

DARDEN PURCELL

A classic thrush with two degrees of separation from Doc Severinsen, Purcell swings around a classic lyric with ease and style. With some great B3 work powering the background, this is a nice new look at a boatload of classics, most of which haven't been beaten to death by the recent class of jazz divas. A solid treat throughout for jazz vocal fans.

- Chris Spector, *Midwest Record, Entertainment, Reviews, News and Views*

Darden Purcell's latest recording, *Where the Blue Begins*, is a masterful compendium of incredible vocal stylings (lovely lyric sensitivity and swinging vocal solis), wonderful playing by her husband, Shawn Purcell on guitar, and imaginative arrangements that are full of fresh and inventive ideas. Darden's great pitch, sense of lyric vibe and her vocal approach to each tune are captivating and just plain fun to check out! Hip singing, playing and writing make for a completely enjoyable listening experience!

- Chip McNeill, *Grammy Award-winning Saxophonist, Arranger and Director of Jazz Studies at the University of Illinois*

Darden Purcell's new recording *Where the Blue Begins*, is an instant classic that will satisfy both the most sophisticated Jazz fan, as well as the casual listener. Whether deftly delivering lyrics, or joining the ensemble in intricate musical lines, Darden is completely at ease and in control...this is music making at the highest level.

- Alan Baylock, *American Composer, Arranger and Director of the UNT One O'Clock Band*

Darden Purcell is clearly a totally hip vocalist; it's as simple as that! From the DC area, Darden's vocal talent delivers just what you want to hear: style, interpretation, selection of songs, scattling chops, great vocal and instrumental solos throughout, and a superb instrumental ensemble supporting her with creative and interesting arrangements by Shawn Purcell. Darden shines throughout! The boxes are all checked. You'll dig it, I promise!

- Pete Barenbregge, *Jazz Saxophonist, Former Director of the USAF Airmen of Note, Jazz Editor, Alfred Music*

Darden's latest record is outstanding - great tunes, great arrangements, and great singing and playing. The whole thing, from beginning to end, is fresh, creative and fun. She is truly a world-class artist. Highly recommend!

- Stephen Jones, *Director of Jazz Studies and Associate Professor, Texas Tech University School of Music*

Darden's time has come...a remarkable first recording from a singer of incomparable talent and depth...partnered with some of the finest jazz musicians anywhere. In a CD filled with interesting twists and turns and great songs, the treatment of "Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow" alone is worth the price of admission.

- Jim Pugh, *Trombonist and Professor of Jazz Trombone at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*

Guest solo vocalist Dr. Darden Purcell, of Washington, D.C. Air Force Band notoriety, was a pure joy to listen to. Her husky rendition of "Do You Know What It Means to Miss New Orleans?" was flawless as was her five-star performance of "Hallelujah, I Love Him So."

- Audrey Thornton, *DCMetroTheaterArts.com*

This new CD by Darden Purcell is the real deal. Her take on familiar standards like Love for Sale and Get Happy is bold and fresh, and she brings an easy, innate sense to swing to every track. She is one jazz singer worthy of the name!

- Bob Bernotas, *Host of "Just Jazz"*

Once in a while you hear a jazz singer whose voice is so unique and intimately communicative, that it simply reaches out and makes you stop and listen. Darden has one of those voices. Her style is understated and yet extremely expressive with an unerring sense of pitch, swing feel and phrasing. In her first release, Darden demonstrates a sense of balance, restraint, honesty and thoughtful musicality that is usually reserved for the experienced veterans. Look out for this young lady, a formidable voice has emerged onto the scene.

- Dr. Lisanne Lyons, Jazz Vocalist and Jazz Voice Professor at Florida International University

Bravo! It is beautiful!!! Darden's voice is pure, sweet and relaxed. Very at-home in the jazz style. It's a nice collection of a wide variety of songs. Great arrangements and guitar playing Shawn! It gives the music a distinct personality for the entire project. I love getting to hear Chip Stephen's playing on piano and Chip's McNeill's saxophone and producing is superb.

- Steve Allee, Pianist, Composer and Arranger

Of worthy note, I found guest vocalist Dr. Darden Purcell's vocal range and jazz expertise superb. Her voice very capably caressed a mature up tempo, playful rendition of "On a Clear Day" and, in a Spanish/English duet with guest vocalist Brazilian-born Gina Mirenda of "The Waters of March," drew a standing applause. A sought-after clinician and jazz vocal educator, Dr. Purcell's students have benefitted from her talent, winning "Outstanding Soloist" awards at collegiate festivals as well as Downbeat Student Music awards.

- Audrey Thornton, DCMetroTheaterArts.com

Easy Living is a solid recording from top to bottom - great musicians, great arrangements, great production, and Darden is simply wonderful throughout.

- Alan Baylock, Composer, Arranger, Leader of the Alan Baylock Jazz Orchestra and Director of the UNT One O'Clock Band

The first thing you'll notice about Darden Purcell when you listen to her new album *Easy Living* is the gorgeous timbre of her voice and the precision of her diction and time feel. She's obviously a top-notch vocalist and her band includes some terrific performers. Saxophonist Chip McNeill is something of a hero among inner circles of jazz musicians and the harmonic substitutions he employs in some of his solos make for interesting listening. Shawn Purcell, while not as well-known to me, is highly skilled and very swinging guitar soloist. While all of the tunes were performed well, the pieces that stood out to my ears were the ballad performances, particularly Alice in Wonderland and You Don't Know What Love Is. I would recommend the album and I plan on adding it to the queue of new recordings that I feature on my radio program.

- Peter Solomon, WCVE-FM, Richmond, VA

Darden Purcell's CD, *Easy Living*, is a fantastic introduction to this vocalist. She has a great control of pitch and nuance. She does great material. Most singers sing in 7/4 by mistake. Not this one. Darden is in control and the arrangements give her ample opportunity to showcase her knowledge and talents with jazz standards presented in fresh surroundings. I was equally drawn to the band. What a great group. Everyone one on this CD is doing their job, supporting Darden with a flourish. I was really taken with the quality arrangements and their superb execution. The solos are fantastic; the vocal accompaniment always on the mark. You must hear this music!

- Harry Miedema, Director of Jazz Studies, University of Indianapolis

I go to L.A. Jazz Institute Fests, I go to Chicago Jazz Fest, and I travel to others around the U.S, and your band and singing topped singers I have heard at these events, in other words to my ears your simply the best I've heard. Top Jazz Vocalist on my list. Please keep on swinging.

- Harry Condon, Jazz Aficionado