

BARBARA ROSENE

JAZZ VOCALIST

Review by Scott Yanow

All Music Guide

Winter, 2008

During her career, Barbara Rosene has become one of the top vocal interpreters of songs from the 1925-1932 period in addition to sounding quite comfortable performing swing era tunes. In fact, at this writing she is touring with the Harry James Orchestra. On *It Was Only a Sun Shower*, she sticks to the “jazz age” and early Depression eras. As usual, she hints in spots of Annette Hanshaw and, to a lesser degree, Ruth Etting, but she has long developed her own voice within the classic jazz idiom. Her tone is beautiful, it is very easy to understand the words she sings, and she gives a light swing to every number. On the 23 selections, 14 different instrumental combinations are utilized. Only “Jeannine, I Dream of Lilac Time” (which has a particularly rewarding arrangement by Peter Martinez) utilizes the full group. Rosene excels whether performing duets with pianist Conal Fowkes or guitarist Craig Ventresco, or with larger units. She whistles on two songs, gives new life to “Tip Toe Through the Tulips” (performing the verse), and performs a wide variety of hot dance numbers from the early days. The musicians, which include cornetist Jon-Erik Kellso, are skilled and quite versatile, whether jamming ensembles or playing inventive arrangements. *It Was Only a Sun Shower* is recommended to fans of ‘20s music and early jazz-inspired vocalists.