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No one reworks the harmonic patterns of standards with the imagination of pianist Ted Howe. Thanks to his arranger's ear, gems like "Let's Do It" and "Come Rain or Come Shine" boast voicings that often find bassist Chris Colangelo harmonizing below Howe's left hand, playing unexpected root tones that often have a noir effect. But before the accent is put on the wrong chops, be assured that Howe is a triple threat: His keyboard technique underscores an insight that thrives on postbop fluidity.

Then there are the songs he co-wrote with lyricist Rebekah Miller, particularly "If I Had Known" and the title track. They're both interpreted by Lainie Kazan, who has evolved into one of the most poignant cabaret singers around. She negotiates the tricky key changes in the bridge of "If I Had Known" with deceptive ease. Another vocalist on the session, Giacomo Gates, shines with his unique scatting on "Come Rain or Come Shine."

Bassist Jim DeJulio steals the limelight in the longest track, "All the Way," which shifts from a rubato 4/4 to 3-against-4 to an intense jazz waltz with the help of sensitively swinging brushwork from Matt Slocum. During an extended cadenza, aided by overdubbing, DeJulio manages to quote from "Love and Marriage," "Call Me Irresponsible" and "Darn That Dream." Of course, Howe—no slouch when it comes to interpolating—does so on "Moonlight Becomes You," another example of his distinctly re-harmonized doubling of piano and bass lines (this time with DeJulio). He must have had Jimmy Van Heusen's melody in mind when he referred to it in the middle of Cole Porter's "Let's Do It."

-Harvey Siders