

Sylvia Syms

...THEN

ALONG

CAME

BILL

A TRIBUTE TO
BILL EVANS

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BILL EVANS

- 1 LIKE SOMEONE IN LOVE 3.23
- 2 MY ROMANCE 4.34
- 3 A SLEEPIN' BEE 5.01
- 4 I BELIEVE IN YOU 5.13
- 5 POLKA DOTS AND MOONBEAMS 5.40
- 6 HI LILI HI LO 5.18
- 7 HOW ABOUT YOU 3.34
- 8 THE TOUCH OF YOUR LIPS 3.56
- 9 MY FOOLISH HEART 5.08
- 10 BUT BEAUTIFUL 4.48
- 11 NOBODY ELSE BUT ME 5.16
- 12 AFTER YOU, WHO 3.25
- 13 LUCKY TO BE ME 3.15
- 14 WALTZ FOR DEBBY 2.04

MANUFACTURED AND MARKETED BY
DRG RECORDS INCORPORATED
130 WEST 57TH STREET
NEW YORK NEW YORK 10019



MADE IN CANADA

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| 1 LIKE SOMEONE IN LOVE 3.23
Van Heusen-Burke | 8 THE TOUCH OF YOUR LIPS 3.56
Noble |
| 2 MY ROMANCE 4.34
Rodgers-Hart | 9 MY FOOLISH HEART 5.08
Young-Washington |
| 3 A SLEEPIN' BEE 5.01
Arlen-Capote | 10 BUT BEAUTIFUL 4.48
Van Heusen-Burke |
| 4 I BELIEVE IN YOU 5.13
Loesser | 11 NOBODY ELSE BUT ME 5.16
Kern-Hammerstein 2nd |
| 5 POLKA DOTS AND MOONBEAMS 5.40
Van Heusen-Burke | 12 AFTER YOU, WHO 3.25
Porter |
| 6 HI LILI HI LO 5.18
Kaper-Deutsch | 13 LUCKY TO BE ME 3.15
Bernstein-Comden-Green |
| 7 HOW ABOUT YOU 3.34
Lane-Freed | 14 WALTZ FOR DEBBY 2.04
Evans-Lees |

MUSICIANS:

Mike Renzi *acoustic piano*, **Rhodes** *electric piano* **Eddie Gomez** *acoustic bass* **Joe La Barbera** *drums* (I BELIEVE IN YOU, HI LILI HI LO, MY ROMANCE, LIKE SOMEONE IN LOVE, NOBODY ELSE BUT ME, THE TOUCH OF YOUR LIPS), **Grady Tate** *drums* (POLKA DOTS AND MOONBEAMS, MY FOOLISH HEART, SLEEPING BEE, AFTER YOU) **Art Farmer** *flugelhorn* **Kenny Burrell** *acoustic and electric guitar* **Toots Thielemans** *harmonica*

Art Farmer appears courtesy of Contemporary Records.

Arranged by **Mike Renzi**

A tribute to the late pianist Bill Evans by Sylvia Syms, one of the world's most gifted and original interpreters of lyrics, is not as surprising as it might seem. On second thought, it's a natural. The significance of their contributions to American music has always been strong, positive, unique and influential. As singers go, there was Bessie, Billie, and Ella, who influenced Mildred Bailey and Lee Wiley, whose musical progeny included Carmen, Sarah, Peggy and the Kenton vocalists, June Christy, Anita O'Day and Chris Connor. Then along came Sylvia, who enjoyed them all (and learned what to keep and how to prune away the clutter). But nobody influenced her craft, by her own admission, as much as piano players.

At the keyboard, there was Fats Waller, Errol Garner, Teddy Wilson, Basie and Tatum, exciting jazz pariahs who carved a niche and pumped energy into their own brand of rhythm and swing. Then along came Bill. He gave the Steinway a whole new sound. He breathed fresh air into familiar songs, with a keen musical intelligence and an exquisite inner ear for harmonics that drew his listeners into whatever cradle of chords he was playing. Jimmy Rowles called him "the Chopin of jazz". Sylvia knows, nods, understands, and agrees.

"I was first introduced to his music by Miles Davis," she says. "I had never heard anyone quite like him. Bill gave songs new meaning. He played words. Through the years, as we became friends, we sang together at parties and I realized more and more how much we thought alike musically. He admittedly lifted my arrangement of Jerome Kern's *Nobody Else But Me* and made it his own instrumental interpolation. The way I sing it on this album is the way he played it. The phrasing, the colors, the tonal changes—listen to his albums and you'll hear the introduction of a pure concept that was totally new to the keyboard. He played lyrics. He knew and understood the words."

From a singer whose life and craft are devoted to the nurturing of words, that is high praise indeed. Sylvia is that rarest of songbirds—a purist who looks at life and love from many different angles, always endeavoring to reach the inner emotions both musically and humanly. Like Bill Evans, she has high standards, impeccable taste, and an uncrushable sense of pride coupled with a wicked sense of humor that melds into a lush, wise and colorful blend of singing, as simple as a sliding door. On songs of love or songs of woe, she has no gray moments. Her approach is positive and straight ahead. Her voice has a liquid flow. And you can always listen and learn something.

On *Polka Dots and Moonbeams*, her voice assumes an innocence that places her listener smack in the middle of a country dance being held in a garden. She has never been to Haiti, but her investigation of Truman Capote's witchcraft lyrics to Harold Arlen's wistful Caribbean trade winds on *A Sleepin' Bee* creates tropical magic. Changing one word in Cole Porter's *After You* from "vain" to "sane" gives that delicate love song an entirely different slant without compromising the master's original intention. *My Foolish Heart* and *My Romance* become talismans an older and more experienced woman can live by without too much damage to the Maybelline. And I have heard Bill Evans' original composition *Waltz For Debby* tackled often by over-baked jazz singers who didn't have a clue what they were singing. Sylvia turns this anthem to childhood into a one-chorus personal statement, like a duenna peering into a nursery and wondering how and why and when it all will change.

This is a wonderful collection that showcases a legendary singer at the top of her form, doing Bill Evans songs without subordinating her own individual style to his, but enriching, honing and polishing until the songs come out as a fascinating blend of both. The result is not just a tribute to Bill Evans but, equally, a tribute to the resilience, courage, patience, craftsmanship and indelible artistry with which Sylvia Syms can use her own dynamic musical personality to move music into another dimension.

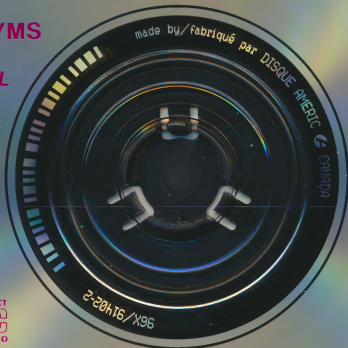
But don't take my word for this. Listen, and fall in love yourself.

— REX REED

CABARET DRG

SYLVIA SYMS

...THEN ALONG CAME BILL



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COMPACT
disc
DIGITAL AUDIO

- 1 LIKE SOMEONE IN LOVE 2 MY ROMANCE 3 SLEEPING BEE
4 I BELIEVE IN YOU 5 POLKADOTS AND MOONBEAMS 6 HI
LILI HI LO 7 HOW ABOUT YOU 8 THE TOUCH OF YOUR LIPS
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