

ANN NESBY: This Is Love (Label: Shanachie)

Written by Bill Buckley

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The ever-dependable Ann Nesby is a real soul heroine. However, most agree that since the milestone Perspective album 'I'm Here For You', the lady's not quite fully delivered again. Yes we've had odd tracks ('Put In On Paper' for instance) and uplifting gospel dance workouts, but now, I can happily report, she's back to her very best. Put simply, 'This Is Love' is stuffed with quality modern soul music and there's truly something for everybody. For modern room people there's the year's best cut - 'I Can't Explain'. It's one of those rare outings where everything's right. For those who prefer the steppers beats, there's the predictably named 'Step', while if you want high-energy dance there's the supercharged 'It's So Easy Lovin'. Then, of course, there are the ballads where that special voice really does cut loose. 'I Apologise' is as good as anything Aretha recorded at her peak; 'Special Occasion' has a real jazzy atmosphere to it; while on the closer 'See U Cry' there's an almost country feel. Here's the 2007 album to prove to the doubters that REAL soul is still being made while for a 2007 peak you won't beat 'I Can't Explain It'.

(BB) 5/5