Sophie Milman – In The Moonlight (2011)

01. Do It Again 3:48 02. Oh, Look At Me Now 3:26 03. Moonlight 5:29 04. Speak Low 4:26 05. Till There Was You 4:01 play 06. Watch What Happens 4:41 07. Prelude To A Kiss 4:35 08. Ces Petits Riens 5:08 09. So Sorry 4:07 10. Detour Ahead 4:40 11. Let Me Love You 3:32 play 12. Day Dream 4:59 13. No More Blues 4:20

Few young vocalists have entered the jazz scene in this new century with the kind of acclaim received by the supremely talented Sophie Milman. Still in her 20s, she has now delivered her fourth album and first masterpiece, In The Moonlight.

Produced by Grammy-winner Matt Pierson (Jane Monheit, Michael Franks, Joshua Redman, Kirk Whalum), this warm, witty, and altogether wonderful collection marks the first time Sophie has recorded in New York with an all-star supporting cast of jazz veterans and hot new stars: names like Randy Brecker, Chris Potter, Gerald Clayton, Julian Lage, Lewis Nash, and Kevin Hays.

It s also the first Sophie Milman collection that features arrangements for strings and larger ensembles. Once again, the list of collaborators is first class: Alan Broadbent, Rob Mounsey, and Gil Goldstein---as well as the aforementioned Gerald Clayton and Kevin Hays--- have all contributed charts.

All of this talent unites to realize an ambitious repertoire that ranges widely from standards (Speak Low, Watch What Happens) to show tunes (Till There Was You), and from Ellington/Strayhorn (Prelude To A Kiss and Day Dream) to Feist (So Sorry)---with Gershwin,

Gainsbourg, and Jobim added in for more than good measure.

You may have guessed that it takes a remarkable artist to pull this extraordinary music together. With a rich, sensuous voice that puts a thoroughly modern spin on the legacy of immortals like June Christy and Carmen MacRae, Sophie Milman makes her mark not just as a singer of songs, but as a complete musician whose taste and sophistication sets her alongside today s very greatest singers. ---Editorial Reviews

Widely regarded as one of Canada's best jazz singers, Russian-born, Toronto-based vocalist Sophie Milman changes tact slightly for her fourth studio album, In the Moonlight. The twinkling piano chords, shuffling, brushed stroke rhythms, and gentle brass instrumentation which defined her previous output are still very much in evidence, but having traveled to New York to record with producer Matt Pierson (Jane Monheit, Michael Franks), the Juno Award winner has capitalized on the opportunity to expand her sound by inviting a string ensemble on board for the first time in her career. However, avoiding the temptation to smother the timeless, smoky, jazz bar arrangements in layers of bombastic layers of strings, the pair only use their newly recruited musicians sparingly and when needed, with only the Duke Ellington standards "Prelude to a Kiss" and "Day Dream," and the Umbrellas of Cherbourg number "Watch What Happens" offering anything more than the occasional orchestral flourish.

It's an approach which entirely befits Milman's intimate and understated cabaret tones, whose seductive French-language delivery of Serge Gainsbourg's "Ces Petits Riens" and expressive, timeless performance of the Gershwin classic "Do It Again," belie her twenty-something years. The constant low-key, candlelight vibes inevitably begin to wear a little thin, but luckily, Milman occasionally shakes things up a little bit, whether it's the sensuous bossa nova reworking of the Billie Holiday favorite "Speak Low," the toe-tapping swing jazz rendition of Jon Hendricks' "No More Blues" or, in a rare concession to the modern music scene, the yearning and heartfelt torch song treatment of Feist's folk-pop album track "So Sorry." Indeed, it's the latter's convincing transition which makes you wish that Milman would tackle more contemporary material more often. Nevertheless, In the Moonlight is still a beautifully arranged selection of songs which, while nothing particularly revolutionary, unarguably provides one of the classiest Sunday morning soundtracks of the year. ---Jon O'Brien, Rovi

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