Each score is unique, perfectly suited and timed to the moods and styles of the film.

--Lia Van Leer of the Jerusalem Film Festival

She was intense, cerebral, and richly inventive in long improvisational expositions, coming up again and again with complex colors and sweet harmonies... Magnes was magnificent.

--The Jerusalem Post

Liz Magnes does something no other Israeli jazz pianist does - she plays Israeli music beautifully. Her evening at the Tel Aviv Museum was not an evening dedicated to jazz virtuosity, although this virtuosity was present. Rather, this was a musical event, showing each song's originality and beauty; serious music, executed exquisitely.

--Ha'Aretz, Israel

The highlight of the evening was Liz Magnes, who played solo jazz piano. Playing solo piano is probably one of the most difficult aspects of jazz - piano with absolutely no accompaniment - and she tackles it victoriously. Her interpretations of Israeli songs of different periods were handled with great inspiration. She inscribes her own style with most exquisite tones.

--Ha'ir, Tel Aviv, Israel

Karen Alkalay-Gut / Liz Magnes

One can not prepare for this immense talent for expression through poetry and music. The piano playing in these professionally recorded poems, is unbelievable, and beyond description

--Pedro Sena (The Alsop Review)

"Moroccan Moods of Gershwin" is one of the more interesting Gershwin tributes that was recorded in the 1990s. This 1995 recording finds pianist Liz Magnes bringing North African and Middle Eastern elements to Gershwin's work. Magnes brings Arabic, Jewish and Turkish influences to her acoustic jazz foundation - as well as a strong appreciation of European classical music. The results are consistently intriguing; performing unaccompanied solo piano, Magnes manages to make overdone war horses like "Embraceable You" (which she performs twice) "Someone to Watch Over Me" and "Our Love is Here to Stay" sound fresh. And considering that these standards have, over the years, been recorded by literally hundreds of jazz artists, that's saying a lot. Much to her credit, the introspective Magnes also embraces two Gershwin pieces that are usually overlooked, "Nashville Nightingale" and "Delicious" aren't nearly as well known as the other songs on this fine post-bop CD. In fact, it's safe to say that the vast majority of young jazzmen coming out of the "hard bop academies" have never even heard of "Nashville Nightingale". "Moroccan Moods of Gershwin" is enthusiastically

recommended to anyone who is seeking a Gershwin tribute that is fresh-sounding and adventurous."

--Alex Henderson