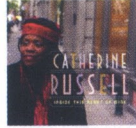


# JazzTimes

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## CATHERINE RUSSELL

*Inside This Heart of Mine* (World Village)



Cat Russell can paint on the broadest of musical canvases: She's as comfortable with honky-tonk blues and swing-era jazz as she is with contemporary country and funk. On her previous album, *Sentimental Streak*, she purposely narrowed her focus to concentrate on material that recalled the pre-WWII era of her celebrated pianist and bandleader father, Luis.

*Inside This Heart of Mine* follows a similarly sepia-tinged path, reinforcing Russell's rather thrilling ability to mirror the emotional sincerity, instinctive musicianship and sly humor of Billie Holiday. As always, Russell's stylistic agility is on glorious display as she navigates a serpentine route that takes her from the raw ache of "Troubled Waters" to the hep shimmer of "All the Cats Join In" and soft swing of "As Long as I Live." Waller is again represented by the *über*-obscure "We the People," a bouncy Depression-era ditty that urges syncopation over taxation, its spirited joy echoed in both a free-flowing treatment of Wynonie Harris' "Quiet Whiskey" and a high-steppin' "Struttin' With Some Barbeque."

Augmenting the vintage material are two new songs that fit seamlessly: Producer Paul Kahn's "November" is like an icy inverse of Irving Berlin's "Remember," while Rachelle Garniez, who contributed the wry "Broken Nose" to *Sentimental Streak*, is back with the feisty "Just Because You Can."

-Christopher Loudon