

CD REVIEW - Lua Hadar with TWIST—Like A Bridge

- Sandi Durell- on May 22, 2012.



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Reviewed by: **Joe Regan Jr.**

I'm late with several of my reviews but I want everyone to know what an extraordinary achievement Lua Hadar's new CD is. I reviewed Hadar's show at the Iridium in 2008 and was impressed with her vocal range and the fact that she sang several songs in several languages but you understood the emotion and meaning of the songs even if you did not know the language. My review, at the time, was translated into Thai when she appeared at the Bangkok 10th International Festival that year. Personally, I can understand French and Spanish very well, and have knowledge of Italian and Portuguese from travel in those countries.

Hadar's new CD, "Like A Bridge," was recorded live at Fantasy Studios in Berkeley, California, USA this year. She appeared a month ago in New York with her musicians but I had a prior commitment that night and could not attend. Two years ago she had two sold out performances at the Cornelia Street Café, a jazz club in the village.

Hadar's musicians in Twist are an international group of superb musicians and I will list them here: Jason Martineau, piano, music director/arranger; Dan Feiszli, acoustic and electric bass; Celso Alberti, drums; Ian Dogole, udu, dumbek, shakers, cajon; Larry De La Cruz, alto, tenor soprano sax and flute; and special guests Dave Miotke on jazz accordion, Emil Miland on cello on Jobim's "Imagina" & Fumiko Ozawa on koto.

Hadar is a well known advocate of world peace and "Like A Bridge" encourages people to be like a bridge to each other; to promote bridging languages, culture, ideas. It takes a water theme to promote world peace. Opening with a Latin rhythm on Simon & Garfunkel's "Bridge Over Troubled Waters," she gives new meaning to the well known lyrics when you hear her sing this standard in this rhythm. Similarly, Trenet's "Beyond the Sea" is sung in French with several key changes and brilliant accordion support. At one point Hadar actually does a duet with the accordion.

She sings in French, a beautiful melody I had never heard before, Maxine Le Forestier's "San Francisco," about a blue house in which it sounds like hippies resided. It is memory song about where are they now and what harmony lived there, the long haired ones, big beds and music, peopled with light and peopled with crazy people. Everyone was always there at 5 PM; they never knocked, those who lived there had thrown away the key. She sings in Spanish "Ojala que Llueva Café," a meringue by Juan Luis Guerra from the Dominican Republic which translates as if it would only rain coffee in the fields and the impact it would have on the poverty of the farmers so their government would not ignore them.

Hadar sings a strong international peace song in English "Child of Man," by Achinoam Nini and Gil Dor. The song is almost five minutes long but Hadar's vocal range builds and builds it to a heartbreaking climax. The Japanese selection, "Ue O Muite Arukou/Sukiyaki," which features Fumiko Ozawa on the koto, is a serious torch song which Hadar sings in Japanese and English.

The band Twist does an almost six minute solo on Strayhorn's "Isfahan" from Duke Ellington's Far East Suite and it's impressive to hear this piece played by these extraordinary musicians.

One of the most brilliant selections on the CD is the final piece, a blending of Nino Rota's well known theme from *La Strada*, "Stegata Dall'amor" with Ravel's "Bolero." Hadar sings the lyrics in Italian which translate "You who do not know how to love/You who cannot love/You are bewitched by love. There are your eyes/Colder than ever/but what fever in your heart." Hadar's rendition is sexy and sad and the "Bolero" sections contribute to the mood of the song, a relentless sadness, and you will recall the unforgettable performances of Anthony Quinn, Richard Basehart, and Guilietta Masina from the film and, if anything is a reason to buy this CD filled with treasured performances, this selection would be the one.

Hadar and Twist will have a CD release performance on June 3 at 4:30 PM at the Jazz School in Berkeley. For tickets go to <http://jazzschool.com/event/luahadar-with-twist-cd-release-for-like-a-bridge/> and her website is www.luahadar.com



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