

CD Review

“Sippiana Hericane”
Dr. John

Enough time has passed since the terrible events of Hurricane Katrina to view this album without undue reverence (“Sippiana” is the delta region in local dialect). And though few have done as much in recent decades to represent the indigenous musical culture of New Orleans to the world as Dr. John, one might reasonably question whether, with his feel-good fonk, he is the ideal candidate to lead these sessions, a mix of original vocals and instrumentals, in paying tribute to such a tragedy. Indeed, some of the instrumentals feel more redolent of a beautiful Southern belle gone to waste, though I suspect the Doc would not object to such a comparison. For many however, the silent-film tremolos will add an unnecessary touch of melodrama. The vocals are simpler, and feel more earnest than many recent tributes, as if the band had been asked to play at the funeral of a fellow musician. There is no great tragedy imparted, but the listener can feel glad for an album that finds something to feel good about, while they search for a more sombre requiem elsewhere.