

Rufus Wonder - The Radiant One - The Fedora Chronicles

This is one of those albums that take me back when I thought music and style would return to the way it used to be... Way back in the 1980's, when I became infatuated with The Golden Era, I try to consume or absorb everything I could. Perfect example of this is when I was worked at the Via Condotti Italian Restaurant on Saturday, I would sleep in the next morning because of how hard I worked and the long walk home. Once a local radio station started playing vintage music Sunday morning, I changed my routine and sleep patterns - I would wake up in time to hear the show. I would set my radio alarm clock to it, crawl on the stairs out of my bedroom in the basement then go into the kitchen and make a pot of coffee the instant after I tuned in the family's stereo system into that station, then if I had to I would crawl back into my room in the basement, I would do so and hammer out my writings down on an old type writer my grandmother have given to me before she moved down to Virginia before the ribbon went dry...

... All the while listening to the vintage music. If I had to go out on Sunday morning and do chores around the yard, I had my Walkman tuned to the same station. I was consumed with trying to listen to that show from beginning to end, listening to the earliest music recording, through the swing and jazz era, up until the birth of Rock and Roll. At that time, I was hoping for a resurgence of the style from that era. In a way, that time in my life was the early glimmers of what would later become **The Fedora Chronicles**.

From listening to Rufus Wonder and the Album "**The Radiant One**," I was taken back to that period in my life, back to the 1980's. For that reason, I think Rufus Wonder was the same way. This music echoes much of the Golden Era with a modern element to it to keep it fresh and current.

This album's sound takes us back to the Cotton Club and Cab Callaway while the other is more for the jazz of the fifties with a fusion of funk from the past few decades.

First off is Rufus Wonder's **The Radiant One**. Before you even open this CD you know that this guy is really one of us, a vintage aficionado – The Outfits he wears on the front and back of the cover is exactly like those

worn by the zoot suitors of the Nineteen Forties. There's also the Art Deco font and other artwork. It's as if this album cover is what people during the Golden Era thought albums in the future would look like.

As for the music, it's a great blend of music styles from that era and modern soul and funk. As I wrote earlier, this sound takes us back to the Night Clubs of the era and the closest artist who I can compare this to is Cab Callaway. Don't let the description on CD-Baby throw you off when you read - 80s influenced R&B with a hint of soul and Motown. Those of us who survived the 80's will tell you the resurgence of Thirties and Forties Retro began in the 80's. Does "The Radiant One" sound like music in the 80's? Sure, but my ear says this sound just as much if not more of an earlier era. So I can't split hairs. If the artists of that era had access to the instruments, production techniques and recording technology of today – this is an example of what it would have sounded like.

There are only five songs on this one, each one is just as strong as the other – "**Tell Me So**," "**Stuck On You**," The title track "**The Radiant One**," "Hey, Sexy Lady" and the album comes to a close with an instrumental of the title track. Just like a lot of other new artists with a lot of promise, this album is just too short. It's decent, high quality music with production values.

"**Tell Me So**" - To an extent, Rufus Wonder sounds like he's channeling every guy who wants a woman to stop playing hard to get and just come out to say how she feels.

"**Stuck On You**" - Behind every great man, there's a woman that's his muse - and that's the narrative of this song.

"**The Radiant One**" - Rufus Wonder's Anthem - song of love about how one "Radiates" with beauty.

"**Hey, Sexy Lady**" - "... Most modern song - a mellow Rap with a pure funky beat and a touch of a salute to Barry White.