



## Music Review: Lorraine Feather - Language

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If you've ever lost your keys, had to take a crappy job waiting tables, marveled at traffic and weather, or been on hold with a human-sounding robotic recording system, you'll find something in common with Lorraine Feather. Born in Manhattan, Feather is the daughter of jazz writer Leonard Feather. Her mother, Jane, had been a roommate of Peggy Lee, and her godmother was Billie Holiday.



Lorraine started working in television as a lyricist in the early 90s, receiving several Emmy nominations for her work. She also supplied lyrics for many Disney releases, including songs for *The Jungle Book 2* and the sequel to *The Princess Diaries*.

Feather's latest solo album, *Language*, was released earlier this month and features more goodies from the underrated vocalist. Her cleverness on each track is never forced, and her light chatty style keeps things moving swiftly. It is the perfect recording for everyday people.

"Traffic and Weather" covers how morning talk radio has paired the two concepts and how they go together "like Itchy and Scratchy." Her attention-

grabbing observations continue with "We Appreciate Your Patience," an ode to the automatic world we live in. Feather's referral to the "website" rings true for any frustrated caller left on hold to the celebrated sounds of Muzak.

With "Very Unbecoming," Feather discusses an individual whose self-pity is less than appealing. The ballad "I Love New York at Christmas" is one of the more striking works on the album and really shows off Shelly Berg's elegant arrangement. "Home Alone" is based around a fictional detective from Sue Grafton's *Alphabet Series* novels and stresses what isolation is like through different eyes.

"Hit the Ground Runnin'" is a song which emphasizes the various sports clichés and applies them to a relationship with uproarious results. "Where Are My Keys?" is another favourite, flawlessly capturing the notion of scrambling around the house looking for lost keys while a partner offers "guidance."

Other songs head back to a softer place, like "In Flower." A beautiful waltz, "In Flower" is a tribute to Billy Strayhorn and Berg's composition echoes the harmonies of Duke Ellington's musical collaborator skillfully. Feather heads back to the well with "Waiting Tables," a fun song that should find meaning with anyone who has ever had to take on a ghastly job just to get by while putting dreams on hold.

"A Household Name" is a well-built tune about the passing nature of fame. The album's closer, "Making It Up As We Go Along," has all of the style and stuff of traditional romance balladry.

The practicality and comedy of Lorraine Feather really comes through on *Language*, an album that should get some attention from the suburban set for its relevant lyrics and enjoyable melodies. The album is uncomplicated without being crude, chic without being showy, and comical without being obnoxious.

Feather's vocals are on point, her pitch is crystalline, and her poetic delivery is second to none. *Language* is another great jazz vocal recording from a thrilling and exceptional lyrical performer.