

**CD Review—
La Tanya Hall: *Say Yes***

By Mike Telin



If a singer has a beautiful voice, yet doesn't deliver the lyrics like they're talking to you, your attention will only be held for so long. But when vocalist [La Tanya Hall](#) sings the opening line to the Nat Adderley classic *All you need to say*, you just want to shout out, 'that's right, give me some more advice.' The song also serves as the perfect opening track for her latest recording, *Say Yes*, on Blue Canoe Records.

The excellent ensemble Andy Milne and Unison — Andy Milne (piano), John Hébert (bass) and Clarence Penn (drums), with guest trumpeter Michael Leonhart — assist Hall in

Say Yes, her first full-length recording in a decade. She brings a full, alluring color-palette, impeccable diction, and an expansive vocal range to the album's eleven tracks. Her distinct interpretations have you hanging on to every word she sings.

You can hear this album live during a CD release concert on Friday, December 20 at 8:00 pm when the ensemble appears at the Bop Stop. Tickets are available [online](#).

Some notable tracks include Raymond Hubble's Puccini-inspired *Poor Butterfly*, a Latin tinged approach to Benny Golson's *Whisper Not*, Thelonious Monk's *Well You Needn't* and a stunningly beautiful take on Cole Porter's *Ev'ry Time We Say Good-Bye*. But it is Hall's silky, flexible voice and her seductive, soft scatting that make her duet with bassist John Hébert during Oscar Hammerstein's *Softly as in a Morning Sunrise*, the highlight of the album.

The recording also features wonderful versions of Jonatha Brooke's *Because I told you so*, Clare Fischer's *Pensativa*, Fats Waller's *Jitterbug Waltz*, and Thelonious Monk's and

Dizzy Gillespie's *Pannonica/Con Alma. Say Yes*, concludes with a haunting rendition of the Joni Mitchell classic, *Fiddle and the Drum*.

Now that we're officially into the dark days of winter, get this album, pour a glass of whatever makes you warm, and relax with someone special — let La Tanya Hall provide the atmosphere.

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