

Retta and The Smart Fellas

They Took The Stars Out of Heaven

Western Swing: Is it Jazz or Country?

It's a question that's been haunting music listeners for over 70 years, since the genre was first heard in the honky-tonks and grange halls of Texas in the 1930's. Groups such as Bob Wills and The Texas Playboys and The Light Crust Doughboys combined traditional Western melodies with swinging jazz rhythms being popularized by big-city bands. Jukeboxes and radio shows such as The Grand Ole Opry and WLS Barn Dance brought Western swing to a mainstream national audience. No matter what you call it, Western swing will make you tap your feet, snap your fingers, and just feel good.

Leading the Western swing resurgence is Retta & The Smart Fellas from Portland, Oregon. Retta Christie grew up in rural Oregon listening to Western swing at the local grange hall on Saturday nights. She formed the first incarnation of Retta and The Smart Fellas when fresh out of college. The present group has been together since 1999, playing to enthusiastic reviews and growing audiences at clubs and festivals throughout the west. The group's first CD, "Rural Jazz" received top radio airplay in Europe. "Rural Jazz" was also nominated by the Academy of Western Artists (AWA) in several categories including, Western Swing Album of the Year (2002.)

In an age when most recordings are over-dubbed and over-processed with multiple tracks, Retta and The Smart Fellas remain true to the music. Each song on this CD was recorded live in the studio without the use of high-tech hocus-pocus. The results give the feeling that a group of friends came together in your home for a swinging Western jam session.

"They Took the Stars Out of Heaven" features nine standards, which showcase both Retta's and The Smart Fellas' versatility from hard driving polkas to lilting hymns. Jazzman Dave Frishberg wrote, "I grew up listening to this kind of music when I was a kid, so Retta's band hits me square in the memory department, where it counts. They're authentic Western swing players and they can swing you into bad health. I love hearing them in person, and their onstage charisma comes across on this recording."

KEY SELLING POINTS:

Appeals to crossover audiences of both jazz and country listeners.

National and International mailing to DJs

National Press Mailing-including Country Standard Time, No Depression, Country Music People, 3rd Coast Magazine. Reviews as of 6/2003 in 3rd Coast and Country Standard Time.

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Distributed By:

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Track Listing

1. They Took the Stars Out of heaven
 2. I love You Honey
 3. Farr Enough
 4. What Did You Expect Me to Do?
 5. Idaho
 6. Buffalo Polka
 7. Waitin' Just for You
 8. Does My Baby Call Me Honey, Yes Sir
 9. Precious Lord
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