

Mp3 Victor Fields - Thinking Of You

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urban smooth jazz vocals with special guests Jeff Lorber, Chris Camozzi, Richard Elliot, Rick Braun and Nelson Braxton. 10 MP3 Songs JAZZ: Jazz Vocals, URBAN/R&B: Rhythm Blues Details: In this era of disposable popular music and flavor of the month idols, there remain a few song stylists who truly study their craft, sing songs with meaning and substance, and strive to create a significant body of work that will stand the test of time. Victor Fields is one such artist. Hes a romantic dreamer, an optimistic believer who committed to and invested in himself. Hes in it for the love: love of singing, love of song, and love of performing. His fourth album, Thinking Of You, led Fields to discovering his identity as a vocalist. Its also the album his fans have been waiting for. Its up-tempo and soulful, described Fields. Its pretty much the same formula in that its smooth vocals over funky tracks. Its decidedly more fun, more upbeat and more danceable. Its also the first album Fields made that will specifically appeal to smooth jazz listeners. Hes evolved from being a jazz vocalist with overt urban tendencies into a smooth jazz vocalist, which admittedly is somewhat of a rare breed in a format that predominantly spotlights guitars, horns and keyboardists. This album feels like home to me. The music was fun and challenging. Smooth jazz is a format Im comfortable with and it naturally suits my style. Fields was born in Brooklyn, New York and grew up in Worcester, Massachusetts. For a while, the family was bi-coastal as they also had a home near Los Angeles in Southern California. His mother was a singer and a Julliard-trained pianist, but she gave up her passion for her family, never pursuing her gift. In the house, she exposed Fields to classical, blues and pop music. Music took the family to a different place. For them, music was spiritual and had a grounding effect. After attending Bowdoin College as a political science major, Fields became a successful businessman while living in the Bay Area. He started singing as a hobby and took vocal lessons to help develop his voice. While trying to find his voice, he sang all types of music in various settings. He attended songwriting demo derbies because he wanted to write songs, but also to learn how to identify a great song. Fields is lyrically motivated in his song selection process. For me, its about the song, which is the raw product. I sing songs as I feel them, whether I wrote it or if someone else wrote it. Ive been taught to understand the story and to fall in love one song at a time. After his mother passed,

Fields was inspired to make a major change in life. Years from now, I didn't want to say, What if? or I should have. I gave up singing to pursue a more practical career, but it came back to me at a higher level than before. Through a friend, he connected with Grammy-nominated producer-songwriter Kashif (Evelyn Champagne King, Kenny G, George Benson, Whitney Houston, Dionne Warwick). The result was Fields' 1998 debut album, *Promise*. A few years later, Fields met Chris Camozzi, a guitarist who has topped the smooth jazz radio charts as a solo artist and has accompanied such voices as Michael Bolton and Mariah Carey. In Camozzi, Fields found someone who truly knew how to listen to his voice and bring the best performances out of him, both in the recording studio and on stage. Camozzi's vision meshed with and enriched Fields' own musical vision. Their first collaboration was 2002's *52nd Street* album, which landed on Billboard's jazz album chart. The critically-acclaimed disc produced by Camozzi included guest performances by Chris Botti, Jeff Lorber and Gerald Albright. Last year, Fields and Camozzi were back in the studio together to create the *Victor* album. The collection of love songs was comprised of several standards along with material from contemporary songwriters Diane Warren, Stevie Wonder, Vince Gill and Chuck Loeb. It was an expansive disc with songs that ran the gamut from traditional and contemporary jazz, R&B and adult pop to theatrical Broadway-esque tunes. The album's closer, *It's Never Too Late In Life*, is an inspirational song that serves as kind of a personal anthem for Fields. Music is an extension of who I am. Sometimes you have to step back and take a look at what you went through to get to where you are. Whether it's in love, your career, or anything else you are passionate about, you've got to believe that your dreams are waiting for you. But you need to have the courage to pursue them. Things aren't easy for Fields, yet he lives by faith. Some people pursue careers in music in search of riches and fame. Not Fields. He had achieved wealth through business and is now pursuing his true love. He has invested his own money into producing his albums and releasing them independently on the Regina Records label, aided by his wife, Regina, a lawyer. Top recording artists and musicians work with him because they believe in his talent. I'm trying to be the best musically that I can be, declared Fields. I feel blessed to work with such great musicians over the years. They inspire me to elevate my game and to come up with something special. What I strive to do is bring elements of old school jazz legends and classic R&B artists and merge them with the best of today's musical sensibilities. Fields naturally gravitates towards love songs and *Thinking Of You* is indeed a collection of love songs. But not all love songs are slow and sad, Fields reminds us. Fields and Camozzi spent months listening to songs and

