



06/20/12 [Albums](#) [By Nick Mondello](#)

A Different Porgy and Bess David Linx/Maria Joao and the Brussels Jazz Orchestra

Different? Indeed. Distinctive? Absolutely. “A Different Porgy and Bess” featuring vocalists David Linx and Maria Joao with the Brussels Jazz Orchestra delivers a performance of taste, elegance and magnificence. This highly unique effort not only reverently bows to the Gershwin/Heyward classic, but, superbly and brazenly opens new musical vistas as relates performances of the well-known individual selections. With the consideration of the Miles Davis/Gil Evans effort – a purely instrumental interpretation – “A Different Porgy and Bess” assumes the distinction as *the* big band jazz plus vocal interpretation of the tale.

Award-winning vocalists Linx and Joao share a common performance thread here as their respective interpretations are simply superb – theatrically emotional and dramatic, yet swinging. Their depth of emotion and lyric interplay startles. The tandem marvelously works their way through the eleven songs (each arranged by a different arranger) with energy. Nothing is held back or rendered intimidated by the nature or historical gravitas of the content.

To their significant credit, Linx and Joao work superbly within the context of the jazz orchestra’s support. They swing and soar just as their instrumental counterparts do. The Brussels Jazz Orchestra puts forth an incredibly powerful, swinging performance of the brilliantly revised and arranged tunes. The eleven different arrangers each have put forth presentations that reveres as they revise and reinvent. The group’s ensemble and solo playing here are the equal of any big band jazz orchestra on the planet.

To call “A Different Porgy and Bess” another interpretation - which of course it is given the source material – dilutes and disrespects the effort. It is, hands down, a startling achievement all-around.

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