

# THE GRAND ST. STOMPERS

## SWING IN PLACE, Volume 2: Balboa in Place

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1. I Can't Give You Anything But Love ..... 200 BPM ..... 3:39  
(McHugh-Fields)
2. You Went Away Too Far (and Stayed Away Too Long) ..... 200 BPM ..... 3:14  
(Monaco-Bryan)
3. I Would Do Anything For You ..... 190 BPM ..... 3:33  
(Hill-Williams-Hopkins)
4. Don't Let It Bother You ..... 184 BPM ..... 3:33  
(Gordon-Revel)
5. Riverboat Shuffle ..... 195 BPM ..... 3:11  
(H. Carmichael)

All tracks arranged by Gordon Au (Gordonburi Music / ASCAP)

Molly Ryan: vocals (3,4)

Tamar Korn: vocals (1)

Gordon Au: trumpet/leader (all)

Dennis Lichtman—clarinet (5), alto sax (4)

Matt Koza—soprano sax (1-3)

Ricky Alexander—tenor sax (1-3)

Matt Musselman—trombone (all)

Nick Russo—guitar (1,3-5)

Dalton Ridenhour—piano (2)

Rob Adkins—bass (all)

Rob Garcia—drums (all)

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## LINER NOTES

by Gordon Au

This second volume of SWING IN PLACE, both at its core and in its origin, is another example of the beautiful synergy between music and dance. Last year, California Balboa Classic, an excellent swing dance event in the LA area, decided to go all-virtual for their January 2021 event as 'CalBal Live,' and invited us to contribute music videos of new music to be debuted at the event. Since this would entail remotely recording the band in

the same fashion as our previous album, this joint project was born: five music videos which had their world premieres at CalBal Live (brought to you by generous sponsors, and which you can enjoy on YouTube), as well as this EP.

Selecting songs for this was straightforward: they had to be prime choices for balboa, an uptempo dance style which arose on crowded Southern California dance floors to 1930s swing. Accordingly, we took this opportunity to record some of our favorite songs from the 20s and 30s with new uptempo, 4-beat arrangements for our swing octet. All of these tunes we recorded for the first time.

*I Can't Give You Anything But Love*, a de facto jazz standard, comes from Lew Leslie's 1928 show "Blackbird Revue" at Les Ambassadeurs Club in New York City, and was first sung by Adelaide Hall. Here Tamar Korn gives it her own playful spin, and the arrangement plays horn sections off each other, emulating some of the more intricate arrangements of Benny Goodman and other 30s big bands (e.g. Jimmy Mundy's masterful 1939 arrangement for Goodman of *Clarinet Marmalade*). For CalBal, this song was sponsored by Jenn Lee, a champion balboa dancer, instructor, and friend.

Following this is the only previously-written arrangement: *You Went Away Too Far (and Stayed Away Too Long)* was part of the Stompers' "Get Music in Your Feet: the Music of the Original Dixieland Jazz Band and J. Russel Robinson," a show we did for the centennial of the first commercially recorded jazz record. It was written in 1926 by Alfred Bryan and James Monaco—the latter being one of the most prolific and musical writers of the era (*While They Were Dancing Around*, from our first album, is one of his gems)—and recorded by the ODJB in 1927. Our arrangement emulates the style of 20s dance bands, to which dancers likely danced foxtrot, but which is great fun for balboa as well. For CalBal, this song was sponsored by dancer (and bass player!) Tara Sliwinski.

*I Would Do Anything For You*, from 1932, was the theme song of the Claude Hopkins Orchestra. Molly Ryan has sung it wonderfully with the Stompers for many years (the video is especially charming), and this was a great chance to expand our arrangement to feature the octet, including the propulsive drum work of Rob Garcia.

Molly also gives us a timely anthem on looking ahead, and persevering through tough times, in Mack Gordon and Harry Revel's *Don't Let It Bother You*. It comes from the 1934 Rogers & Astaire film "Gay Divorcée," but is not in the original 1932 Cole Porter musical; the lone song re-used from the latter in the film was *Night and Day* (one hopes Porter did not let that bother him). Our favorite version of this is by the great Fats Waller, and in a

nod to his style, this arrangement features a three-horn section in a bit of a traditional jazz / swing hybrid.

For *Riverboat Shuffle*, the Hoagy Carmichael classic, we also took a hybrid approach, featuring the Gordon–Dennis–Matt trumpet–clarinet–trombone front line that has played together for years, and was a pleasure to reunite. The arrangement is replete with breaks that make for interesting dancing, and has a rousing two-chorus modulating finale, capped with a nod to Don Redman’s 1924 arrangement of *Copenhagen* for Fletcher Henderson’s orchestra. For CalBal, this song was sponsored by Jennifer Barnett and the NYC Bal Scene –we ❤️ NYC!

Though exactly how much longer we will have to make due with DIY recordings, in place of live performances, remains unclear, we are thankful to have these opportunities to bring our music to listeners and dancers, and grateful to CalBal for this fruitful collaboration. We look forward to the day we can once again make music for everyone in person, and urge you to stay safe and healthy in the meantime. Until then, we hope this recording brings you some joy and as you listen along and SWING IN PLACE.

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## CREDITS

Produced by Gordon Au ([GordonAuMusic.com](http://GordonAuMusic.com))

Recorded remotely and independently across the USA in December 2020

Edited, mixed, and mastered by Gordon Au

Cover art by Kelsey Ballance and Gordon Au

Photography by Jack Grassa, Jessica Keener, Lynn Redmile, and April Renae

Many thanks to: California Balboa Classic, their team, and attendees, and song sponsors including Jenn Lee (“I Can’t Give...”), Tara Sliwinski (“You Went Away...”), Jennifer Barnett and the NYC Bal Scene (“Riverboat Shuffle”), and anonymous; All Souls Bethlehem Church and Vannah Oshun; the musicians above (as well as Kevin Dorn and Joe McDonough) for once again rising to this challenge; in NYC, our fellow musicians and swing dancers, Michael Steinman and JAZZ LIVES, Kevin McEvoy and Barbara Epstein, Swing Remix, and Ryan Swift and The Track podcast; our extended scene including DCLX, Mark Jansen and the Redwood Coast Music Festival, and The Syncopated Times; our dear friends and families and always to Kelsey; and our listeners and all those who help support us, this music, and the arts!

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