

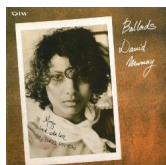
## David Murray - Ballads (1990)

Written by bluesever

Saturday, 16 December 2017 15:14 -

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## David Murray - Ballads (1990)



1 *Valley Talk* 7:11 2 *Love In Resort* 4:42 3 *Ballad For The Black Man* 10:59 4 *Paradise Five* 8:16 5 *Lady In Black* 7:57 6 *Sarah's Lament* 7:12 Bass – Fred Hopkins Drums – Ralph Peterson Jr. Piano – Dave Burrell Tenor Saxophone – David Murray

Ballads is one of David Murray's finest records. Like the three other excellent DIW releases that came from the same productive New York session of January 1988 (*Spirituals*, *Deep River*, and *Lovers*), it contains a mix of originals by Murray, pianist Dave Burrell, and drummer Ralph Peterson Jr., and it also includes fine bass work by Fred Hopkins. The rapport these players have on this record is stunning. They effortlessly move through a program of cool yet smart after-hours explorations that, in spite of the multi-layered arrangements, come out sounding almost artless. Of the six originals, two are penned by Murray: the touching, melancholic waltz "Love in Resort" and the graceful, pathos-driven piece "Ballad for the Black Man." Murray displays his usual inventiveness of phrasing and tone on these and the rest of the album's numbers but thankfully suppresses his penchant for gratuitous outbursts, keeping his solos flowing. This sort of studied, yet loose playing is heard from all the quartet members, including Peterson, who, like Murray, also has the tendency to eat up the scenery. Peterson also contributes the sophisticated "Lady in Black," which elicits some of Murray's most creative playing of the date. The fine, mostly straightforward originals by Murray and Peterson are complimented by Burrell's rhythmically sophisticated pieces like the tango-calypso hybrid "Valley Talk" and multi-tempo boss nova "Paradise Five." The set ends with Murray joining Burrell on the pianist's bravura duet "Sarah's Lament." Ballads is an excellent set on all levels and even the sound is superb. One of the best albums of the '80s. ---Stephen Cook, AllMusic Review

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