

Herb Alpert's 'Love Affair' Song Premiere: Listen Now

Billboard 9/8/2015 by Gary Graff

Fifty years after his landmark "Whipped Cream and Other Delights," Herb Alpert is still sweet on making music.

On Sept. 25 the trumpeter and A&M Records co-founder releases *Come Fly With Me*, a new album featuring seven originals -- the track "Love Affair" is premiered below -- and covers of songs by The Beatles ("Something"), Irving Berlin ("Blue Skies") and, of course, the Frank Sinatra-popularized title track.

"I just try to find songs that are fun to play, and if I'm playing a standard or a song people recognize I try to do it in a way people have never heard -- that's about it," Alpert tells Billboard. "It's the same thing I set out to do on all the albums I've ever made."

"Love Affair" is a collaboration between Alpert, who came up with the melody and sent it to co-producer Eduardo del Barrio to finish off.

"He's a genius. I sent him what I had and he sent it back to me and we just started developing it," Alpert recalls. "I had it at 50 bpm and [del Barrio] just started developing it from there and one thing led to another. He started putting on this string passage and then I had a few sessions with him at his studio [in Los Angeles] and finished off the trumpet at my home [in Malibu]. It was pretty straightforward."

Alpert describes "Come Fly With Me" as a collaborative enterprise with his current band, a nine-year-old ensemble that includes keyboardist Bill Cantos, drummer Michael Shapiro and bassist Hussain Jiffry.

"They're three real creative guys," Alpert says. "I don't want to be covered up by a bunch of sounds. So when we're playing live or making the records, you can hear everybody, and I leave it up to the guys to play whatever they want to play whenever they want to play it, given the structure we're using. With the Tijuana Brass, we played the same song over and over pretty much the way we recorded it. This group is more fresh and spontaneous."

Among the covers, "Something" has a particularly personal connection to Alpert. Though it was his partner Jerry Moss who signed George Harrison's Dark Horse label to A&M for distribution, Alpert developed a friendship with the Beatle, particularly when both were working in the company's recording studios.

"George was terrific. He was a real human being," Alpert remembers. "He was a really sweet guy with a lot of talent, and we become friends. I think 'Something' is one of the most memorable Beatles songs. I love that melody."

As if having a new release and celebrating the golden anniversary of his most famous album isn't enough, this year also marks Alpert's 80th birthday. He laughs as he recalls that "when we started A&M in '62 I was the youngest guy, and all of a sudden here I am, the elder statesman." but it doesn't sound like there's any quit in him.

"I love to make music," Alpert says. "I've been playing trumpet since I was eight. I'm passionate about it. It drives me. I wake up in the morning thinking about practicing the horn, trying to do something that makes me feel good. I love to do it and I'm able to do it, and I'm healthy so I feel a responsibility to get out there and do it until I can't do it any more."

Alpert's album is available for pre-order on Apple Music, iTunes and Amazon.

Herb Alpert's upcoming tour dates:

September 25 - Malibu, CA - Smothers Theatre

September 26 - Tucson, AZ - Fox Theatre

September 28 - Austin, TX - One World Theatre

September 29 - Austin, TX - One World Theatre

October 1 - Chicago, IL - Chicago City Winery

October 2 - Rochester, MN - Mayo Civic Presentation Hall

December 2 - Saratoga, CA – Montalvo

December 3 - Saratoga, CA – Montalvo

December 5 - Oakland, CA - Yoshi's Oakland

December 6 - Oakland, CA - Yoshi's Oakland

December 7 - Oakland, CA - Yoshi's Oakland

January 26 - Seattle, WA - Jazz Alley

January 27 - Seattle, WA - Jazz Alley

January 28 - Seattle, WA - Jazz Alley

January 30 - Spokane, WA - Spokane Symphony

February 20 - Arcadia, CA - Performing Arts Center

Feb 29-March 1 - Vienna, Virginia - Barns at Wolf Trap

March 3 - Melbourne, Florida - Theater Performing Arts Center

March 5 - Clearwater, Florida - Capitol Theater

March 6 - Boca Raton, Florida - Festival of the Arts