

## Beth Hart - Better Than Home (2015)

Written by bluesever

Tuesday, 22 September 2015 16:08 -

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01. *Might As Well Smile* 02. *Tell 'Em To Hold On* 03. *Tell Her You Belong To Me* 04. *Trouble* 05. *Better Than Home* 06. *St. Teresa* 07. *We're Still Living In The City* 08. *The Mood That I'm In* 09. *Mechanical Heart* 10. *As Long As I Have A Song* 11. *Mama This One's for You* 12. *St. Teresa (acoustic)* 13. *As Long as I Have a Song (acoustic)* Beth Hart - Piano, Vocals, Vocals (Background) Larry Campbell - Guitar (Acoustic), Guitar (Electric), Mandolin, Pedal Steel Angela Clemmons - Vocals (Background) Mike Davis - Trombone Charley Drayton - Drums, Percussion Aaron Heick - Sax (Alto), Sax (Baritone) Zev Katz - Bass (Electric), Bass (Upright) Jeff Kievit - Trumpet Peter Lale - Viola Martin Loveday - Cello Rob Mathes - Guitar (Acoustic), Guitar (Electric), Keyboards, Piano, String Conductor Perry Montague-Mason - Violin Nikki Richards - Vocals (Background) Andy Snitzer - Sax (Tenor) Vaneese Thomas - Vocals (Background) James "D-Train" Williams - Vocals (Background)

Separating from producer Kevin Shirley for the first time in three records, Beth Hart chose to work with Rob Mathes and Michael Stevens for 2015's *Better Than Home*. A change in producers helped Hart change direction, letting her depart from the down-and-dirty blues belting she specialized in throughout her time with Shirley, reconnecting slightly to her singer/songwriter beginning while emphasizing deep soul roots. Despite opening with the tight Memphis groove of "Might as Well Smile," most of the album is grandly introspective -- majestic brooding ballads with a clear debt to early Elton John. This cinematic landscape provides a nice contrast to Hart's raw, nervy vocals, accentuating the aching in her delivery. This emotional immediacy compensates for the sometimes elliptical songs, songs that take a little while to settle, but the risks Hart's taken on *Better Than Home* pay off: this is a distinctive, ambitious record that takes advantage of her natural talents in surprising ways. --- Stephen Thomas Erlewine, Rovi

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What's Better than Home? Nothing, as L.A. chanteuse Beth Hart proves on her relaxing twelfth album. Blues purists and idealists be warned: Only two songs, "Might As Well Smile" and "Trouble", might be up to the genre's exacting standards. The rest are low-key, soul-influenced songs, with all eleven tracks being originals. This CD is nothing like recent claims to fame on her collaborations with blues rocker Joe Bonamassa. Here, she's squarely found a niche in mellow ballads. Sadly, in the liner notes of the promotional copy of Better than Home, there is zero mention of Hart's studio musicians on the album.

Beth possesses a robust alto voice that's one part Sheryl Crow, one part Natalie Merchant of 10,000 Maniacs, and one part Tracy Chapman (even though Hart herself is Caucasian). She frequently employs a Chapman-style vibrato, rougher than most, with a breathy touch. No one can accuse her of sounding like every other female pop or blues artist out there, and that's fantastic. In Beth's career so far, she has had hit after hit on chart after chart. She has had iconic guitar legends performing with her, top music producers and musicians eager to work with her, ever-growing audiences flocking to her shows in the US and Europe as well as newer ventures into Australia, New Zealand, Russia, Armenia, and several other countries. ---  
bluesblastmagazine.com

Kariera Beth Hart to trochę dziwny przypadek. Mam wrażenie, że wielu osobom wciąż kojarzy się w pierwszej kolejności z dwoma świetnymi płytami coverowymi nagrany z Bonamassą, a przecież Beth jest na scenie już od niemal ćwierć wieku i właśnie nagrała swoją siódmą solową płytę. I to jaką! Trzy kwadranse, które wypełniają krążek Better Than Home, to zupełnie inna muzyczna bajka, niż przepelnione rockandrollowym czadem wspomniane albumy Don't Explain i See Saw, które przyniosły jej sporą popularność. Na nowym solowym krążku nawiązania muzyczne prowadzą nas także do epoki późnych lat 60., ale tym razem zamiast pełnych energii klimatów rockandrollowych dostajemy bardziej stonowane, oparte głównie na brzmieniu fortepianu kompozycje osadzone w rejonach R&B i soulu oraz delikatnego bluesa.

Niby chciałyby się czasem usłyszeć na tym albumie coś bardziej żywiołowego, numer, w którym Beth pokazałyby, że rockandrollowa z niej babka. Ale z drugiej strony – to przecież i tak dostajemy co jakiś czas na krążkach nagrywanych w duecie z Bonamassą. Better Than Home to płyta nieco nostalgiczna, bardzo nastrojowa i spokojna. Ale na pewno nie nudna! Beth jest niezwykle prawdziwa w tym, co robi. Chyba przede wszystkim za to cenią ją fani. Daje całą siebie czy to na koncertach, czy na płytach. Zero sztuczności, zero udawania, zero kalkulacji. To czuć – takich płyt zawsze słucha się niezwykle przyjemnie. Jestem przekonany, że to wydawnictwo spodoba się w naszym kraju. Tu wokalistki o charakterystycznym, chropowatym

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głosie, w których muzyce dominuje fortepian, zawsze miały wzięcie. A Beth z roku na rok jakby u nas popularniejsza. Trudno się dziwić – ma babka talent! ---Bizon,  
muzycznyzbawicielswiata.blogspot.com

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