

New album reviews: **Ben E. King**

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Ben E. King, "Heart & Soul" (CanAm). 3 1/2 stars.

Fifty years after **Ben E. King** co-wrote and scored one of the most unforgettable hits of his era with "Stand by Me," it's good to see the man is still making music that is sophisticated, smooth and timeless.

"Heart & Soul" is a collection of songs that would make a great gift for your favorite valentine, a set of soft love songs – many of them classics – sung with a tender touch by this Rock and Roll Hall of Famer.

With elegant backing by pianists Larry Willis and Jon Mayer, as well as smooth jazz solos courtesy of folks like tenor saxophonist Javon Jackson on "Since I Fell For You," and trumpet great Randy Brecker on "I Only Have Eyes for You," and "When I Fall in Love," the mood stays consistently romantic throughout.

And whether he's delivering a refreshing arrangement of "Heart and Soul," or wrapping his soulful sounds around "My Funny Valentine," King sounds warm and resonant. Tracks to download: "Heart and Soul," "Since I Fell for You."