

# Adam Baruch - The Soundtrack Of My Life

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
**SIRKIS / BIALAS INTERNATIONAL QUARTET ~ COME TO ME**  
**STONED BIRD 004 (Barcode: 702811649729) ~ UK ~ Jazz**  
Recorded: 2014 Released: 2014

This is the debut album by the quartet co-led by Israeli drummer **Asaf Sirkis** and Polish vocalist **Sylwia Bialas**, both currently resident in London, which also includes two excellent British musicians: pianist **Frank Harrison** and bassist / chromatic harmonica player **Patrick Bettison**. The album presents ten original compositions, five each composed by Sirkis and Bialas, who also wrote the lyrics (in Polish) to five of the album's tracks.

Thank God that Bialas had the common sense to stick to her mother tongue, when singing lyrics, rather than trying to sing in English, a fatal mistake made by most Polish Jazz vocalists, which in most cases simply devastates their efforts. But Bialas also balances wisely and beautifully between singing lyrics and using her voice as an instrument, improvising scat and vocalese passages. As a result this album immediately arises to the level of one of the best vocal achievements I had the pleasure to hear this year.

But of course the vocal parts are only one of the ingredients of this album, which also includes excellent compositions and superb performances, turning the entire listening experience into a most pleasing aesthetic adventure. The overall mood of the album is overtly melancholic, consistent in a sense with the Polish Jazz attitude, which means that Bialas is a dominant influence here, which does not surprise me at all. Sirkis, who is usually quite a powerful drummer, plays delicately and beautifully melodically all the way through. Harrison, who carries the main accompanying responsibility, is simply exquisite in what he does, both as a soloist and as a supportive pillar behind the vocalist. Bettison keeps supplying the pulsating bottom lines, which pave the way for the music and move it forward. His harmonica solos are a nice icing on the cake, but personally I could do without them. In short the entire quartet seems to act as a symbiotic organism, in complete contrast to the usual singer / band circumstances.

As I keep saying lately, the freedom of movement, which characterizes contemporary Europe, results in many international encounters, which have a high potential of becoming marvelous mixtures and exchanges between Artists. This album is a typical example of such encounter, and the listeners are blessed to receive this piece of music into their laps. Intelligent, emotional, moving music of this magnitude is rare in today's chilling reality of non-culture and gems like this one should be embraced and admired. One can only hope this is but a beginning of a lasting creative force. This is an outstanding debut by all means and hopefully many people around the world will be eventually exposed to it.

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