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## **Scoring High — Group Synergy Is Key To The Success Of 'At The Movies'**

By John Amodeo

Hearing a vintage film theme song can instantly transport us back to that place where we first heard that song, or when we first realized how that film affected our lives. The Boston vocal group "At The Movies," consisting of four accomplished singers, Nina Vansuch, Michael Ricca, Will McMillan and Brian Patton, gets to the heart of that feeling on their debut CD, aptly and cleverly called "Reel One."



The talented quartet blends their eccentric humor and superb musicality into this recording that is at first blush highly listenable, yet gets richer with every hearing.

The clever song selection includes themes from such camp/cult films as "Valley Of The Dolls" and "Tootsie" to film songs by The Beatles and Randy Newman. When do we ever hear such great songs as "George Girl," wonderfully sung here by Vansuch, with note-perfect tight harmony back-up from the guys? Vansuch shines on many cuts. |

The guys score high as well with Patton's heartfelt "Secret Love," Ricca's touching "It Might Be You," and McMillan's disarming "That'll Do."

Though wonderful singers individually, it is the synergy they create working together — along with Patton's inventive arrangements — that makes this CD a standout. From the opener, "Everybody Wants To Be A Cat," a Manhattan Transfer-like swing arrangement that doesn't quit to the pulsing anthem "Journey To The Past," which drives to a rousing finish, the pieces soar on Patton's tight harmony vocal arrangements.

Tapping into their funny bone, the group cleverly toys with "He's A Tramp," where Vansuch plays it straight to a delightfully loopy back-up of musical dog howls. They hilariously segue into an all-male arrangement of "Where The Boys Are," one of the CD's several highlights. Turning on a dime, the poignant transition from "Wives And Lovers" to "Coming Round Again" will leave you breathless.

"Reel One" is such a fun and finely produced package of songs and vocal arrangements that it already has me anticipating the sequel.