

All About Jazz - Reviews

May 16, 2019

Houry Dora Apartian: Anticipation



Vocalist [Houry Dora Apartian](#) has a rich, honeyed voice and a polished delivery. On her third release as a leader, the charming *Anticipation*, Apartian fronts a sophisticated group of talented instrumentalists who share her musical vision. Apartian and pianist [Oliver Friedli](#) contributed the album's eight originals that, together with a cover of the Rogers and Hammerstein classic "Climb Every Mountain," showcase the full breadth of her creativity. They are also thematically unified in their message of positivity and triumph over challenges.

Apartian's emotive singing undulates over Friedli's sparse chiming notes on "We Are Born Today." The tender, lullaby-like atmosphere transforms slowly to a brightly hued, cascading piece as the band buoys Apartian's voice with their vibrant refrains. Saxophonist Adrian Pflugshaupt's muscular lithe improvisation mirrors Apartian's agile vocals as they usher in the passionate conclusion.

On the three-part suite, at the core of which lies the title track, Apartian expresses the full range of her musicianship as she sticks to wordless vocalizing. The

expectant mood that is collectively created is tense and cinematic with delightful hints of melancholy. Apartian's warm, captivating song fades in and out of the sonic backdrop like an enchanting dream. On the third movement, "A Matter of Time," Pflugshaupt's acerbic bittersweet soprano meanders in simmering phrases within the quintet's percolating vamps. Meanwhile bassist [André Pousaz](#) solos with graceful lyricism and an elegant spontaneity.

Apartian also recites her own verse on the energetic "Possible Pursuits." Drummer [Tobias Friedli](#)'s rumbling polyrhythms, Pousaz's thumping lines and Oliver Friedli's percussive, resonant chords imbue the music with an urgent immediacy. Pflugshaupt's saxophone wails as Apartian articulates the words with determination and a theatrical panache. Although her message is simultaneously timely and timeless, her writing style is not quite poetic and is more like a sermon in its directness and lack of imagery.

Overall, *Anticipation* is an engaging and enjoyable recording by a singer who is not content with just reinterpreting old standards. Apartian is not afraid to blaze her own trail and create contemporary tunes that are uniquely hers yet rooted deep in the traditions that inspired her. Hopefully more is to come from this exciting artist.

Track Listing: We Are Born Today; With Hope; The Day Will Come, Pt. 1; Anticipation, Pt. 2; A Matter of Time, Pt. 3; Placid Conversations; Possible Pursuits; Climb Every Mountain; Thirteen Oceans and One Dream.

Personnel: Houry Dora Apartian: voice; Oliver Friedli: piano; Adrian Pflugshaupt: flute and saxophones; André Pousaz: bass; Tobias Friedli: drums.

[On All About Jazz](#)

By [HRAYR ATTARIAN](#)

May 16, 2019

[Sign in](#) to view read count


