

The Puppini Sisters - The Rise & Fall Of Ruby Woo (2007)

Written by bluesever

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1. "Spooky" 2:43 2. "Walk Like an Egyptian" 2:42 3. "Old Cape Cod" 3:32 4. "Soho Nights" 4:29 5. "I Can't Believe I'm Not A Millionaire" 4:31 6. "It Don't Mean a Thing (If It Ain't Got That Swing)" 4:50 7. "Could It Be Magic" 3:33 8. "Jilted" 5:37 9. "Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree" 2:51 10. "Crazy in Love" 3:38 11. "It's Not Over (Death or The Toy Piano)" 3:15 12. "And She Sang" 4:16 13. "We Have All the Time in the World" Kate Mullins - Melodica, Piano, Shouts, Toy Piano, Triangle, Vocals Stephanie O'Brien - Soloist, Triangle, Violin, Vocals Marcella Puppini - Accordion, Duet, Piano, Shouts, String Arrangements, Vocals Kris Wilkinson - Viola Jeff Williams - Trombone David Angell - Violin Monisa Angell - Viola John Catchings - Cello David Davidson - String Arrangements, Violin

On record you can't see the many costume changes into stunning '30s vintage dresses, or be impressed by the trio's mugging or musical chops -- Marcella Puppini plays piano and accordion and Stephanie O'Brien plays credible jazz fiddle. This leaves the vocalizing, and while the trio isn't half bad, its members are not spectacular or particularly adventurous singers. On their second album they follow the template of their first. There are a couple of standards including "It Don't Mean a Thing If It Ain't Got That Swing," and contemporary numbers -- "Spooky," "Walk Like an Egyptian" -- delivered in '40s vocal trio-style arrangements. Fine as far as it goes, but the joke is wearing thin. The Puppini Sisters' salvation is clearly in their original material. All three Sisters write solid tunes; the sooner they can come up with a full album's worth of original tunes, the better their career prospects will be. Puppini's "I Can't Believe I'm Not a Millionaire" is a blues full of arch humor, and her "Jilted" sounds like it would have been a natural for Peggy Lee, a sultry, sexy tune with a strong hook and a great lyric. O'Brien contributes "Soho Nights" a jump tune with a strong vocal arrangement, a perfect evocation of the era they obviously love. Kate Mullins may be the strongest writer of the three. Her "It's Not Over (Death or the Toy Piano)" is another song in the big-band mode, but its complex melody and inventive lyric make it one of the album's strongest tracks. ---Rovi

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