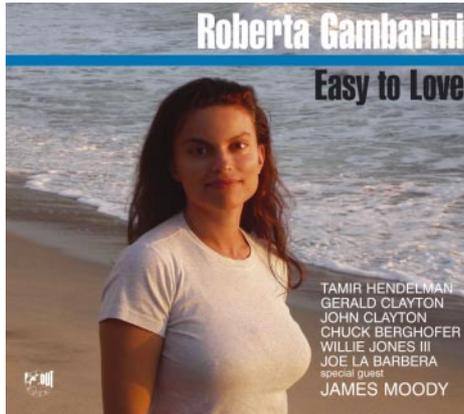




PRESS RELEASE



ROBERTA GAMBARINI Easy To Love

IOR CD 77084-2



1. Easy To Love (4:48)
2. Only Trust Your Heart (4:11)
3. Lover Man (5:59)
4. On The Sunny Side Of The Street (5:39)
5. Porgy, I's Your Woman Now / I Loves You, Porgy (7:25)
6. Lover Come Back To Me (5:44)
7. The Two Lonely People (6:12)
8. Centerpiece (5:21)
9. Guess I'll Hang My Tears Out To Dry (5:58)
10. No More Blues (3:13)
11. Smoke Gets In Yours Eyes / All the Things You Are (5:53)
12. Too Late Now (5:09)
13. Multi-Colored Blue (6:30)
14. Monk's Prayer/Looking Back (5:24)

ROBERTA GAMBARINI - Vocals
JAMES MOODY - Tenor Sax & Vocal
TAMIR HENDELMAN - Piano
GERALD CLAYTON - Piano
JOHN CLAYTON - Bass
CHUCK BERGHOFER - Bass
WILLIE JONES III - Drums
JOE LA BARBERA - Drums

ROBERTA GAMBARINI »Easy To Love«

(in & out records / in-akustik)

"I've had some experience with singers over the years, and I'm hard pressed to name one who did better than Roberta."
(Hank Jones)

"During my long career I never had the pleasure of accompanying a singer who was more musical than Roberta. She reminds me of a young Ella Fitzgerald." (Paul Kuhn)

"Finally. From a singer, whom musicians have long known is one of the greats. It was worth the wait; Roberta's recording debut is breathtaking." (Michael Brecker)

"She'll be the best singer around for quite a while." (James Moody)

There are few voices in jazz which receive eulogies like these from such authoritative sources. It's all the more astonishing that it is a European singer who earns such tributes from musicians on both sides of the Atlantic. Indeed, Roberta Gambarini is the exemplary and self-confident answer to the plethora of female vocalists from Europe, among whom – let's face it – are a number of inadequate and over-hyped talents. But let us tell Roberta's story from the beginning.

Most jazz lovers will be familiar with the musical Roberta from the year 1930, which features the famous evergreen, Smoke Gets In Your Eyes. A young couple from Turin loved this tune so much that they decided to name their new-born daughter after it. They could have had no premonition that their baby child would become an internationally known singer. Today Roberta Gambarini proves every time she sings that the association of her name with music from the Great





American Songbook was most appropriate. With a lyrical singing style which shows commitment to the heritage of Monk, Gillespie and Benny Carter, she delights us with her debut album, *Easy To Love*, recorded in L. A.

At the age of 17, Roberta Gambarini was winning warm applause from audiences in clubs in Northern Italy. Two years later she was touring the whole country, newly honoured with a prize in a national jazz competition. Her career became more firmly established when she moved to Milan. In 1998 she arrived in the USA to take up her studies at the New England Conservatory of Music, Boston. Just two weeks later, she was one of the winners in the prestigious Thelonious Monk International Jazz Competition. It was just one step further for her to win the approbation of audiences all over the world. In the past few years Robert Gambarini has played in clubs from Moscow to Monterey, from Brazil to Japan and in most of the European countries. Her collaborations are wide-ranging, including sessions with Herbie Hancock, Ron Carter and Michael Brecker, a partnership with the Dizzy Gillespie All Stars Big Band, the Dutch Concertgebouw Jazz Orchestra and the NDR Big Band, Hamburg. What are the qualities of this jazz lady, who casts such a spell over audiences wherever she performs?

"I approach all of the tunes I sing in terms of what they mean to me in lyric and story", says Gambarini, who discovers something connected to her life in every one of them. To achieve her goal, she commits herself to the "vocalese" tradition of putting lyrics to instrumental solos, adding new colours to standard tunes Gambarini chooses her rôle models with care. Benny Carter takes pride of place in her estimation – and it was a case of mutual admiration. The saxophonist, who passed away in 2003, held his young colleague in such high esteem that he made his compositions especially available for her. Gambarini was his student for the last three years of his life. Furthermore, she loves Dizzy Gillespie because of his permanent "search for musical freedom" and his unique understanding of the functions of a jazz group. And

Gambarini also salutes Thelonious Monk, whose music, she says, "was always fundamental in my life." Billy Strayhorn and Jon Hendricks are other sources of inspiration.

With *Easy To Love* Roberta pays tribute to all these giants, at the same time enriching their compositions with a new language. She is backed by two rhythm sections, consisting of bass players John Clayton and Chuck Berghofer, drummers Willie Jones III and Joe La Barbera and pianists Tamir Hendelman and Gerald Clayton. Saxophonist James Moody guests on two numbers and even contributes some inspired scatting. This album is a real masterpiece that was recorded live on tape over two afternoons in L. A. Just a few observations will suffice to establish the quality of this musical rendez-vous. With *On The Sunny Side Of The Street*, Gambarini brilliantly reworks the Gillespie composition *Sonny Side Up*, reprising the original solos of Sonny Stitt and Sonny Rollins with brand new lyrics, and capturing, unerringly and full of esprit, the high tones of Dizzy's trumpet. In *Centerpiece*, she enters into a dialogue with Moody's saxophone, then he embarks on a spontaneous scatting adventure with his partner. Their teamwork in the erotic *Lover Man* works just as magnificently. With *Multi-Colored Blue*, she roams effortlessly up and down the bluesy scale and in Monk's *Prayer / Looking Back*, she succeeds in offering a magical and intimate finale for Thelonious. And, as you'll note, Roberta has included a medley which, appropriately, features the evergreen which inspired her parents in choosing a name for their daughter – and it proved to be a tremendous self-fulfilling prophecy.

