



FRANK GRIFFITH

News and Reviews

ALL OR NOTHING - CD REVIEWS

ALEXANDER STEWART is an exciting, up and coming jazz singer who is getting great reviews. Frank has been heavily involved in arranging and producing his latest CD.



GUARDIAN , SEPT 2011

A hasty listen to the 32-year old Manchester-born singer, Alexander Stewart, can leave you muttering “Michael Buble”, though the more generous might invoke Jamie Cullam. He’s accompanied on this debut session by a razor sharp group including Empirical saxist, Nathaniel Facey and Jazz Jamacian bassist, Gary Crosby, with swinging horn chartist, FRANK GRIFFITH.

A soft Latin account of *YOUNG AT HEART* and an understated *ALL THE WAY* are among the highlights of a set in which the newcomer’s phrasing shows more security on low lights songs than on the punchy ones. Dee Dee Bridgewater’s daughter, China Moses, makes an R&B inflected appearance against a Blue Note soul-jazz horn sound on Alex Webb’s *THE HARD WAY*- but the Smiths’ *PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE LET ME GET WHAT I WANT* may be the standout. This likeable performer’s live show dynamism isn’t quite caught here, but he is on his way.

JOHN FORDHAM

ALL OR NOTHING AT ALL - Reviews

SANDYBROWN JAZZ , SEPT 2011

It is almost two years ago that we were impressed with singer Alexander Stewart when we caught him sharing a gig at the London Jazz Festival with Sue Richardson and Tammy Weiss, Stance-then- he has steadily established himself as one of the UK's up and coming jazz singers.

His recent live gigs have included alto saxophonist Nathaniel Facey who came to everybody's attention composing and playing with Empirical, and Nathan's pairing with Alexander Stewart and pianist/arranger Webb is inspired. .

We have been anticipating Alexander's first album for a while, and that is always risky as you could be faced with an anti-climax, but not so here. His debut album *ALL NOTHING AT ALL* is released on 5th September and it is a real pleasure. If you wondered what had happened to the legacy of the classic band singers - try this out. We think that his music is more intimate somehow than Michael Bublé or Michael Feinstein, and he certainly knows how to swing. The mix is outstanding and re-workings of pop songs and the space that is given to solos by Nathaniel Facey keeps firm hold of that swing feeling but brings it right up to date.

Tracks include the standards *NO MOON AT ALL*, *YOUNG AT HEART*, *EASY TO LOVE*, *TOO MARVELLOUS FOR WORDS* and *ALL THE WAY* alongside songs like Paul Simon's *FIFTY WAYS TO LEAVE YOUR LOVER*, Blondie's *CALL ME* and the duet *THE HARD WAY* with Dee Dee Bridgwater's daughter, China Moses.

The rest of the line-up: bassist Gary Crosby OBE (whose CV includes Courtney Pine, Jazz Jamaica, Nu Troop and Denys Baptiste), trumpeter Freddie Gavita (previously a star of the National Youth Jazz Orchestra), Andy Chapman (Rhythmica, Ayanna Witter-Johnson) and tenor saxophonist FRANK GRIFFITH make sure of the solid jazz foundations.

SANDYBROWN JAZZ

ALL ABOUT JAZZ , AUG 2011

There's a space between Georgie Fame and Plan B, between Mark Murphy and James Hunter. Where musicianship meets soul, and stories of love and loss are told over a powerful acoustic groove. It's a space where you can now hear Alexander Stewart.

At just 23 years of age, Manchester-born singer Alexander Stewart releases his debut CD, *ALL OR NOTHING AT ALL*, and the act that has captivated Ronnie Scott's, the Pizza Express, Boisdale's, the Hideaway, the Forge ... in fact all of London's coolest music venues ... can be heard in the company of some of the UK's finest musicians.

ALL OR NOTHING AT ALL - Reviews

'*ALL OR NOTHING AT ALL*' is released on Monday 5 September on ASM and distributed by Proper Note Distribution.

Alexander has already created a buzz as one of the most precociously talented vocalists of the new generation. With a warm, urgent voice that shows off his early love of Billie Holiday and Tony Bennett, he avoids being a nostalgia act with his judiciously off-beat choice of material and a decidedly contemporary energy level. As well as clever rearrangements of some of the famous standards, he stamps his mark on great pop songs as well as adding some superb originals, including songs by his pianist and musical director Alex Webb.

He has appeared on stage with Curtis Stigers and Buddy Greco (in a concert from the Cheltenham Jazz Festival broadcast live by BBC Radio 2) and sung live on ITV1's Alan Titchmarsh Show. He has also performed live on BBC Radio London and other local radio stations

ALL OR NOTHING AT ALL features a stellar band of bassist Gary Crosby OBE (whose CV includes Courtney Pine, Jazz Jamaica, Nu Troop and Denys Baptiste), saxophonist Nathaniel Facey (of MOBO-winning group Empirical), trumpeter Freddie Gavita (previously a star of the National Youth Jazz Orchestra) and Andy Chapman (Rhythmica, Ayanna Witter-Johnson). Pianist, arranger and musical director Alex Webb has contributed the original track *The Hard Way* featuring a guest appearance by Blue Note recording artist China Moses, daughter of legendary singer Dee Dee Bridgewater.

The CD, produced by bassist and producer Andy Cleyndert, ranges from Blondie (*Call Me*) to the Smiths (*Please, Please, Please Let Me Get What I Want*), from Sam Sparro (*Black And Gold*) to Paul Simon (*Fifty Ways To Leave Your Lover*) ... with a nod to past masters like Sinatra (*Too Marvellous For Words*) and Ellington (*Jump For Joy*). **It's a high-energy record with razor-sharp arrangements augmented by punchy horn charts from US saxophonist, FRANK GRIFFITH.**