

## Cristina Morrison - I Love (2012)

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01. *Summer In New York* (5:39) 02. *Fifteen Day Affair* (6:20) 03. *I Love* (3:42) 04. *Stand Still* (4:44) 05. *What A Difference A Day Makes* (3:52) 06. *Red Mafia & Jass* (4:58) 07. *East Of The Sun* (5:16) 08. *Perfect Little Storms* (6:03) 09. *Fine & Mellow* (6:02) Cristina Morrison – vocals Steve Einerson – piano Willard Dyson – drums Marcus McLaurine - acoustic bass Alex Alvear - electric bass Vinny Valentino – guitar Gregoire Mare – harmonica Sammy Torres – percussion Alex Harding - baritone saxophone Christian Hidrobo - alto saxophone Navijilo Cevallos – requinto

Vocalist Cristina Morrison is also quite the lyricist as she demonstrates in spades on *I Love*. Original compositions like "Summer in New York" are beautifully carnal while the title track is a celebration of art and free spirits. Swing is the vitamin that nourishes this music, catalyzing a fine extended band to pitch-perfect performance. This is bright and contemporary jazz singing in the best sense of the word. Morrison's tone is sure and her mid-range uniform. She readily puts muscle behind the lyrics warranting it, and while never exactly dropping to a purr, still imbues the more sensual pieces with enough humidity to drench the area. The best example of this is the closing piece, Billie Holiday's staggering "Fine and Mellow."

Morrison and her band's arrangement of "Fine and Mellow" takes full advantage of an opening double bass and vocal chorus that immediately establishes the organic basis for the song. Bassist Marcus McLaurine begins with intention rather than swing, playing an intentional stilted blues line for the first two vocal choruses before pulling out the stops with the rest of the band, and throwing out some nose-bleed swing. Morrison coos and laments, frets and warns. She captures the inconsistent danger in love and lust. McLaurine's bass solo is in no way abstract: it is not a wink but a grab of the lapels. Guitarist Vinny Valentino adds some elegant low-down to the song, his solo one of decadent noblesse rather than roadhouse hubris and machismo. Nicely done, Cristina Morrison. ---C. Michael Bailey, [allaboutjazz.com](http://allaboutjazz.com)

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