

# Chris Ruggiero – I Am Chris Ruggiero

written by Beach Sloth | July 11, 2021



Chris Ruggiero does the classics true justice on the sweetened AM pop splendor of "I Am Chris Ruggiero". Everything about the arrangements has a true sense of taste, from the acutely balanced melodies to the genteel rhythms that guide them along. Such care and craft adorn these works for they each flow into the other. Best of all is his assured, soulful voice that serves as the beating heart of the collection. There are instrumentally vibrant elements of classical music within these pop standards which help develop each into something quite exciting.

The unique approach recalls a bit of Jean-Claude Vannier's work alongside Serge Gainsbourg. The cinematic tone of Ennio Morricone's output also appears to have influenced some of the orchestrations, in particular his beloved spaghetti westerns. Further, the influence of pop bands like the Beach Boys, the Beatles, among so many others dart in and out of the equation, making the entire album lively.

A grandiose opening "Run to Me" features an exquisite amount of detail, for his voice soars up into the very heavens. On "Betcha by Golly Wow," the glowing keyboard takes its time. The late-night lounge jazz aspect feels so vibrant. With a spring in its step, "My Cherie Amour" embraces the original form while Ruggiero pours all his love into the vocal delivery. Strings sweep through on the potent delivery of "Anyone Who Had a Heart". Grabbing the listener's attention is the fantastic fanfare of "California Dreamin'". Hushed awe adorns the peaceful bliss of "It's Over" before its dramatic climax.

Lonely piano phrases introduce the steady build of "One". By far the highlight "One" has a commanding presence to it. Another highlight is the truly vivid re-imagined bombastic style of "The More I See You". The mash-up "And I Love Her/Every Little Thing She Does Is Magic" has quite an adventurous ethos to it. A delicate yearning provides a lilting backdrop for "Put Your Head on My Shoulder" where the melody gets treated to a fully

blossoming symphony. "Wouldn't It Be Nice" reveals Ruggiero's fondness for the Beach Boys. Neatly tying the whole of the album together comes the celebratory "This Magic Moment" which ends the journey on a high note.

"I Am Chris Ruggiero" shows off Chris Ruggiero's adoration for some of music's most beloved pieces making them truly his own.