

Private collection

By

Kristin Amarie

Written by

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It's not often you get to review the work of one of your neighbours, but in the dying embers of the today, I sit and listen to the sultry and deeply emotive voice of **Kristin Amarie**, with the added bonus of *David Lanz*, the great one, on piano.

You may remember back in 2013 her debut release *Notes from a journey*, well we can safely place that to one side now, as we listen to a collection of very private songs, starting with the quite brilliant, and hair raising **Adagio**. If you ever wondered what natural talent is, this song should explain the comment. I have listened to this particular track for a few weeks now, and each time I do, the hairs stand up on my neck, and the tears well in my eyes, the sheer power and passion here is beyond anything I have ever heard before.

Now the strange thing is, I was in a conversation with someone the other day about artists that you like, but you have no music in your collection from, that person for me would be **Barbra Streisand**. Here on this album Kristin provides me with my first recorded track **Evergreen (Theme from a Star is Born)**. For me this is a gem to savour, and is as every bit as good as the original, because like Barbara, Kristin also sings with her heart not her head.

Back in the autumn of 1965 *The Beatles* released an album called *Rubber Soul* and upon it is the song you will have just arrived at, entitled **In My Life**. Kristin tackles this all-time classic with such style and grace. The textures here are beautiful to behold, with Lanz on piano in his usual genius mode.

I must admit I love to try and tackle the occasional songs from the shows, but when I am not parading around on stage as the phantom, I love to sit and listen to some of the classics from the musicals, and *Les Miserables* would be a good example. **Kristin Amarie** seems to agree, and on the empowering, **I Dreamed a Dream**, you not only have a vocal expression of sensitivity, but one of pure passion, in this quite breath-taking arrangement.

I wonder how many of you are movie buffs? *Pete's Dragon* was released back in 1995; it featured singer and actress *Helen Reddy*, who sang the song **Candle in the Water**. **Kristin Amarie** delivers her arrangement of this piece right now, the performance is divine, with perfect pitch and pronunciation, here we have an offering that is filled full of charm and warmth.

Now I'm a big fan of *James Taylor*, so when I came upon **Don't Let Me Be Lonely Tonight** I was thrilled, and looked forward to hearing its mood wash over me. Lanz on piano was perfection and Kristin not only sung in a style so redolent of the original artist, she actually at times sounded a little like him, a very sweet rendition indeed.

I remember listening to **Without You** back in 2013, I had found it on *Notes from a Journey* and it entranced me as much then as it does now. The string section adds a real *Enya* feel to the composition and the very sweet and fluent melody is addictive, one that you will feel a compulsion to sing or whistle at all hours of the day and night to. This is also a song that truly emphasises the vast range and stunning vocal strength of the artist, in a quite outstanding opus of brilliance.

We move back to a *Beatles* standard with **Here, There and Everywhere**, there is something so smooth and delightfully lush about this one that makes the arrangement so sensual. It is originally from the album *Revolver* way back in 1966, *Celine Dion* has also covered it, but for me there is a certain stylish panache about this offering from the artist, that manifests a certain warmth within the composition, that gives it that little extra something special.

Let's allow our minds to drift back a few years to the May of 1976, a song would be written by Carpenter, Hammond and Bettis that would rock the pop world, and eventually be released by the Carpenters duo later on in that month. **I Need to Be in Love** was that very ballad, here 41 years later **Kristin**

Amarie takes the opportunity to make the piece her own, and does so with such grace, that I'm sure, if the amazing *Karen Carpenter* had of been alive today, she would have taken Kristin by the hand and said thank you. The performance was not only perfection; it was also respectful of its original conception.

There are around 25 well known versions of this next piece, **Dream a Little Dream**, ranging from *Dean Martin* to *Doris Day*. Accompanied by the ever green *David Lanz*, on some extremely laid back Piano, Amarie brings a whole world of sultry sensuality to this offering, and leaves us breathless at the end.

Now you may not know that *Audrey Hepburn* was the first to originally perform **Moon River** on the film *Breakfast at Tiffany's* back in 1961, while many will know the *Andy Williams* version of 1962. Amarie now performs a simply mood flied presentation of this song, that brings the piece right up-to-date, and whilst doing so, adding a certain smoothness of layered calm and tranquillity, to what is an all-time classic.

The strings at the beginning of our penultimate song **The Promise** set the scene perfectly and constantly dance with the vocals of **Kristin Amarie** throughout this quite stunning offering. Amarie once more showcases her talents here with a performance on vocals that will leave the listener empowered and mesmerised along the way.

So we have finally arrived at the very last doorway of this musical voyage with **Kristin Amarie**, and her final musical gift for you is called, and quite appropriately for this time of year, **O Holy Night**. This is also the longest pieces off the album at well over five minutes long, and gives us ample time to enjoy this wonderful fully flowing seasonal classic; by the end of this masterpiece, you will be completely convinced that **Kristin Amarie** and the album **Private Collection** must be a part of your musical anthology at all costs.

Private Collection from **Kristin Amarie** is a collection of supreme songs performed by a singer at the top of her game, and this assemblage of classic tracks sung with power, intensity, but also layered with a sensitivity that is rare to find these days, is an absolute must for your musical library, believe me, your ears will love you forever.