



The Nature of Love

Whitney James | Damselily Productions/Stir Stick Music

By [Jakob Baekgaard](#)

Taking the step into professional jazz singing can be a test, but the challenge is gracefully overcome in this debut, *The Nature of Love*, by the young female singer Whitney James. In fact, it is hard to believe that this is James' first recording. The sculpted lines of her sensual, smoky voice could be mistaken for those of a seasoned diva who knows exactly when to break into the higher register and how to create intimacy through a whisper.



Helping out on the date is the immensely talented [Ingrid Jensen](#), whose muted trumpet sets the rainy night scene for the standard "Tenderly." The song is treated with care by James' slowly unfolding voice that wraps itself around the dripping piano of Joshua Wolff.

While most of the program comes from the Great American Songbook, including classics such as Irving Berlin's "How Deep Is the Ocean" and [George Gershwin](#) and [Jerome Kern](#)'s "Long Ago and Far Away," there's also room for more modern readings like the interpretation of [Jimmy Rowles](#)' "A Timeless Place (The Peacocks)" where [Norma Winstone](#)'s lyric is sung with crystalline clarity yet retains much of the unorthodox harmonizing that gives it a more contemporary feel.

The rhythm section of bassist [Matt Clohesy](#) and drummer Jon Wikan creates the perfect backdrop for James' silky voice. They play intuitively around her and swing with conviction when necessary. However, *The Nature of Love* is, as the title suggests, mostly about the ballads and James does them exceptionally well. While her voice doesn't convey the deep pain that love sometimes causes, it carries a sweet, melancholy longing, perfectly suited for a quiet dinner for two. James is a class act who manages to treat her topic with the serious sensuousness it deserves.

Track Listing: Tenderly; Whisper Not; A Timeless Place (The Peacocks); Long Ago and Far Away; My Love Is You; The Very Thought of You; How Deep Is the Ocean; Be Anything; In April.

Personnel: Whitney James: voice; Ingrid Jensen: trumpet and flugelhorn; Joshua Wolff: piano; Matt Clohesy: bass; Jon Wikan: drums.

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