



Jane Siberry “**City**” Sheeba Records

“**City**” amounts to an attempt by Siberry to gather together material, featuring her voice, from numerous side [recording] projects that she has worked on over the period 1991-2001. In drawing together these disparate elements, the album does not possess the cohesion that a collection of songs specifically written or chosen for a [Siberry] solo album would normally possess ; in fact, much of the material featured hails from traditional sources or was written by others. That said, overall, the visionary highs outweigh the occasional lows. In the former category, there’s Joe Jackson’s dreamy, piano driven “The Bridge.” Specifically co-written with Graeme Revell for the 1994 movie “**The Crow**,” till now “It Can’t Rain All The Time” only appeared on the [accompanying] soundtrack album. It is a welcome addition here, as are other Siberry penned soundtrack songs – “Calling All Angels” [“**Until The End Of The World**” 1991 & “**Pay It Forward**” 2001] and “Slow Tango” [“**Faraway So Close**” 1993]. It’s worth pointing out at this juncture that this collection is not meant in any way to be a definitive collection of Siberry side trips in song. For instance her hauntingly beautiful renditions of “Shenadoah” which acted as bookends to the 1997 Darol Anger *traditional song tribute* “**Heritage**” are not included here. Conversely, Jane’s “When Spring Comes” which first appeared on her Sheeba debut “**Teenager**” [1996] isn’t included here, although it appeared the following year on the soundtrack album to “**The Hanging Garden**.” The melody of the six-minute plus “Innig,” co-written with British born violin virtuoso, Nigel Kennedy, who accompanies Jane on piano, is in the main slow and ponderous and makes for arduous listening. The traditional and melancholy “She’s Like The Swallow” is given a new age interpretation by French avante-garde musician/composer Hector Zazou. Elsewhere there are a couple of tracks taken from recordings made during Peter Gabriel’s Real World Records Collaboration Week, circa 1993, plus a collaboration with Japanese recording artist Takafumi Sotoma. Pride of place here must surely go to Jane’s stirring tribute compilation “What I Think Of Laura Nyro” [which features a medley of Nyro compositions], plus the late Judee Sill’s “The Kiss” which appeared on one of last year’s finest albums, Ghostland’s “**Interview With An Angel**.”

Folkwax Rating 7 out of 10

Arthur Wood

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