



- ***CD Review: The Song Is You 'Tribute To Lawrence G. Williams'***

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Like the U.S. Navy's Blue Angels and the Air Force's flying Thunderbirds, this ensemble has a “hole” in it where Lawrence G. Williams would comfortably fit his drum set into motion. Sadly, Williams has passed on.

As a duo tribute to their friend by trumpeter Marcus Belgrave and guitarist Michele Ramo, *The Song is You* carries with it considerable emotion and pure, heartfelt memories. Gentle timbres from both instruments translate into a lovely ballad album based on tradition but complete with original statements.

The “Hei-D Mostro” 8-string guitar is Ramo's invention: a guitar and bass combination that allows him to work both functions in tandem. As he interprets by Belgrave's side, the resulting sound cascades gently as if open trumpet were working with electric bass and amplified guitar. Both veterans issue their feelings casually with ease of mind and body.

As Belgrave's sensual trumpet melodies roll fragrantly over Ramo's gentle guitar lines like whispers in the wind, both artists wear their hearts on their shirt sleeves. The program's standards fall naturally into place. With “Angel Eyes,” the duo achieves its most dramatic intersection of the program by setting three distinct lines in motion: bass, guitar and trumpet. With a classical Spanish tinge, they approach the subject forcefully and draw upon its lingering melody. It's a haunting tune that shall remain timeless.

Ramo's original, “A Song for a True Artist,” rolls gently on a bossa nova wave that honors Williams for both the fluid rhythmic foundation that the drummer used to bring to performances and for the lyrical lines that fill his compositions. Williams' “Number 6” finds both trumpet and guitar fusing a pensive melody that will bring goose bumps to its audience.

As veterans, both artists have their say convincingly without any frills. The true meaning of each selection comes forward naturally. Their lost comrade would be proud.

Track listing: *The Song is You*; *A Song for a True Artist*; *Where Are You*; *East of the Sun (West of the Moon)*; *If You Could See Me Now*; *Angel Eyes*; *Number 6*; *Teach Me Tonight*; *What a Wonderful World*.

Personnel: Michele Ramo: 8-string guitar; Marcus Belgrave: trumpet, flugelhorn, vocal.