

NELSON RIDDLE

“He gave new careers to Frank Sinatra and Linda Ronstadt.” This is a quote by Robert Windeler in a KCRW radio tribute to Nelson Riddle in 1985. Mr. Windeler goes on to say “Much of the best work of Ella Fitzgerald, Rosemary Clooney, and Peggy Lee was done in collaboration with him.” As his children, we have always been amazed at the sheer volume and variety of music he produced.

While there were several good arrangers in the 50’s and 60’s, Nelson Riddle stands out as probably the most prolific, as illustrated by “Laugh In” hosts Rowan and Martin who would periodically punctuate their comedic dialogue with “arranged by Nelson Riddle.”

NELSON RIDDLE was one of the greatest arrangers in the history of American popular music. He worked with many of the major pop vocalists of his day, but it was his immortal work with Frank Sinatra, particularly on the singer’s justly revered Capitol concept albums, that cemented Dad’s enduring legacy. He was a master of mood and subtlety, and an expert at drawing out a song’s emotional subtext. He was highly versatile in terms of style, mood and tempo, and packed his charts full of rhythmic and melodic variations and rich tonal colors that blended seamlessly behind the lead vocal line. He often wrote specifically for individual vocalists, keeping their strengths and limitations in mind and pushing them to deliver emotionally resonant performances. This is evidenced certainly in his work with Sinatra in the following quote from Charles Granata’s book “Sessions with Sinatra,“: “It quickly became apparent that Riddle, of all the arrangers the singer had worked with, complemented Sinatra’s talents better than anyone else.”



Ella Fitzgerald Sings The Johnny Mercer Song Book

Arranged and
Conducted by
Nelson Riddle



Mastered in DSD256



HIGH DEFINITION TAPE TRANSFERS

Dubbed "The First Lady of Song," Ella Fitzgerald was the most popular female jazz singer in the United States for more than half a century. In her lifetime, she won 13 Grammy awards and sold over 40 million albums.

Her voice was flexible, wide-ranging, accurate and ageless. She could sing sultry ballads, sweet jazz and imitate every instrument in an orchestra. She worked with all the jazz greats, from Duke Ellington, Count Basie and Nat King Cole, to Frank Sinatra, Dizzy Gillespie and Benny Goodman. (Or rather, some might say all the jazz greats had the pleasure of working with Ella.)

She performed at top venues all over the world, and packed them to the hilt. Her audiences were as diverse as her vocal range. They were rich and poor, made up of all races, all religions and all nationalities. In fact, many of them had just one binding factor in common - they all loved her.

Along with her Rodgers and Hart collection, this is one

of the best of Ella Fitzgerald's songbooks. Fitzgerald's assured and elegant voice is a perfect match for Mercer's urbane lyrics and Nelson Riddle's supple arrangements. In light of this decorous setting, it's not surprising that Mercer's swagger-heavy numbers like "I Wanna Be Around" and "One More For My Baby" are skipped in favor of more poised selections such as "Early Autumn" and "Skylark." Even traditionally hard-swinging numbers such as "Day In Day Out" and "Something's Gotta Give" are kept in check with Riddle's vaporous, flute-heavy backing and Fitzgerald's velvet tone. Slower numbers like "Laura" and "Midnight Sun" add dramatic contrast with their enigmatic tonal backdrops and elongated vocal phrasing. Fitzgerald's Mercer songbook has become something of an overlooked gem partly because of the popularity of her Cole Porter and Gershwin collections. It's a shame, because this songbook is beautifully executed by Fitzgerald and Riddle and contains wonderful Mercer collaborations with, among others, Harold Arlen and Hoagy Carmichael. This is definitely one for any Fitzgerald fan and not a bad introduction to her vast catalog.

Ella Fitzgerald Sings The Johnny Mercer Song Book

- 1 Too Marvelous For Words 2:27
- 2 Early Autumn 3:47
- 3 Day In - Day Out 2:42
- 4 Laura 3:39
- 5 This Time The Dream's On Me 2:51
- 6 Skylark 3:07
- 7 Single 'O 3:15
- 8 Something's Gotta Give 2:30
- 9 Travlin' Light 3:47
- 10 Midnight Sun 4:50
- 11 Dream 2:55
- 12 I Remember You 3:34
- 13 When A Woman Loves A Man 3:47

Vocals – Ella Fitzgerald
Arranged By, Conductor – Nelson Riddle
Alto Saxophone – Willie Smith
Clarinet – Buddy DeFranco
Piano – Paul Smith
Tenor Saxophone – Plas Johnson
Vibraphone – Frank Flynn
Recording Info: Released by Verve Records 1964
Engineer – Val Valentin
Producer – Norman Granz
Recorded At – Universal Recorders



For more info e-mail us:
admin@highdeftapetransfers.com
or visit our website:
www.highdeftapetransfers.com