



JAZZ

JAZZ & COCKTAILS

GREGG ARTHUR

ABC Jazz

Four stars

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One has to feel for the gifted Australian singer Gregg Arthur. His latest album includes three originals by himself and his pianist Peter Locke, and nine standard tunes. Unfortunately he is competing with great versions of these standards already in the collective memory, and also freely available on YouTube. Still there's good news. Arthur is backed here by a stellar jazz quintet doing everything right: Locke, bassist Craig Scott, drummer Tim Geldens, saxophonist Michael Avgenicos and guitarist Jim Pennell. Whether presenting the Duke Ellington/Billy Strayhorn repertoire, or tunes such as *Nature Boy*, *In The Still of the Night*, and *A Child Is Born*, this exceptional singer, like Sinatra, delivers immortal melodies with impeccable phrasing. This rare ability is one of many qualities which enable Arthur to compete on equal terms with whatever the past has to offer.

Eric Myers