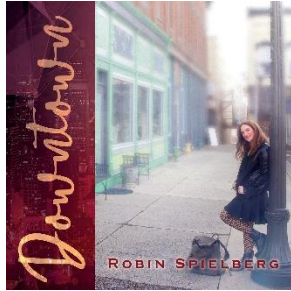


Robin Spielberg

Downtown

robinspielberg.com



Well-known pianist and composer **Robin Spielberg** just released her new album **Downtown**. All of the music on this album resembling sentimental favorites is purely deliberate. Choosing through nine decades of popular tunes Spielberg reminds us of one of the many reasons we listen to music in the first place. Music builds memories. Through her thirteen emotional renderings on *Downtown*, Robin accompanies us as we walk down memory lane and remember all the good things and none of the bad.

To show how serious she is, Robin starts out with a lighthearted song from *The Muppet Movie* called **The Rainbow Connection**. You can almost imagine Kermit's soft, folksy voice as the song is played in a splendid piano arrangement. Like wishing on a star, Robin's *Rainbow Connection* is a wonderful way to make your dreams come true.

A gentle rendition of Sting's **Fields of Gold** is next and Spielberg's earnest performance would make a wonderful overture to a symphonic version. The music is a witness to the test of time of a love as it travels through season after season of growth and change. The echoing piano notes resonate like heartbeats that can be heard long after the harvest.

Next, Robin offers up the title tune **Downtown**, an early sixties hit by British pop singer Petula Clark. The generation that wandered aimlessly about looking for answers was encouraged to find them *Downtown*. There aren't many that cannot hum at least one line from this No. 1 hit song. *"When you're alone and life is making you lonely, you can always go downtown
When you've got worries, all the noise and the hurry, seems to help, I know, downtown"*.

Robin gives us a bright rendition of the Carpenter's unforgettable hit, **Close to You**, a solid gold winner penned by Hal David and Burt Bacharach back in 1970. Her upbeat offering is a vaudevillian version full of twists and turns, but she remains true to the original theme. This could be a song performed in the park on a sunny day or while the merry-go-round spins endlessly to everyone's enjoyment.

A Broken Hearted Me is a tune recorded by Canadian songstress Anne Murray that reached the top position on several charts in the U.S. and Canada. It is a sentimental ballad that Robin transforms into a major production number with her strong, emotional piano theme. Don't worry, your heart will remember the words.

I clearly remember **Oh Babe, What Would You Say**, but not like this. Robin turns Hurricane Smith's 70's hit song into something that comes out of a Victrola from the 1930s. It gives it a

timeless feel. For many, it was a one hit wonder, but it was thought about enough for singers like Mama Cass Elliot and Liza Minnelli to give it a whirl.

I almost didn't recognize Bob Seeger's **Still the Same**, but when it dawned on me it became all too familiar. Robin really hits an expressive note with this bluesy ballad. What is memorable in the original song is the driving piano lead, but Robin gives it a more delicate touch, softening the melody with a gentle, music box technique.

And speaking of Mama Cass, the final song on Downtown is **Dream A Little Dream of Me**. One of the most underrated singers of the sixties and seventies, Cass Elliot as a solo performer and a member of the Mamas and the Papas had a voice that could fill a space with love like no other. Ironically, her performances are making a comeback via social media. Robin's powerful piano version of the song is as strong and bold as the original songstress made it with a dollop of honky-tonk for good measure. One of the best on the album.

Others titles include Don't It Make My Brown Eyes Blue, Shallow, A Thousand Years, Crazy, and Drivers' License. Robin Spielberg has been creating great music since the early nineties and Downtown is her 23rd album. During Covid restrictions she popularized weekly live performances from home called Robin's Piano Bar. You don't need an evening out on the town. All you need is Robin Spielberg's Downtown to enjoy days gone by and new memories to come. Highly listenable. - R J Lannan, Artisan Music Reviews