

Uptown Vocal Jazz Quartet

Reviews

"You're EVERYTHING, the whole package. Your lyrics, music, arrangements... fantastic! My new discovery." - **Richie Cole, legendary jazz saxophonist**

"A whiz, a star, a revelation. The group is fabulous." **Bob Dorough, legendary jazz singer/songwriter**

"Decades in the future, some critic is going to be writing that a new vocal group reminds him of UVJQ. They indeed are making the form their own...They are remarkable vocalists who blend stylish harmonies with dynamic solos in a format that parallels that of the typical instrumental jazz quartet." - **Jack Goodstein, *Blogcritics***

"You are an Important 'Star' in the Jazz vocal sky for us all. Keep your leading light beam shining." - **Frank DeMiero, *Executive Producer, DeMiero Jazz Fest; Owner, Sound Music Publications***

"The Uptown Vocal Jazz Quartet is an exceptional vocal group. Add to this, alto saxophonist Richie Cole, a great admirer of the UJVQ, and the stage is set for a hugely entertaining hour of music making. The flawless harmonizing of the singers, along with some vocal solo moments, blend well with the alto saxophonist's outstanding solos. This fine set is a swinging assurance that this kind of jazz singing is in good hands. The album is dedicated to ManTran founder Tim Hauser who died recently; not only is this appropriate, he would surely have approved."- **Bruce Crowther, *Jazz Mostly***

"An endlessly hip album from the UPTOWN VOCAL JAZZ QUARTET with RICHIE COLE. They swing, have great arrangements by UVJQ member Ginny Carr, and project a sense of fun in everything that they sing. Alto saxophonist Cole has been a stalwart in carrying on the bebop tradition. His Alto Madness groups have been known for the excitement that they generate, and that excitement is present on this recording. Simply stated, this album is a complete gas." - **Joe Lang, *Jersey Jazz Journal***

"This quartet demands to be heard, loved and respected for its brilliance and daring. You have to marvel at the writing as well as the interpretations of the group's vocalistics by the ineffable beauty of Richie Cole's playing...Accomplished, extrovert performances... close creative partnership between the singers is immediately heard from the opening...One of the finest albums that you will hear this year." - **Raul da Gama, *Jazz Journalists Association***

"And now, well into the new century, the Uptown Vocal Jazz Quartet takes hipness to a new level, and swings with élan on Vocal Madness...The tricky lyrics show the group's sleek and elastic improvisations...Although this Washington DC based group has received some well-deserved accolades, it merits a wider audience." - **Pierre Giroux, *Audiophile Audition***

"The vet sax man that was one of Manhattan Transfer's secret weapons stumbled upon the DC vocal quartet and flipped. Almost like a hidden time piece that escaped from the vaults after hiding in a corner for years, this killer jazz vocal set hits all the right notes and will be tickling your fancy before you know what's happened. Killer stuff so thoroughly in the pocket, hearing almost isn't believing. It's that hot." - **Chris Spector, *Midwest Record***

"Old school moving to new cool. As versatile and entertaining as any vocal group you may hear. The Uptown Vocal Jazz Quartet takes their original influences of some iconic masters and transforms them into their own unique flavor and unforgettable sound..."

Richie Cole with the Uptown Vocal Jazz Quartet is like sprinkles on ice cream, makes a good thing even better with Vocal Madness! There are a plethora of vocal groups working the jazz scene that simply bang out some old school standards with little originality and minimal soul. Vocal Madness is a breath of fresh air with tight harmonies drawn from a brilliant color palette of sound and harmonic texture. This is not a release of swing for the sake of swing but a harmonic exploration of vocal possibilities with tunes that are remarkably personal and allow the listener to come along for the ride. The voices will give you goose bumps, the arrangements will grab your ear while the stories will touch your heart. A tremendous effort once again from The Uptown Vocal Jazz Quartet with Vocal Madness!" - **Brent Black, *CriticalJazz***

"From start to finish this is serious music making that communicates on all levels, and while bringing a smile to the face serves to remind us just what is that we love so much about this wonderful sound we call jazz." – **Nick Lea, *JazzViews***

"I have just discovered a new group who call themselves Uptown Vocal Jazz Quartet and they are sensational...If DownBeat still had a Vocal Group category in their Polls, I have no doubt that Uptown Vocal Jazz Quartet would win. I really enjoyed the last album they made, and their new one is even more impressive as they partner up with Richie Cole. The meeting up of two fine talents, the outstanding UVJQ and the multitalented Cole, who is still playing so well." - **Don Albert, *South African Correspondent for DownBeat (USA) and Jazz Journal International (UK)***

"I've been wondering where the bebop voices had gone and Uptown Vocal Jazz Quartet is the current answer to this missing musical link. Ginny Carr stands out as an arranger/composer on several of these original songs and Richie Cole shines in the prolific composing department as well. These four vocalists sound like a small choir: rich, lush and harmonically innovative." - **Dee McNeill, *LA Jazz***

