

EMMA HAMILTON

LA MUSIQUE

EVEN AS A TODDLER, EMMA HAMILTON WAS RARELY PHOTOGRAPHED WITHOUT A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT IN HER HAND. BORN INTO A MUSICAL FAMILY (HER FATHER IS A PROFESSIONAL FOLK MUSICIAN), EMMA'S COURSE IN LIFE WAS NEVER REALLY IN DOUBT. 'I HAD THE BENEFIT OF TREMENDOUS ENCOURAGEMENT FROM MY FAMILY AND MUSIC WAS ALL AROUND ME DURING MY CHILDHOOD,' SAYS THE 25-YEAR-OLD, WHOSE NEW ALBUM ON THE ABC JAZZ LABEL, LA MUSIQUE, FEATURES AN INTOXICATING BLEND OF JAZZ-POP STANDARDS AND HOOK-LADEN ORIGINALS.

THE TITLE ACKNOWLEDGES SYDNEY-BASED EMMA'S BI-CULTURAL BACKGROUND. HER MOTHER IS FRENCH, AND IN HER EARLY YEARS SHE SPENT SO MUCH TIME WITH HER FRENCH SIDE OF THE FAMILY THAT SHE BEGAN TO FORGET HOW TO SPEAK ENGLISH! MORE THAN HALF OF THE ALBUM IS SUNG IN FRENCH AND THE IMMORTAL TUNES OF PIAF AND OTHERS CONJURE UP A PARIS OF ANOTHER ERA THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF CONTEMPORARY POP.

'I'VE ALWAYS HAD THAT FRENCH MUSICAL SOUND RUNNING AROUND IN MY HEAD,' EMMA SAYS, 'AND YOU CAN HEAR IT IN THE ACCORDION LINES AND THOSE EMOTIONAL MELODIES OF THE GREAT FRENCH BALLADS.'

THE MANAGER OF ABC MUSIC, ROBERT PATTERSON, WHO DISCOVERED EMMA PLAYING GIGS IN SYDNEY VENUES, SAYS THAT EMMA'S 'FRENCH CONNECTION' CREATES AN UNUSUAL POINT OF DIFFERENCE IN THE INCREASINGLY-CROWDED WORLD OF COMMERCIAL JAZZ-POP. 'EMMA HAS SUCH A NATURAL AFFINITY WITH THIS REPERTOIRE AND WHEN SHE TAKES ON THE GREAT BALLADS LIKE HYMNE À L'AMOUR OR LA MER, IT'S AS IF YOU'RE TRANSPORTED BACK INTO SOME POST-WAR, LATE-NIGHT PARISIAN CAFÉ. AND YET THE WHOLE THING SOUNDS SO FRESH AND NEW.'

FEATURING MANY OF AUSTRALIA'S LEADING SESSION MUSICIANS, THE ALBUM IS PRODUCED BY EMMA'S YOUNGER BROTHER TOM, WHOSE INFLUENCE NOT JUST ON THE LUSH SOUND OF THE ALBUM BUT INDEED ON EMMA'S ENTIRE CAREER HAS BEEN PROFOUND. THEY FIRST PERFORMED TOGETHER IN THEIR BAND THE HAMILTONS (LATER KNOWN AS CAROLINE) AND SINCE THEN THEY HAVE PLAYED TOGETHER REGULARLY IN ICONIC SYDNEY VENUES LIKE THE BASEMENT, THE VANGUARD AND THE ENMORE THEATRE, INCLUDING SUPPORTING RYAN ADAMS IN 2009.

'THERE'S TWO YEARS AGE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN US BUT TOM AND I ARE SO CLOSE MUSICALLY THAT WE OFTEN DON'T EVEN NEED TO ARTICULATE THINGS,' EMMA SAYS. 'WE KNOW INSTINCTIVELY WHAT THE OTHER IS TRYING TO ACHIEVE AND HE CAN OFTEN PREDICT EXACTLY WHAT MY NEXT MUSICAL MOVE WILL BE.'

'IT'S AN EXTRAORDINARY MUSICAL PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO OF THEM,' SAYS PATTERSON, 'AND TOM HAS A MUSICAL MATURITY WAY BEYOND HIS YEARS. THE SOUND HE HAS CREATED ON THE ALBUM BORDERS ON THE EPIC.'

TOM HAS ALSO CO-WRITTEN MOST OF THE ORIGINALS WITH EMMA, AND THEIR SONGS LIKE TRULY AND THE QUIRKY I HEART YOU HAVE THAT INSTANT RECOGNISABILITY OF GREAT POP.

PERHAPS THE ALBUM'S DEFINITIVE SONG, THOUGH, IS THE FIRST SINGLE JE PENSE À TOI (GYPSY SONG), THAT INSTANTLY TRANSPORTS THE LISTENER TO SOME ROMANTIC SETTING ON THE LEFT BANK. EMMA SAYS, 'I REALLY LOVE THIS SONG, AS, FOR ME, IT ENCAPSULATES EVERYTHING THAT'S GREAT ABOUT PARIS - THE JOY, THE PASSION, THE REGRET AND SADNESS, AND THAT AMAZING SOUND WORLD OF FRENCH MUSIC ITSELF.'

EMMA HAMILTON'S LA MUSIQUE WILL BE RELEASED ON 18 MARCH.
EMMA IS AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEW.

FOR MEDIA ENQUIRIES, PLEASE CONTACT:

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