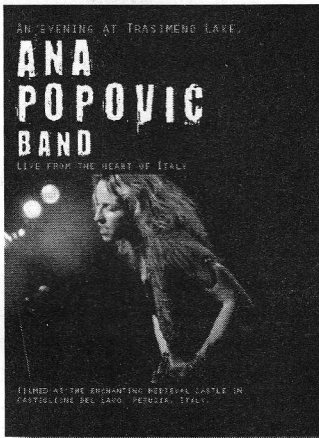


DVD & CD REVIEWS



ANA POPOVIC BAND *An Evening at Trasimeno Lake* ArtisteXclusive DVD

Awhile back in another publication I noted that pretty women wielding electric guitars are viewed as a sexy marketing combo and mentioned that a Warner-Reprise exec once bragged to me that then new artist Bonnie Raitt and her Telecaster where "shaped the same!" Nowadays no label bigwig would dare say something so sexist, but as blues fans tend to be male, pretty women in the music-biz still have a leg up, so to speak, in terms of finding an audience and getting contracts. The Ruf label has practically specialized in such signings.

Some of Ruf's women players have proved themselves to be more than marketable faces, especially Ana Popovic who has put out three titles on the label and two more with Eclecto Groove. *An Evening at Trasimeno Lake* is her latest project, this time a DVD on the ArtisteXclusive imprint. Her performance was recorded at a 13th-century

castle in Italy, a scenic locale worthy of travelogues and a lovely backdrop for a night-time show.

Popovic, who was born in Belgrade back before the breakup of Yugoslavia, fronts an eight-piece band and works through a lengthy set of mostly blues-rock originals. There's also a bit of jazz and funk in the mix and, yes, she looks good playing them all. But then no less than Luther Allison first spotted her as a promising guitarist and recommended her to bookers.

Tracks include Popovic's own "Wrong Woman," "Is This Everything There Is," "Nothing Personal," "Doubt Everyone But Me" and "Blind for Love," as well as covers of Snooky Pryor's "How'd You Learn to Shake It Like That" and Kevin Bowe's "Love Fever." They're mostly variations on the standard "good-love-gone-bad" theme that figures into so much music, but Popovic keeps it fresh with her vocals and guitar playing, especially her use of bottleneck. The 124-minute DVD also includes a solo, un-amped acoustic performance and a lengthy interview segment.

— *Bill Wasserzieher*

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