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Check out CBO's
New CD release
"Covered"
From the swinging 40's
to today's Top 40!

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CBO "Covered"

By Roger Anderson/Nite*Times Magazine

"The World's Most Outrageous Party Band", the Casablanca Orchestra aka CBO is now available on disc. CBO will take you from the swinging 40'S to the current Top 40 now in the comforts of your living room with their latest release, "Covered", available on Oar Fin Records. The new disc can be ordered at Under the Radar Music Group via the internet at www.utrmusicgroup.com and I am sure will be available at all CBO gigs.

Just recently prior to the stylish CD release party held at Rossi's Jazzroom in Downtown Minneapolis, I had the pleasure of checking out the spin on my Infinity system via 1-35 in my Jeep after a long day at the office. Holy @ !&%, my adrenaline pumped to ten and I was blown away and suddenly had a second wind. These gifted players and vocalists tripped me out and gave me hope in the marketplace. Now it wasn't that I expected anything short of coolness, but the national quality mix and production by Darren Rust behind the knobs enhanced the trueness of the pro act that I had been accustomed to.

CBO has toured regionally and nationally for over a decade and their magical chemistry was truly captured on tape. The multi-instrument, big band sound and the diversified lead vocals as well as layers of vocals were in perfect harmony. Of course would you expect anything short of perfect from an eleven piece ensemble that makes a fine living entertaining everyone from the corporate elite to clubville Minnesota, USA? In 2003, City Pages Best of the Twin Cities Readers' Poll voted CBO - Best R& B Band, and don't be surprised if "Covered" receives some notoriety at this year's Minnesota Music Awards.

Melissa Etheridge was quoted as saying, "You guys are great! Go for the brass ring!" This could very well be the ringer that puts CBO even farther on top of the variety band fair, festival, and corporate band circuit than they already are.

Melanie Moos is our favorite showgirl up front. Her vocal chords, choreography, and brains as in managing the day to day of CBO are all icing on Melanie's package that she offers CBO. Her appearance, which is classy-sexy, is by no means a distraction. Melanie's live stage appearance brings it all home even though equal spotlights are pretty diverse throughout the dream team of soloists that step up when it's their turn to shine.

Schroeder, the saxman as well as Phil Holm on trumpet and Jeffrey J. on trombone blow some mean horns and are some of the finest the Twin Cities has to offer. Perhaps so many talents under one roof are unchallenged on the local scene with probably the only real noticeable fair direct comparison being Prince himself.

Highlights of the disc include disco hit "Good Times", "These Boots Are Made For Walkin'", by Nancy Sinatra, "More Today Than Yesterday", a Spiral Staircase hit, "Boogie Oogie Oogie", and my favorite cut, the jazzed "Mack the Knife". It's rare to find an artist who performs a cover better than the original artist, but CBO performs interpretations with original flares that are most enjoyable. "Love the One You're With" is my least favorite cut, mainly due that my main man is Stephen Stills and his version just doesn't quite seem natural, but maybe it's just a taste thing. But all in all, "Covered" is a new regular in the disc player and as soon as the schedule permits, I am heading to the next CBO show. If that was what their goal was, it definitely worked on me.

It will be a challenge for CBO to do one better than "Covered", but "Uncovered" a disc of their own material, might be worth the effort. I'd buy it.