

# Cheryl Fisher

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CD Reviews

**Cheryl Fisher**  
**Joyride**  
**Catfish Records, IPJ10313**

By Nick Lavigne

With her fourth album *Joyride*, Canadian jazz vocalist Cheryl Fisher continues to match her technical brilliance and emotionally vibrant voice with her unique approach to music. It also doesn't hurt when you surround yourself with some of the country's best jazz musicians either. Here, Fisher is supported by Neil Swainson on bass, Terry Clarke on drums, pianist Phillip Strange, guitarist Reg Schwager, and the multitalented reed player/husband Eric Allison. Having earned a masters in music at the University of Miami School of Music, and being honored at the Festival International de Jazz de Montreal, it's no wonder why Fisher has turned so many heads her way over the past few years and continues to do so as one of Canada's most important jazz singers.

*Joyride* kicks off with the Ellington classic "In a Mellow Tone" with Swainson swinging the band along with his buoyant bass lines underneath Fisher's relaxed phrasing of the melody into the doubletime solo section. Right away it's easy to hear how sonically beautiful this album is going to be. Engineer Dennis Patterson does an incredible job making each instrument resonant and clear, capturing the charming acoustic nuances of jazz music.

The Knighton/Wildhorn song "I'll Forget You" is delivered in a dark and somber manner, creating a beautifully haunting yet moving atmosphere. The empathy flows effortless within the ensemble as Fisher sings the lyrics as only someone who has experienced them can.

"*Joyride*," the poignant title track penned by Fisher, displays her talents as a thoughtful and tasteful composer. Strange and Allison keep the energy and integrity of the song alive throughout their solos before Fisher powerfully restates the melody on this joyful track. Nothing cools down as they move into the jovial "The Girls Colors." Clarke and Swainson keep the pocket deep as Fisher and Allison flawlessly execute unison lines together. Fisher's ability to confidently and cleanly employ eighth notes and triplets with the accuracy of a horn is impressive to say the least.

Cheryl Fisher and her band have created an album in which one could easily lose themselves in, which is a fantastic testament to all involved. With its clever arrangements and superb musicianship, this ensemble makes everything on *Joyride* sound easy, simple, and more importantly, enjoyable. *Joyride* will easily please casual listeners of jazz as well as the most die-hard fans of the genre.

*Cheryl*