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CD Reviews - March 2010
by [George Fendel](#), and [Kyle O'Brien](#)

Reviews by George Fendel

The Nature Of Love, Whitney James, vocals.

Seattle's Whitney James, a much admired singer among that city's hip jazz folk, debuts here with an album which satisfies in so many respects. First, take a look at the careful choice of tunes. She's about spot-on perfect on Benny Golson's "Whisper Not," never succumbing to the temptation of the tune's possibilities of overdoing it to somehow prove that she's the real deal. James is brave enough to take on Jimmy Rowles' gorgeous (but extremely challenging) "The Peacocks." It's a tune that by now has established itself as a jazz standard, but it gains new freshness with Norma Winstone's lyric as "A Timeless Place." Other little subtleties, surprises and highlights: the rarely heard introduction to "Long Ago and Far Away"; her clever use of the closing phrases of "The Very Thought of You" to open the song; the tension release as the rhythm section opens up on "How Deep Is the Ocean"; and a Bill Evans tune which has somehow escaped even an Evans freak like me, called "In April" -- a lilting, life-is-good kind of melody. Put all this and more together with James's brisk trio of Joshua Wolf, piano, Matt Clohesy, bass, and Jon Wikan, drums, and add a bonus: Ingrid Jensen's trumpet and flugelhorn is a plus on several of the tunes, especially the ballads. This is a well thought-out CD from a singer who deserves the kudos sure to come her way.

Self-Produced, 2009, 51:30.