"Richie Cole has long been famed for his bebop style and upbeat creativity, and if you think he's lost an ounce of spark since emerging in the mid-70s, think again. The guy sparkles throughout the entire CD, whether vamping, accompanying, soloing, or just kicking up his heels for the hell of it. A dozen cuts of non-stop cookin' and mellow balladry, almost every inch written by Cole and/or Quartet leader Ginny Carr. In the end, the base five were made for each other, and Cole even said so, exclaiming they were his "new discovery, the whole package!" Amen, amen, amen, and I sure as hell hope they remain entranced of one another, 'cause the pairing is quintessential." - **Mark S. Tucker, *FAME***

"The close harmony work of the quartet is exceptional, as is the rhythm backing. You'll be hooked on both the band's singing and Ginny Carr's wonderful writing." **Ian Tiele, *International Association of Jazz Record Collectors' Journal***

"Forget the old standards. These tight harmonies and hand-crafted lyrics will have you believing they've been around for forever." - **Doug Boynton, *62nd Street***

"*Vocal Madness* by Uptown Vocal Jazz Quartet is intelligent, incredibly tight, and, frankly, perfect jazz singing. The original material is worthy of the same praise. Richie Cole, alto legend and unofficial 5th member of Manhattan Transfer, is everywhere on this recording. Easy enough to draw the conclusion, but if you ask Richie he will tell you that Uptown Vocal Jazz Quartet "Has it." Says it all. Richie was right. Uptown Vocal Jazz Quartet has massive amounts of "It." - **Steve Martin, WOBO-FM**

"Alto great Richie Cole's latest project is an admirable collaboration with the Uptown Vocal Jazz Quartet. The singers are a classy throwback to the vocal groups of the 1950s although a tad hipper than most. Together with Cole and a fine rhythm section, they perform six Richie Cole songs, two others (his emotional rendition of "Pure Imagination" and "I Love Lucy") from his repertoire and four originals by Ginny Carr. *Vocal Madness* is a delight." - **Scott Yanow, LA Jazz**

"A record that oozes swing at any time, from beginning to end, in length and breadth. The perfect understanding between the singers, rhythm section, the beautiful alto sax, all contribute to make this easy to listen to music without losing sight of the technical and artistic level. A great record that puts you in a good mood, and that will not disappoint fans of the genre." - **Vittorio Lo Conte, Music Zoom (ITALY)**

"The music is full of warmth, swinging rhythm and a full exploration of the possibility of the harmonic vocal quartet, with its own unique sound and taste. Rich, ingeniously arranged harmonic textures that sway to the rhythm of expressive melodies executed in perfect harmony and warm tone." - **Robert Ratajczak, LongPlay Reviews (POLAND)**

"Vocal jazz fans will go crazy for "Vocal Madness." The quartet's harmonies are impeccable, and boy do they swing! Richie Cole is magnificent on alto sax." - **Randy Morse, The Best of Brazil (Beyond Brazil)**

"A delightful hour of musical excitement. Congratulations to Cole and Carr for this wonderful collaboration. May there be many more!" - **Norman Vickers, Jazz Society of Pensacola**

"Love the new CD. The listeners do too." - **David Kenney, WBAI-FM**

"Love everything about that record." - **Jack Frieden, Vocal Sound of Jazz**

"Tight harmonies, rich interpretations, and a lot of fun! Jump for joy - the pleasure is here!" - **Grady Harp, Amazon.com Hall of Fame/Top 100 Reviewer**

"Uptown Vocal Jazz Quartet with Richie Cole "Vocal Madness" is excellent and the superb Richie Cole is just that "Superb!" - **Peter Kuller, Radio Adelaide, Australia**

"I really appreciate the sound that this group is perpetuating. A rare breed." - **Michael Gourrier, host of "Bebop and Beyond," WRIR, Richmond**

"You will not want to miss *Vocal Madness*, where the Uptown Vocal Jazz Quartet sings scintillating arrangements of Richie's music as well as original songs by the quartet's Ginny Carr, with the saxophonic excitement of Richie Cole adding even more oomph to the proceedings. Terrific CD---the arrangements, the singing, and Richie as well." - **Bob McWilliams, Kansas Public Radio**

"The Harmony, Rhythm and Improvisation of "Vocal Madness" is a listener's delight for something fresh in Vocalese." - **Jay Edwards, "Jazztones, "WCLK, Atlanta**

"I'm in love with your music." - **Rich Germaine, President, Jazz Radio Network**

"Not only terrific singing, but sharp songwriting skills, as well." - **Jack Hopke, WWNO, New Orleans**

"Exceptional tight-harmony group ... symmetry and individual vocals that blend so well. Yes, they really are that good and worthy of serious attention. We need what they offer... They've got it. They are carrying the torch." - **John Hoglund, Cabaret Scenes Magazine**

