

Marilyn Monroe – Never Before and Never Again (1993)

Written by bluesever

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01. Do it again 02. Kiss 03. You'd be surprised 04. A fine romance [play](#) 05. She acts like a woman should 06. Heat wave 07. Diamonds are a girl's best friend 08. A little girl from Little Rock 09. When love goes wrong, nothing goes right 10. Bye, Bye, Baby 11. I'm gonna file my claim 12. River of no return 13. Lazy 14. Running wild 15. I wanna be loved by you 16. I'm through with love 17. My heart belongs to daddy

[play](#)

18. Happy birthday to John F. Kennedy

Few people really think of Marilyn Monroe as a singer, yet she had a unique, engaging voice that was showcased in a number of her films. She was by no means a trained singer, and the quality of her voice varied at times, seemingly dependent upon how comfortable she felt, but all of her magic and spirit was encapsulated in her wholly unique voice. I have a number of Marilyn CDs, but this one, *Never Before and Never Again*, is by far my favorite. With over seventy minutes of music, this CD covers the spectrum of her entire career, from her incredibly sultry rendition of *Kiss* from the film *Niagara* (there is no other song, according to her character in the film) to her delicious recording of Cole Porter's *My Heart Belongs To Daddy* from *Let's Make Love* (although this is a studio recording and not the extended version of the song) to her unforgettable May 1962 performance of *Happy Birthday for John F. Kennedy* in Madison Square Garden. Best of all, this album includes basically the whole soundtrack from *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*: *Little Girl From Little Rock* (with Jane Russell); *Bye Bye Baby*; *When Love Goes Wrong*; *Nothing Goes Right* (with Jane Russell), and of course the immortal classic *Diamonds Are a Girl's Best Friend*.

Less familiar Marilyn movies also supply some wonderful tracks. *River of No Return* was not a movie Marilyn particularly wanted to make, but her rendition of the theme song is touchingly mournful, and the song *I'm Gonna File My Claim* stands among my favorites, representing Marilyn's voice at its most vibrant. Anyone who enjoyed Marilyn's performances of the songs

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Heat Wave, Lazy, and You'd Be Surprised from There's No Business Like Show Business will welcome their inclusion here. Of course, Some Like It Hot is not forgotten; not only do you get the Marilyn staple I Wanna Be Loved By You and the poignant I'm Through With Love, you also get the short and sometimes forgotten energetic ditty Running Wild. Gershwin's Do It Again is classic Marilyn, a song combining sultriness and innocence in the way only Marilyn could. Two studio recordings from 1954 are particularly impressive, as well; Do It Again and She Acts Like a Woman Should, both featuring brass band accompaniment, make the album complete. Marilyn Monroe Never Before and Never Again, originally released in 1978, made available several of these tracks for the very first time, and it still stands among the best of a growing number of Marilyn collections. --- Daniel Jolley, amazon.com

Monroe was a great singer and she had some fine material to work with along the way. Sweet, sexy and quite funny too, she was definitely one of a kind.

The main interest here centers around side 1, which contains the five wonderful songs from the classic comedy/musical Gentlemen Prefer Blondes, where she sings three tunes with the great Jane Russell, a true pin-up if I ever saw one. The ladies in question also get to sing one solo each and of course Monroe's version here of "Diamonds Are a Girl's Best Friend" is both a classic and the definitive interpretation of this wonderful Jule Styne-tune with razor-sharp lyrics by Leo Robin. Russell by the way does a great job on Hoagy Carmichael's and Harold Adamson's raunchy "Ain't There Anyone Here For Love". And all three duets are real firestarters, too. Plus let's not forget how good the film is - a rare treat from the ever so sexually oppressed 1950's.

The B-side of the album is a more mixed bag with songs from different sources, but Monroe's interpretation of Irving Berlin's "Heat Wave" is a winner and the innuendo of "Do It Again!" will make most red-blooded males break out in a sweat.

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