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Woodrow Wilkins, *Reviewer*

Quiet Joy

When a vocalist does a collection of standards, it's important to create something that stands out, something that distinguishes his/her recording from so many others. Jennifer Lee comes through in more ways than one. *Quiet Joy* showcases Lee's versatility as a pianist, guitarist, arranger, composer and singer. This album is mostly comprised of songs written by Brazilian composers or written by Lee in a Brazilian style; the music would be very different even if she only sang. Lee is a San Francisco product, and on *Quiet Joy* she is accompanied by a variable lineup of Bay Area and San Diego musicians.

The title song, one of Lee's three originals, has a slight samba edge to it; she plays guitar and leads on a wordless vocal chant. Lee shifts easily from a flute-like "oo" to consonant-flavored syllables, while Raul Ramirez handles percussion with Bob Magnusson on bass.

"O Barquinho" captures that same spirit, with Buca Nacak taking over on bass and Tripp Sprague adding harmonica. This time, Lee mixes in some scatting with the lyrics. Her delivery is on par with the sounds of such Brazilian vocalists as Astrud Gilberto and Flora Purim, with Sprague's solo adding to the song's joyful feeling. When Lee sings again, the lyrics are in Brazilian Portuguese. She shifts back to English and scatting during the closing sequence, while Sprague answers on harmonica.

jennifer lee

vocalist • pianist • guitarist

"Music of Your Soul," another Lee composition, is a delightful stroll with Lee and Ramirez providing finger snaps. David Udolf joins on piano and Peter Sprague on guitar. During the chorus, Lee sings a phrase that gives a slight nod to Oliver Nelson's "Stolen Moments." Necak scats during his bass solo and Sprague and Udolf also get turns at soloing.

Lee and her sidemen do a masterful job of mixing samba with straight jazz. Her use of both Portuguese and English lyrics, to say nothing of her scats, enhances the special nature of Quiet Joy.

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