

Shannon Butcher - Words We Both Could Say (2008)

Written by bluesever

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1. *Mad World* 2. *Wichita Lineman* 3. *Here, There & Everywhere* 4. *It Might As Well Be Spring* 5. *Call Me* 6. *Just A Girl* 7. *Don't Talk (Put Your Head On My Shoulder)* 8. *Slow Hot Wind* 9. *Strange & Beautiful* 10. *Walking After Midnight* Bass - Ross MacIntyre Drums - Mark McLean Guitar - Rob Pilch Percussion - Daniel Stone Piano, Electric Piano [Rhodes] - Michael Shand Saxophone - Kelly Jefferson Trumpet - William Sperandei Vocals - Shannon Butcher

Shannon Butcher is quickly becoming a favourite with the Canadian media for her dynamic voice and fresh jazz style. Her fans adore her and so do her musicians who are among the finest players in Canadian jazz today. "Jazz isn't about one label or style; it's not about one person or time," says Butcher. "It's about the freedom to bring together all of your experiences; sing in the moment and honestly connect with your audience."

Little Hearts is the companion album to her debut release, *Words We Both Could Say*, which itself landed in iTunes' top ten for Best Vocal Jazz Album and Best New Jazz Artist in 2008. Little Hearts' re-arrangements of recognizable Canadian tracks like Glass Tiger's *Don't Forget Me When I'm Gone* and Bryan Adams' *Run To You* stand out as distinctively original Jazz versions of these Pop classics. Adams' tune also serves as a nod to Shannon's love of running.

The peppy cover of Lily Allen's *Smile* retains the sassy vengeance Allen intended and adds an extra layer of New Orleans' styled exuberance. *Walk on By*, originally written for Dionne Warwick, is re-imagined as a ballad with a powerfully evocative counter melody. Celebrated 1920's songwriter Irving Berlin's *What'll I Do?* also gets spotlighted.

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The new disc also includes six original Shannon Butcher compositions. Noted Canadian jazz vocalist and pianist Michael Kaeshammer collaborates with Shannon on the duet The Last Word which was inspired by the tongue-in-cheek romantic comedies of the early 60s. The album opener Joy In My Heart is a jazz-meets-soul arrangement inspired by the music of Stevie Wonder. Hush feels like a late-night jazz standard and features the vibraphone of Michael Davidson. (I Ain't in the Mood for) No DJ was first performed at the Oscar Peterson tribute concert in Mississauga's Living Arts Centre and references the late pianist directly in the lyrics. Simple Love is Shannon's ode to the elegance of the music of Burt Bacharach and the emotional simplicity that that we all crave. The country tune Better Kisser, is a quirky story referencing an event on her Grandparents' wedding day.

Little Hearts features a stand-out cast of Canadian musicians including: Michael Shand (keys), Ross MacIntyre (bass), Mark McLean (drums), Michael Kaeshammer (piano and vocals), Rob Piltch (guitar), Daniel Stone (percussion), Michael Davidson (vibraphone), William Sperandei (trumpet & flugel), William Carn (trombone), Kelly Jefferson (sax), Marc Rogers (bass) and Karen Kosowski (glockenspiel & melodica).

Shannon Butcher is a graduate of the University of Toronto's Classical Performance program. She earned her Jazz chops early as one third of the swinging vocal trio Swing Rosie, garnering quick acclaim for their tight harmonies and high-energy performances. Throughout 2009, Shannon travelled internationally to Chicago, San Francisco and London, England, performing as an ambassador for the city of Toronto on behalf of Tourism Toronto. --- sonicbids.com

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