

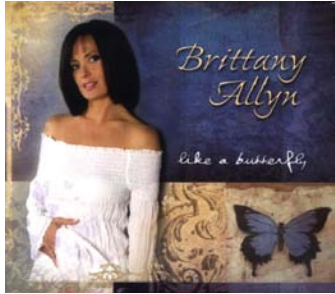
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CD REVIEWS

by *Larry Kelly*



Brittany Allyn **Like A Butterfly**

Mighty Pen Music Group MPMG
20071

★★★★

A highly refreshing listen, it's about time this vocalist stood in her own light!

You may be forgiven if the name Brittany Allyn fails to register because despite the fact that she has sung vocal harmonies on countless recordings, this is her first solo outing, leaving one to ponder why it has taken so long for the lady to make her recording debut. Raised in St. Stephen, Minnesota Brittany grew up listening to a wide range of music including classic country recordings belonging to her grandparents. Making the move to Nashville, Brittany was soon cutting demos, writing and engaging herself in studio work. Whilst performing in a club, she had the good fortune to be heard by Lorrie Morgan's manager who was most impressed. Brittany was in luck;

Lorrie was touring extensively and in need of a backing vocalist. She toured with Lorrie for a decade and can be heard singing harmony on seven of Ms Morgan's albums. Taking a short break, Brittany then toured with Toby Keith before returning to Lorrie for a year or so and then being asked to tour with George Jones, which she has been doing on his recent tours.

It should be made clear from the outset that, despite her country 'pedigree', LIKE A BUTTERFLY is not a country album. Brittany has written eight of the dozen songs and as a writer her lyrics are mature, literate and wholly engaging. they boast real class and I would go so far as to say that, almost without exception they could have been successfully recorded by the likes of Peggy Lee, Nancy Wilson, Ella Fitzgerald and divas of that calibre. That in itself should give readers some indication as to what to expect. Brittany's voice is expressive, soulful and her diction perfect. Given most tasteful backings by producer, Chris Nole, what we have are deliveries ranging from jazz, blues, adult pop, sultry torch songs and a touch of country blues, perfect for late night listening; soothing, sometimes seductive, but always engaging.

Brittany's original compositions include the opening track, *They Ain't Got*

Nothin' On You, a sassy jazz number which sets the tone for much of the album. Other originals in a similar vein are *She Does What She Wants*, *Money In The Bank* and the excellent closing track, *You're My Favorite Song*. There's a soulful, bluesy feel to *Bruised*, *Come Back To Me* and *Another Hot Day In The South* with something like *You Need Me* best described as a smouldering torch song. Punctuating these numbers come a couple of things which may well take the listener by surprise, Hank Williams' *Your Cheatin' Heart* and the classic Jimmie Davis composition, *You Are My Sunshine*, both delivered in a style which really does give them a new lease of life. There are many highlights on this album but a particularly pleasing song, one not written by Ms Allyn, is *Your Tears Tell On You*, which stylistically brought to mind the way the late Ray Charles chose to deliver country music back in the 1960's. LIKE A BUTTERFLY invites the listener to turn the lights down low, kick off their shoes, lie back and simply unwind. This is late night listening delivered by a classy performer and for those willing to set labels aside, well worth checking out. **LK**