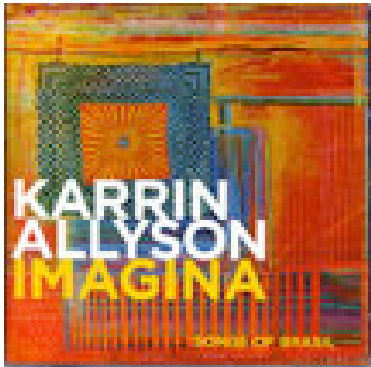


Karrin Allyson – Imagina: Songs of Brasil (Concord Jazz)*****

By John Henry, April 14, 2008

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Karrin Allyson has been one of the few non-Brazilian vocalists doing Brazilian music who really seem to get it right. She has a “Brazilian mentor” who coaches her on the proper Portuguese pronunciations and introduces her to new tunes she might perform with her players. Imagina became the title of this new CD after her mentor - Lucia Guimaraes - brought it to her as the very first song ever composed by Antonio Carlos Jobim and she loved it. Lucia also gets a page of the note booklet to speak about all good music being without borders.

Karrin doesn't have a big voice - she's a petite lady - but she uses it to best ability with a naturally sensual but not overdone timbre, perfect pitch, and a rhythmic feel that seems perfect for anything tunes she does, but especially for the music of that most exciting country, Brazil. She deserves a big thanks for her efforts in making this album more “user friendly” for the general public. She alternates between the original Portuguese and the English translations as she sings - sort of aural subtitles which communicate the lyrics to the majority of us who are sadly not multilingual. They flow well thru the songs and add a great deal to the listening experience, since all the songs except Desafinado will probably be new to most listeners. By the way, the English lyrics to that tune are from Jon Henricks and are a delight, and so is the arrangement which intriguingly goes in and out of tempo.

Sonics are first rate, and the accordion on many of the tunes adds a fine Brazilian folk flavor that makes everything sound even more authentic. With 14 tracks you get your money's worth of Karrin on this great album!

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