

# CABARETSCENES

## Diane Marino

### Just Groovin'

M & M Records



Will this collection re-visiting 1960s pop hits reveal their lyrics to be worthy of deeper drama? Do these tracks sung by Diane Marino put them on track to join the more classic Great American Songbook standards of earlier decades? That doesn't seem to be the goal or the end result. What's happening? Diane is, perhaps—as the CD title says—*Just Groovin'*. And, on those grounds, it's a success and quite enjoyable. This burnished-voiced, confident singer is also her own pianist and it's music and instruments that get her attention—and ours. Each track features a solo guest instrumentalist, with seven of the twelve tracks putting the spotlight on a sax player. There's class playing here adding much to the mix, with, among others, top-drawer talent like trombone player Wycliffe Gordon and Houston Person, a sax man with numerous collaborations with singers.

The (Young) Rascals' hit, "Groovin'"—with that band's Felix Cavaliere (who co-wrote it) trading vocal lines and playing organ—is a welcome treat. He sounds vital and involved.

From "Baby, I'm Yours" to "Baby, It's You"—from bidding "Hello, Stranger" to the never-bidding-farewell of "Then You Can Tell Me Goodbye"—Diane avoids potential highs and lows of emotional expression. Ardent lyrics evidence restraint. There's little despair or anguish when Diane sings lines like "I sit alone at home and cry over you/What can I do?" (in "Baby, It's You") or "The love of my life, he left me one day" (in The Beach Boys' hit, "The Warmth of the Sun"). The most involved lyric reading with struggle is the Bacharach/David "Anyone Who Had a Heart"—though it steers clear of the guilt trip or emphasizing the sense of addiction to a dysfunctional relationship. This is no nostalgia copycat romp. Things have a looser feel. Liberties are taken with melodies and the familiar tempi of the original hit recordings. It's a feel-good CD with solid singing and playing.

### Rob Lester

*Cabaret Scenes*

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[www.cabaretszenes.org](http://www.cabaretszenes.org)

