

Perry Como - Lightly Latin (1966)

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*A1 How Insensitive 3:10 A2 Stay With Me 3:03 A3 (The) Shadow Of Your Smile 3:46
A4 Meditation 3:45 A5 And Roses And Roses 3:07 A6 Yesterday 2:59 B1 Coo Coo Roo
Coo Coo Paloma 2:49 B2 Dindi 4:16 B3 Baía 3:25 B4 Once I Loved 3:50 B5 Manhã De
Carnaval 2:39 B6 Quiet Nights Of Quiet Stars 3:19* Perry Como – vocals Nick Perito –
arranger, conductor Ray Charles – choir master

"A perfect matching of man to music," claims the heading to this 1966 Perry Como Latin project, most of it including standards in the classy, challenging bossa nova style. Arrangers Nick Perito and Torrie Zito assemble a team of instrumentalists who are surely up to the task, teams of guitarists delivering deeply felt patterns as if bringing up the best from the wine cellar. Ray Charles is hanging around with his team of singers, teaming up with Perito to co-write a musical plea to "Stay with Me" in which an alto saxophonist steals the show. As this project winds on, Como gives the impression of becoming one with his relaxed audience, letting the background singers drown him out, then put him to bed. The Beatles' "Yesterday," on the other hand, comes off astonishingly well, the arrangement starting off with the bridge in a kind of Ahmad Jamal moment. "The Shadow of Your Smile" and "Dindi" are both done complete with introductions, a touch worth appreciating since this is something most singers don't bother with, even the ones that are good at bossa nova. The band goes off in at least three directions once the main part of "The Shadow of Your Smile" begins, the arranger obviously equating smiling with running for office. Como is indeed at his best with "Dindi" and "Once I Loved," utilizing simplicity to bring the lyrics to life, carefully touching the melody, making it both ache and laugh, at least when the long tones aren't vanishing up his nose. For once the singer is ahead of the arranger, who on "Dindi" foolishly buries the catchy percussion parts in favor of a boring woodwind solo. --- Eugene Chadbourne, AllMusic Review

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