



[http://www.amazon.com/review/R3MLD1N8I3Z14A/ref=cm\\_cr\\_dp\\_pern?ie=UTF8&ASIN=B005ZEMDII&nodeID=5174&tag=&linkCode=](http://www.amazon.com/review/R3MLD1N8I3Z14A/ref=cm_cr_dp_pern?ie=UTF8&ASIN=B005ZEMDII&nodeID=5174&tag=&linkCode=)



**\*\*\*\*\* (5 Star) A solid and confident collection, January 31, 2012 By Nicola Jarvis (Herts, UK)**

I have hundreds of classical crossover albums (over three hundred) and in such an oversaturated market it becomes more difficult for the artist to stand out among the crowd. This is not helped by most of the artists covering the same material again and again and working in a genre that's usually considered old fashioned and stagnated. Not only is material and sound the issue, but the performers themselves; there are hundreds of tenors all singing the same standards in the same way.

I cannot stress enough how much of an achievement it is, then, to simply have a sound that is distinctly your own, and Micheal Castaldo can boast of possessing this quality. Not only does he write his own material (and the demonstrated ability required to produce the album) but any of those "standards" he does record sound as fresh as when they were first released. Castaldo's identity is so assured and confident that his music transports you to his world of beauty, warmth and positivity. Although there are no shortages of Italian tenors, none embrace their heritage with the passion and authenticity of Castaldo. This is achieved despite Castaldo singing in languages other than Italian, including English.

His arrangements are both slightly exotic and sweepingly romantic making standards such as 'En Aranjuez Con Tu Amor' and 'Parla Piu Piano (Godfather Theme)' sound like new compositions. In the case of the latter Castaldo injects some delicacy into the usually dark and menacing piece. I usually get a bit grumpy seeing 'Con Te Partiro' on a track list (better known as Frank Peterson's adaptation 'Time To Say Goodbye') as I have this song by no less than thirty different artists. Although I still wouldn't describe myself as happy with it, I can definitely pick it out among the sea of versions that I own as one of the better recordings and one that makes an effort to sound unique.

The strongest songs on the album, however, are Castaldo's originals. 'Pray'r' and 'Dancing To A Different Beat' have an anthem type sound going on that's inevitably infectious. 'Mio Cuore' is an achingly sincere and innocent track and the romanticism pours out of the strings in 'Guarda Questa Terra'.

For those unfamiliar with Castaldo, the passionate delivery, touching tones, sensitive interpretations and the multiple talents of his brings Andrea Bocelli to mind, but you'd be wrong to assume that Castaldo's a mere emulation. 'Olive You' will serve to enrich your musical experience and it's one I can't recommend enough.

*NOTE: Nicola Jarvis is the founder and editor of [www.classical-crossover.co.uk](http://www.classical-crossover.co.uk)*

[www.michealCASTALDO.com](http://www.michealCASTALDO.com)

