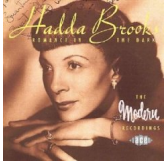


Hadda Brooks - Romance in the Dark (2004)

Written by bluesever

Monday, 20 February 2012 19:46 - Last Updated Friday, 14 November 2014 21:12

Hadda Brooks - Romance in the Dark (2004)



01 - *Variety Bounce (Aka Variety Boogie)* 02 - *That's My Desire* 03 - *Romance In The Dark*
[play](#)

04 - *Bully Wully Boogie* 05 - *Out Of The Blue* 06 - *Honey,honey, Honey* 07 - *Keep Your Hand On Your Heart* 08 - *Bewildered* 09 - *Jukebox Boogie* 10 - *Trust In Me* 11 - *Do'nt Take Your Love From Me* 12 - *Schubert's Serenade In Boogie* 13 - *Tough On My Heart* 14 - *When A Woman Cries* 15 - *Say It With A Kiss*

[play](#)

16 - *I've Got My Love To Keep Me Warm* 17 - *I Feel So Good* 18 - *It All Depends On You* 19 - *Don't Call It Love* 20 - *Honky Tonk Boogie* 21 - *Don't You Think I Ought To Know* 22 - *You Wo'nt Let Me Go* 23 - *Tootsie Timesie*

This special lady, known alternately as Empress Of The Torch Blues and Queen Of The Boogie, was one of America's best-kept secrets for, although she was a prolific recording artist as both a singer and pianist, just three of her songs made an impact on the charts - in 1947/48 on what then passed for the R&B charts for the small Modern label. She would also record for Columbia's "race" label Okeh, but without any chart success for her singles releases.

Heading the Hadda Brooks Trio [with Basie Day on bass and Al Wichard on drums] her first hit was *That's My Desire* which went to # 4 in June 1947, a tune covered by Frankie Laine for HIS first hit on the much larger Mercury label [# 4 pop]. The flipside [not included here] was *Humoresque Boogie*.

A year later, after singing *Out Of The Blue* in the 1947 George Brent movie of the same name, a recorded version went to # 9 b/w *Bully Wully Boogie*. Both are included here. Her last charter then came a month or so later in October 1948 when *What Have I Done?* topped out at # 3 for

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her best hit. But while the flipside, Tootsie Timesie is included here, the A-side is not! Nor does it seem to be included in any of the other Hadda Brooks compilations offered, which indicates that, perhaps, the master has been lost (a good bet since, if Ace didn't include it then it likely was unattainable). If that's the case it's a tragedy for music historians.

Even though no further hits ensued, she would continue recording, including acclaimed LPs, almost right up to the time of her death on November 21, 2002 at age 86. She also appeared in several more films, usually in a singing role, among them the 1950 Bogart movie In A Lonely Place, and the 1952 Kirk Douglas/ Lana Turner award-winning The Bad And The Beautiful.

In 1957 she became the first black woman to host her own weekly television show in L.A., The Hadda Brooks Show, which featured That's My Desire as her theme song. Towards the end of her life she appeared in the 1995 Jack Nicholson film The Crossing Guard, directed by Sean Penn, a situation brought about by the fact she was a long-time favourite of both star and director. Another who adored her is Johnny Depp, who had a special 80th birthday party for her at his L.A. club The Viper Room in October 1996. Three years later she made her final film appearance in The Thirteenth Floor.

An amazingly talented woman whose early music [and her later material] deserved a better fate in terms of singles sales and chart recognition, a situation all too common back then for black recording artists unable to hook up with a major distributor.

Thanks to Ace of London we at least get to hear 23 of her best, both the torch and boogie varieties, in this beautiful package which includes comprehensive liner notes as only Ace can do them. And the sound quality is impeccable. Highly recommended. And while you're listening take the time to drop a note to the Blues Hall Of Fame and tell them to remove their blinders and pull out their ear plugs. This lady should have been among the FIRST inductees, never mind still on the outside looking in. --- AvidOldiesCollector (Ottawa, Ontario, Canada)

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