

## Press Reviews

### "Fresh, Unpretentious..."

★★★ **DownBeat Magazine, October 2005**

"This fresh, unpolished quartet offers an unpretentious date led by an earthy acoustic guitarist — Pat Bergeson, pingy and polite — and plays good originals mixed with a few jazz or pop standards. But it's the arresting, quirky singer — Annie Sellick's catchy, smart-as-a-fox alto — that steals the show.... On *Low Standards*, Bergeson and vibist Steve Shapiro lead their low-key band through Latinized classics and lush, leisurely originals with lucid grace.... When they back Sellick on shorter alternating tracks, they ease into overdrive for her insinuating smears and hints of Diana Krall and savvy Carmen McRae snap."  
 — Fred Bouchard

### "Unpretentious, straightahead combo..."

**JazzTimes Magazine**

"This is unpretentious, straightahead combo swing. Shapiro sculpts his solos well... his frequent four-mallet comping doesn't go unappreciated, and neither does the firm, melodic walking of bassist Doug Weiss. Bergeson shines... Perky vocalist Annie Sellick, an original with her own way of phrasing that allows her tongue-in-cheek personality to emerge.... Shapiro's sharp, but keep your ears on Annie."  
 — Harvey Siders

## MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

**Improvjazzation Nation, April 2005**

"... puts you right in th' mood... It's not just the great recording/production on the album that will make it a (real) KEEPER, it's also the fact that all the players understand how important it is to have "the groove" together!..."End Of The Road" would have served ever so well as the theme for "Twin Peaks"! A really GREAT jazz album that gets a MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED from us."

### "..warm and tasteful..."

**All Music Guide, Paula Edelstein**

"*Low Standards* ... is not only warm and tasteful, but is filled with the kind of retro-cool in-the-pocket grooves that will have listeners poised for more of Shapiro's triple-threat musicality. Sellick's icy-cool voice and soft-chic approach has that late-night feel that blends conservative with sexy... definitely a winner. *Low Standards* should boost Shapiro's profile as an accomplished vibraphonist, and will definitely make him a favorite with jazz critics because of his ability to bring well-known jazz standards into a different realm of musical dialogue. This CD is definitely saying something and has the perfect late-night ambience for just chillin', or getting something started with that special person."

## FIVE STARS \*\*\*\*\*

**FonoForum, Germany, May 2005**

"what a charming album! it is modest and unpretentious. but vibraphonist steve shapiro and guitarist pat bergeson raise their inconspicuousness to a new level, creating overlaying group sound, in which they perfectly integrate guest singer annie sellick and saxophonist scott kreitzer--not neo-swing or mainstream or folk-jazz. a little bit of each, but most of all a lot of enjoyment for the listener. these standards are anything but low."

## Press Reviews (cont.)

### Recommended

#### **CD Hotlist, June 2005**

"On this very fine mixed set of standards and originals, vibraphonist Steve Shapiro and guitarist Pat Bergeson lead a quartet that also includes bassist Doug Weiss and drummer Jeff Williams (with guest appearances by saxophonist Scott Kretzner and the smolderingly sexy singer Annie Sellick). There's something pleasingly retro about this group's sound -- there's nothing loungey about them, but something will make you think of cocktails anyway. Not sure how that works. Recommended."

-Rick Anderson

### "Diversity pays dividends."

#### **AllAboutJazz.com**

"Welcome to Low Standards. That comment was not meant to be quizzical. It just goes to show that Steve Shapiro and Pat Bergeson have a sense of humour that blessed them when coming up with a name for their record. That is the only part of the package that is "low", the music travels a well-described path made all the more definitive by the musicians and the arrangements. The quartet which is rounded off by Doug Weiss on bass and Jeff Williams on drums, features singer Annie Sellick and tenor saxophonist Scott Kretzner, who help extend the parameters. Sellick has a supple, pliant expression and Kretzner has the ability to dig deep and come up with some impassioned permutations....Sellick infers a poignant sadness. And she has a way with standards, never decrying from their innate sensitivity. Diversity pays dividends." By Jerry D'Souza

### "Most Pleasing..."

#### **The Village Voice**

"Annie Sellick has the most pleasing standards voice I've heard in a long time, and she alternates with Scott Kretzner, who does his vocalizing through a tenor sax."

-- Tom Hull

### The Jazz Thing

#### **(Germany)**

"vibraphonist steve shapiro--probably known to the "jazz-thing" reader from steely dan's "two against nature"-- has also worked together in the past with nashville guitarist pat bergeson. in "low standards" they have finally said adieu to all excited modernism, and given themselves up to time travel to the cocktail jazz of the 50s. this starts with the cover--which looks like a lounge sampler--and continues with the choice of songs--wes montgomery, duke ellington, henry mancini--up to the feather-light sound itself. only the musicians are from today: over simple drums and bass accompaniment, the young singer annie sellick lifts her soft voice and the tenor saxophonist scott kretzner adds accents. the entirety that emits from the speakers is so perfect and so quieting that the question about the "why", which sometimes rears its head, is generally silent."

### Vocalist Annie Sellick

#### **L.A. Times, Sunday, May 29, 2005**

"Sellick's buoyant singing brings to mind the question of how Janis Joplin might have sounded had she been born 40 years later and focused on jazz. But there's more than Joplin in Sellick's well-formed style, which also includes traces of Anita O'Day's roughhewn rhythms, Ruth Brown's blues and ? even more ? her own utterly unique musical personality. Recorded live at the Vic, with the solid backing of pianist Gerald Clayton's quartet, Sellick concentrates on standards known and lesser-known ("Honeysuckle Rose," "Baltimore Oriole," "Any Place I Hang My Hat Is Home"), as well as tunes by Lionel Bart, Jimmy Rowles and others, finding the gold in each. She sings everything with an ineffable, perky enthusiasm. But Sellick's most attractive quality may be the manner in which she has transformed her influences into her own, immediately identifiable style. She's a comer." Annie's latest CD, "A Little Piece of Heaven"(Chalice Music), is available at [www.cdbaby.com](http://www.cdbaby.com).

### MIX Magazine, March 2000

"Steve Shapiro is a legitimate triple-threat musician."