demos while searching for the right material to record for the album. I approach things as a jazz singer. I like to see how other artists before me put it together. Sometimes you have to go back to study the masters to find your own voice. You've got to go back to the root first. For Fields, his major influences are classic crooners such as Sam Cook, Joe Williams, Marvin Gaye, Teddy Pendergrass and Luther Vandross. I try to make each song I record a musical event. Every song counts. There are no throwaways. I like to pick challenging yet interesting songs then I bring my personality and some new energy to each one, Fields revealed. Stylistically, my vocal phrasing, color and tone are jazzy and soulful. Thinking Of You was recorded in June at the legendary recording studio The Record Plant in Sausalito, California. Fields describes the record as being as close to a live record as you can get. The CD opens with the happy and optimistic Lovely Day, a Bill Withers signature tune that perfectly fits Fields silky smooth vocals. Doing music independently is not easy. But along the way, I've experienced a lot of compassion and support that keeps me optimistic. No matter what I am faced with, I have a source of inspiration to draw from. For me, it's my family, my friends and my fans. This CD is dedicated to them. Fields voice is breathy on Yearning For Your Love, a song from a man's perspective about settling down and making a commitment to a relationship. Jeff Lorber co-wrote the title cut, Thinking Of You, a sexy, amorous ballad. Fields was drawn to it because of its versatility as a smooth jazz track with a distinctly urban groove. Smooth jazz star Richard Elliot contributes an animated sax to Walkin In Rhythm, which was recorded rather spontaneously with a live rhythm section. It's a jazzier version than the original and Fields was given an abundance of space vocally. The ethereal Creepin remains true to the lyric in its sensual seduction. Rick Braun added a flugelhorn to the vaporous production. It's In Your Vibe is another Lorber original that Fields loved as soon as he heard it. It's a danceable, mid-tempo R&B/pop track that he knew he'd have fun with vocally. In addition to paying tribute to Pendergrass with the old school meets new school production, Fields used When Somebody Loves You Back to express something personal about his own relationship. When both partners in a relationship contribute equally, it's magical. Live horns and a live rhythm section created a deep in-the-pocket groove. Fields got to stretch while utilizing his upper register on the dreamy and seductive Butterflies on which he did all the backing vocals. On For The Cool In You, Vince Lars big sax solo and Fields jazz-imbued vocals over an upbeat funk track bring new life to the Babyface original. Many vocalists would shy away from singing a song as big and as significant as Gaye's What's Going On. Not Fields. It was probably the hardest song to sing on the album because it

is more than a classic. Its an anthem and I wanted to be respectful of that. I went out on many long sunset drives in the country asking Marvin for permission to sing it, recalled Fields. The lyric is as relevant today as it was when it was first recorded over thirty years ago. We definitely need to find a way to bring more love into the world. Camozzis acoustic guitar flourishes add sparkle and wonderfully compliment Fields sweet caramel vocals. With each successive album, Fields has explored a variety of dimensions of his musical muse. As hes evolved, hes become more focused while balancing art and life. But hes quick to remind you that hes got a long career path in mind. This is only my fourth album and Im still growing. Im not there yet; Im just a baby. But I am fully committed to leaving a musical legacy that I can be proud of. Time will tell what his legacy will be, but one thing is for certain: Victor Fields will be singing songs that hes fallen in love with while thinking of you. 9-06

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