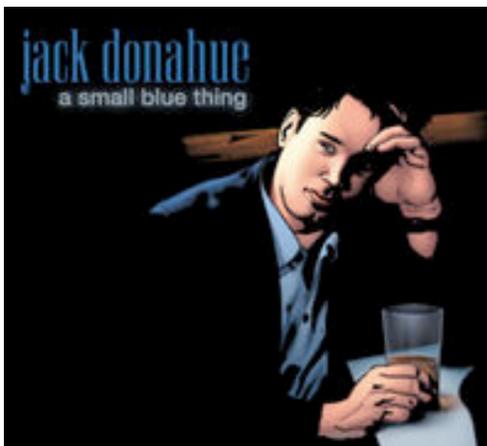




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Jack Donahue
A Small Blue Thing
(Two Maples Music)

by Peter Sanchez

Since Frank Sinatra's passing nearly a decade ago, there has been a . . . male vocalist population bottleneck, affording their female counterparts like Norah Jones, Diana Krall and Cassandra Wilson great success. The tide has begun to

turn of late with the emergence of Peter Cincotti and the reemergence of Harry Connick, Jr. **Jack Donahue continues on their gains with what promises to be a significant voice interpreting the great American songbook.**

Donahue's voice and cadence have improved dramatically since (his previous release) *Strange Weather* a couple of years ago, which was as impressive a release as any that year. *A Small Blue Thing* really elaborates on his *Strange Weather* progression; understanding the importance of originality, Donahue walks with remarkable ease through the album's 13 selections. From the opening title track, **Donahue is confident, poised. His sophisticated and beautiful voice is warm and fully envelops the listener.** Lush piano accompaniment allows Donahue to expose his vulnerability. Donahue's supporting rhythm section is flawless throughout. An example is the walking bass intro (Matt Penman) and the fine vibraphone work (Joe Locke) on "Get Out of Town." **Melancholy is Donahue's expertise and his heartbreaking "I'll Be Around" and "A Time for Love" are superb examples of his musicality. *A Small Blue Thing* is terrific in its ability to capture the essence of longing and really makes a case for best-of-the-year accolades.**

Male vocals are making a comeback. For those of you who have yet to be formally introduced to Jack Donahue, may I suggest you make his acquaintance with *A Small Blue Thing*-- jazz for a rainy day it certainly is.