

Karrin Allyson - Daydream (1997)

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1 *Daydream* 4:36 2 *Like Someone In Love* 5:51 3 *My Foolish Heart* 7:47 4 *So Danço Samba* 5:26 5 *Corcovado (Quiet Nights)* 6:57 6 *Show Me* 3:40 7 *Monk Medley (Straight No Chaser / Blue Monk / I Mean You)* 6:23 8 *Everything Must Change* 6:45 9 *Donna Lee / (Back Home Again In) Indiana* 4:44 10 *I Ain't Got Nothin' But The Blues* 6:59 11 *You Can't Rush Spring* 4:14
Acoustic Guitar – Danny Embrey (tracks: 4, 5), Rod Fleeman (tracks: 3, 8, 10, 11) Alto Saxophone – Kim Park (tracks: 2, 9) Bass – Bob Bowman (tracks: 1 to 11) Drums – Todd Strait (tracks: 1, 3 to 4, 6 to 11) Electric Guitar – Danny Embrey (tracks: 2, 6, 9) Flugelhorn – Randy Brecker (tracks: 3, 4) Flute – Kim Park (tracks: 5) Harmonica – Randy Weinstein (tracks: 8, 11) Percussion – Karrin Allyson (tracks: 2, 4, 5), Todd Strait (tracks: 2, 5) Piano – Karrin Allyson (tracks: 8), Laura Caviani (tracks: 7), Paul Smith (tracks: 1 to 2, 4 to 6, 9 to 11) Trumpet – Randy Brecker (tracks: 7) Vibraphone – Gary Burton (tracks: 1, 4, 9) Vocals – Karrin Allyson

Karrin Allyson has a beautiful voice that is also quite flexible, as she shows throughout this consistently interesting release. The emphasis is a little more on ballads than usual, but there are some heated moments too. Joined by some of her favorite Kansas City-based musicians, plus a few guests (trumpeter Randy Brecker, vibraphonist Gary Burton and altoist Kim Park), Allyson sounds both lyrical and enthusiastic. High points include a touching rendition of "Everything Must Change" (a solo performance in which she accompanies herself on piano), "Daydream," "My Foolish Heart" and "So Danco Samba." ---Scott Yanow, AllMusic Review

A sweet singer. Right away on the Ellington / Strayhorn "Daydream," the title track that opens this CD, Karrin Allyson sounds sooo warm and vulnerable. Gary Burton's vibes are masterfully deployed, with Allyson's voice floating around them. She has that female jazz singer thing, that

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thing all the great female jazz singers have had: the ability to move emotions. She has good taste and self-confidence, and she doesn't indulge in the pyrotechnics that pass for singing among mediocrities these days.

Allyson really sings these songs, trusting her material enough to play it straight and let the song carry the day. One may not think it's easy to go wrong with material like "Daydream," "Like Someone in Love," and "My Foolish Heart," but it's precisely their familiarity that tempts too many into trying new twists that all-too-often fall flat. Allyson resists that temptation.

That doesn't mean she doesn't take any chances. First she tries out a couple of Jobim numbers in passable Portuguese: "So Danco Samba" and "Corcovado (Quiet Nights)." The latter is enriched by Danny Embrey's sensitive acoustic guitar and the atmospheric flute of Kim Park. Allyson really communicates the mournful longing and quiet intensity of "Corcovado," and to do it in Portuguese earns her special merit. Then it's time to show off her chops on Lerner and Loewe's "Show Me." She's up to it, and, perhaps emboldened by her success, jumps into a medley of Monk tunes. Aided by Randy Brecker's dead-on trumpet, she scats and then sings the melody line of "Straight No Chaser." That's fine, but the lyrics attached to "Blue Monk" by Abbey Lincoln limp a little ("Monkery's the blues you hear...") and sound a little too forced on the melody. Jon Hendrick's words to "I Mean You" work much better, and Allyson's singing brings out the wry humor of the melody as well.

"Everything Must Change" is fragile to the breaking point, with the usual acoustic guitar accompaniment and eerie bass work by Bob Bowman (joined by Randy Weinstein's eerie harmonica — if you don't think a harmonica can sound eerie, check this out) to match the lyrical message of loss. Once we're all fearfully meditating on the transience of existence, Allyson treats us to a capably scatted "Donna Lee" and then we're out with the impassioned "I Can't Get Nothin' But the Blues" and "You Can't Rush Spring." It would seem from the varied nature of this program that Karrin Allyson is shooting for wider recognition. It would also seem from her confident and versatile singing on this program that she deserves such recognition. ---Robert Spencer, allaboutjazz.com

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