

Sat Jul 12, 2008

**NEWARK STAR-LEDGER**

**Calabria Foti: "A Lovely Way to Spend an Evening" (MoCo)**

by Zan Stewart

Italian-born vocalist and violinist Calabria Foti is an ace Los Angeles-based jazz artist who couples her substantial musicality with the emotive capacity to get inside a song and bring it alive. Working with top SoCal musicians headed by trombonist and arranger Bob McChesny -- and at points including a 27-piece string section -- Foti digs with panache into a wealth of evergreens. The rarely-heard Gershwin-DeSylva gem, "Do It Again," spotlights the richness of Foti's voice, and McChesny's sweet tones over the strings. Noble's "The Touch of Your Lips" finds the singer both spiritedly delivering the lyrics, and scatting solidly, with guitarist Larry Koonse and bassist Trey Henry telling the instrumental stories. Porter's "All of You" has a bubbling rhythmic undercurrent, which Foti's rides with lan, her enunciation spot on. "Close Your Eyes" has a like approach; here the singer drops in a lengthy scat that leads to Rob Lockart's potent tenor saxophone.



<http://www.jazzweekly.com/>

**Calabria Foti**

**A Lovely Way To Spend An Evening**

MoCo Records

By George W. Harris

**Not since Julie London put out discs like "All Through the Night" has a lady put out such a seductive plate like the one cooked up by vocalist Calabria Foti. Produced by trombonist Bob McChesney (of Big Phat Band fame), this disc is a late night delight of mood and romance. Not many could pull it off convincingly (pun possibly intended), but Foti has a Francis Wayne huskiness and allure to her voice that makes songs like "The Touch of Your Lips" and "All Of You" irresistibly convincingly. Except for the hard bop burp of "Close Our Eyes", the emphasis on stylized nuance and innuendo that is rarely approached in this day of blatancy. The mix of McChesney's trombone**

**and the occasional inclusion of strings on the pieces make the head swoon with delight. I'm telling you, if my wife had caught me listening to Foti's glazing delivery on the drawn out and tempting "Do It Again", she'd have thrown me on the couch for the night! This woman is not safe to be around! Not recommended for those with high blood pressure. Her voice might be the last thing you hear before they rush you to the ambulance with a coronary.**

*(This is one of the best music blog sites. Jordan's a great writer. MB)*  
<http://blogcritics.org/archives/2008/07/02/210730.php>



Music Review:

## Calabria Foti - A Lovely Way to Spend an Evening

Written by Jordan Richardson

Published July 02, 2008

Born into a family of musicians in upstate New York, Calabria Foti grew up wholly absorbed in music. With both of her parents being highly trained and enormously talented individuals, they passed many a nugget of musical prominence down to young Calabria and she soaked up the talent like a sponge.

By 12, Calabria was kicking butt in jazz clubs and singing with her parents and their associates. She already knew how to groove on several instruments, including a serious knack for the violin. Drenched and baptized in jazz and classical, young Ms. Foti had her destiny carved out for her at a very early age. With influences from Ella Fitzgerald and Judy Garland, Calabria knew she wanted to connect with an audience and touch hearts in the same way those great singers had done.

Fast-forward to present day and Ms. Foti is using her incredible understanding of music to do just that.

2005 saw her debut record, *When a Woman Loves a Man*, pick up plenty of accolades. Ms. Foti was getting noticed. By the time her second record (2007's *A Lovely Way to Spend an Evening*) dropped, she was receiving praise from the masters of the industry.

"One of my great pleasures in life is listening to a beautiful voice. This recording of Calabria Foti's voice is some of the most beautiful and artistic music I have ever heard," said Johnny Mathis. That's right, that Johnny Mathis.

With similar words of praise from the likes of Johnny Mandel, Chris Botti, Jorge Calandrelli, and Dave Koz, it's safe to say that Ms. Foti's dreams of touching hearts have become realized.

*A Lovely Way to Spend an Evening* is, if you'll absolve the truly obvious cliché, just that. With ten elegant songs, Calabria's second album is a sultry and silky album certain to steam up the windows.

Ms. Foti's enchanting voice coos over the tender bossa nova gait of "Love Me as Though There is No Tomorrow," a song once recorded by Mathis. Her intonations of longing for love are stunning, as is the arresting nylon string guitar solo from Larry Koonse.

Calabria continues in that fashion throughout the record, charming listeners with her take on Cole Porter's "All of You" and unleashing an impressive rendition of a Peggy Lee medley ("When Lights are Low/Linger in My Arms").

Calabria Foti's second album is a scorcher. Destined for greatness, her voice is capable of enchantment and the graceful way in which she achieves her exquisite sounds deserves more than a few listens. A Lovely Way to Spend an Evening is also A Lovely Way to Spend an Afternoon or A Lovely Way to Spend a Morning. For great vocal jazz at any time of the day or night, look no further than Calabria Foti.

Chris Spector  
Midwest Record  
[www.midwestrecord.com](http://www.midwestrecord.com)  
[www.myspace.com/midwestrecord](http://www.myspace.com/midwestrecord)

**CALABRIA FOTI / A Lovely Way to Spend an Evening:** A type A, over achieving LA studio rat that was raised by musical parents that loved her and gave her a love of the kind of Americana music that was extant before it came to mean the hybrid country music we call Americana today serves up a grand vista of adult jazz/vocal pop ala Peggy Lee and the rest from that era, calling upon songs from that era that haven't been beaten to death even of they were popular standards in their time. An accomplished, sure footed, sexy album, if she wants to spend her time as a vocalist, she's sure to hit the heights in very short order. Pass this gem up at your own risk.  
23-002 (MoCo)