

Guy Van Duser & Billy Novick

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Guy Van Duser and Billy Novick

Every Little Moment

Daring Records CD 3026

I first heard Van Duser and Novick back in the days when folk music was more inclined to grace my turntable than jazz. (Van Duser's claim to fame then was an ungodly complex solo guitar version of John Philip Sousa's 1897 classic, "Stars and Stripes Forever.") Fortunately this disc found its way to the offices of a jazz magazine.

A lot of Dixieland fans drooling for the next Bob Wilber album could expand their horizons by giving these guys a listen. For the past couple of decades, they have resurfaced songs from an era unfortunately of little interest to Jazz fans who only rewind back to the swing era. This duo gives us great versions of Victor Herbert's "Indian Summer," Jelly Roll Morton's "Wolverine Blues," and Gus Kahn's "I'll See You In My Dreams." It's a lot of music for just two instruments to play, and I remember much earlier albums where they struggled far harder than they do here to pull it off.

Best of all, they entirely avoid attempts to re-create music of the era. Such re-creations are the reason why the 1940's Dixieland revival remains something of an embarrassment to Jazz, which, by definition, is supposed to be progressive in some form or another. Through their instrumentation alone, in a perfect world where good music was given good marketing, Van Duser and Novick would seduce new generations of pimple-faced neophyte finger-pickers into hearing music older than their grandparents. No way that Pete Fountain dreck could pull that off.

by Dave McEilresh

