

Anya Turner & Robert Grusecki: Dream On

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Dream On

Don't Tell Mama, NYC, November 5, 2017

Reviewed by Marilyn Lester for Cabaret Scenes



Anya Turner & Robert Grusecki

Photo: Carol Rosegg

For their sixth album, *Dream On*, the husband and wife singer-songwriting team of Anya Turner and Robert Grusecki presided over a CD release party of joyful unveiling. *Dream On*, according to the liner notes, is about the pair's belief in the human spirit, the idea that language matters, and the sense that music can uplift. Their point is well-taken.

Both have been around the block a few times, and their life experience rolls out tunefully in lyrics from the deceptively simple to the clever, witty and sophisticated. "When I Was a Little Girl," for instance, has an artful twist from a transgender point of view. It's followed by an equally trenchant observation on the same topic in "Caitlyn." Turner is the singer of the team, with pleasant, mellow and steady vocals. Pianist Grusecki takes a turn from time to time. His serviceable voice works most effectively in their duets. That blending of expression is in itself a metaphor for the personal and musical bond they share.

A tour de force of *Dream On* is the "Talk Sequence," a suite of six numbers ("Texas 1969," "Talk," "The Name Song," "App," "Shallow Bitch," and "Give Me Shtrength") quirky, cute, and penetrating, about pronunciation, verbal tics, and the nuance of language. It's a montage that's as fun and entertaining as it is insightful. The wry "Perfect" is about the pair's relationship. Much of their work is from an intensely personal point of view. The remainder falls into the category of gentle social commentary, such as the sly "How Do I Look?" The songs are melodic and the point of view delivered cheerfully. Turner and Grusecki are, when all is said and done, a pair of optimists. "I Love This Town," an homage to their adoptive city of New York, reveals an admirable love of life, while their over-arching philosophy is stated in their "mantra" song, the eponymous "Dream On." For those who don't know the work of Turner and Grusecki, there's treasure to be found within.