



**Great Voices – In-akustic Reference Sound Edition – [TrackList follows] In-akustic INAK 7501 HQCD, 71:59, \*\*\*\*:**

(Featuring an international collection of singers)

In-akustic has released a compilation of previously recorded material that has been re-mastered to reflect the acoustics of their mastering process. *Great Voices* features singers in a variety of genres and material that was previously released on various independent labels (Red House, Delicious, Stockfisch, CrossCut, Rounder Europe, Train Wreck and their own label). Described as optimized spatial representation, improved dynamics with enhanced low frequencies, the tracks emphasize the vocal tonality and the acoustic timbre of the instrumentation.

Opening the album is Evie Sands (an In-akustic artist) with a bluesy groove-laden pop song, “While I Look At You”. The lower end mix picks up the steady drum beat as the silky guitar chords chime in. As with all of the tracks, the voice is the key instrument. Sands has a sensuous, forlorn quality that flows into the music. A similar mix is heard on “By The Light” by British r&b singer Miller Anderson (Spencer Davis Group, T-Rex), but in a rock n’ soul arrangement.

It seems that the aesthetics of the re-mastering shine a favorable light on the folk/country material (especially the female vocalists). Lynn Miles (Rounder Europe) has a reedy soprano and the inclusion of mandolin adds some texture to the song. Fellow Rounder artist, Cheryl Wheeler showcases a versatile range on the breezy “Walk Around Downtown”. Lucy Kaplansky (Red House) infuses a Celtic inflection into a tender ballad (“The Tide”). On most of the cuts the emphasis is on the acoustic guitar and vocals.

Several artists from German audiophile label Stockfisch Records are included. Folk singer Allan Taylor exudes a relaxed baritone that blends perfectly with the fluid, quietly elegant acoustic guitar. Another raspy-voiced singer, David Munyon (“Words Of Love”) delivers a restrained performance. Melancholic nuance pervades “Argyle Bridge” with a decidedly American classic folk interpretation by Steve Strauss. Again, the tones of the guitar are dulcet and subtle. On a different note, Chris Jones (“No Sanctuary Here”) injects gospel with soulful lead and backup vocals.

The liner notes for *Great Voices* are very specific to technical details of the proprietary RESO (Reference Sound Mastering) system. There is an unusual level of warmth in the tonality, not often found on digital recordings. [This is still a standard 44.1K/16-bit CD that plays on any deck—so it can’t go in our Hi-Res Section—but the improvements in mastering and pressing actually do result in enhanced stereo sonics vs. the typical CD...Ed.] The song selection is good, but has an uneven momentum.

**TrackList:**

Evie Sands – While I Look At You  
 Chris Jones – No Sanctuary Here  
 Cheryl Wheeler – Walk Around Downtown  
 Udo Schild – All The Lonely Girls  
 Miller Anderson – By The Light  
 Kimberly M’Carver – Silver Wheeled Pony  
 Phillipp Fankhauser – I’m Finished Here  
 Patrick Largounez & Friedemann – Petit, Tu Viens Petit  
 Lynn Miles – 1000 Lovers  
 David Munyon – Words Of Love

Michael Schenker & Gary Barden – Lost  
 Allan Taylor – The Traveller  
 Martelle – Up And Away  
 Lucy Kaplansky – The Tide  
 Leigh Blond – You Can't Always Keep The One's You Love  
 Steve Strauss – Argyle Bridge

—Robbie Gerson

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