"If by now you know what to expect from the UVJQ and Richie Cole you won't be disappointed by this recording. No compromises on either side and nicely integrated." - **Robert Rusch, Cadence Magazine (April 2015)**

"Clever and swinging and completely uncontrived." - **George W. Harris, Jazz Weekly**

"Rich, ingeniously arranged harmonies...swinging and evocative brand of vocalese."
- **Mike Joyce, The Washington Post**

"UVJQ is continuing the tradition of vocalese hipness, much to the satisfaction of those of us who love Eddie Jefferson, King Pleasure and Lambert, Hendricks & Ross. But they add another whole dimension to the tradition with new original compositions and engaging original lyrics... UVJQ mixes the old and new in a charming, original way."
- **Amy Duncan, Jazz History Online**

"Crisp melodies, excellent tone and warm harmonies typify the set. A rich and enjoyable experience." - **D. Oscar Groomes, O's Place Jazz Magazine**

"Ginny's lyrics carry the message, from the opening salute to Eddie Jefferson ("He never got the acclaim/(yet) he's the one that put vocalese in the game") to the closing promise of even better things to come ("Imagine the fun we'll invent / it might even be fun to repent"). Her lyrics are full of gentle ironies and surprising twists. She's a singer/songwriter several cuts above the general run of many who advertise themselves as such. A lovely album, full of affirmation and achingly authentic acumen. Amen." - **Alan Bargebuhr, Cadence Magazine**

"Clever vocalese lyrics coupled with a complex line and a killing band...The quartet is in full harmonic force." - **C. Michael Bailey, All About Jazz**

★★★★★ **LOVE THIS ALBUM!!!**

By [SHERRI J](#) on June 10, 2016

Format: Audio CD | [Verified Purchase](#)

THIS ALBUM IS OUTSTANDING!!! I HAVE BEEN IN LOVE WITH THE MANHATTAN TRANSFER SINCE DAY ONE. I NEVER THOUGHT THAT ANY GROUP COULD EVEN COME CLOSE. WELL, UVJQ DOES JUST THAT. VOICES ARE EXCELLENT. SONGS ARE EXCELLENT. WRITING IS EXCELLENT. HARMONY IS EXCELLENT. HOPING THAT THEY MAKE MANY MORE ALBUMS. I AM A FAN.

▶ [Comment](#) | Was this review helpful to you? [Report abuse](#)

★★★★★ **Brilliant method to this madness**

By [Wouter Kellerman](#) on October 17, 2015

Format: MP3 Music | [Verified Purchase](#)

This record is a stunning display of great jazz vocals! IT'S THE SAME THING EVERYWHERE, BOSSA NOVA EYES and D.C. FAREWELL, all have breathtaking work on the drums, piano and guitar, but the staccato vocals are really out of this world. A lighter, slightly poignant feel runs on SO YOU'RE GONE, a mood of collecting one's self probably. VANNA BONTA with the 6/8 blues kind of feel is simply great!

▶ [Comment](#) | Was this review helpful to you? [Report abuse](#)

★★★★★ **A vocal marvel**

By [Jean-Philippe Epitoux](#) on June 9, 2015

Format: Audio CD

"So You're Gone" is definitely one of the most beautiful thing I've heard since I have played and listened to music, that is since the 50's (I am now 73). .Holley Shokey's voice is just incredible. Just thinking of it gives me the goosebumps. Words are not enough to describe my emotion.

▶ [Comment](#) | One person found this helpful. Was this review helpful to you? [Report abuse](#)

★★★★★ **What a blast!**

By [Armickbe](#) on December 12, 2014

Format: Audio CD

Over an hour of varied and lyrical creativity, exploring many sub-genres. If we had more productions like this, jazz could become the American popular music it once was.

▶ [Comment](#) | 4 people found this helpful. Was this review helpful to you? [Report abuse](#)

★★★★★ **The CD is just AWESOME. The group sound so good plan to see ...**

By [tina caldwell](#) on September 16, 2015

Format: Audio CD | [Verified Purchase](#)

The CD is just AWESOME. The group sound so good plan to see them in Baltimore October 10 ,2915. But I give thanks to Sirius radio For playing them

▶ [Comment](#) | Was this review helpful to you? [Report abuse](#)

★★★★★ **A 5-star treat.**

By [Ann M](#) on June 18, 2016

Format: MP3 Music | [Verified Purchase](#)

Creative musical genius, perfectly presented.

▶ [Comment](#) | Was this review helpful to you? [Report abuse](#)

★★★★★ **Five Stars**

By [Amazon Customer](#) on February 23, 2016

Format: Audio CD | [Verified Purchase](#)

My new favorite jazz vocal group! Wonderful!

▶ [Comment](#) | Was this review helpful to you? [Report abuse](#)
