

Sounds

Velvet Tango

Harry Bacharach

Hard Poor Corn Productions



His work has been called "Heavy Easy Listening" and if you've ever heard the loungy jazz styles of pianist Harry Bacharach (nee Ari Friedman) the odds are you'd come up with the very same words. Bacharach is "[a] Jewish baker with soul" according to online reviewer "Minnesota Fatty"; to wit, Bacharach, who's known to have a day job at the On the Rise Bakery in Cleveland Heights, really let's his inner hep cat-ness hang out at night. Bacharach swoons, swings and smolders in all the right spots on *Velvet Tango* -- a 10-track CD named as a nod to one of his regular gigs at the Velvet Tango Room speakeasy. It's a well-arranged, full-band throwback to a bygone era... one that will have you looking for a martini, a dugan, a pair of spekkies, flapper fashions or something with a velvet collar.

Bacharach's neo-Cotton Club sound on *Velvet Tango* is bolstered by a venerable who's-who of local jazz musicians (trumpeter Josh Rzepka and drummers Jamey Haddad and Roy King among them). From the captivating opening of "Careful With Those Blues, Eugene" to the muted trumpet of "Philandering Fool," it's hard not to feel those 1920s and 30s vibes permeating your soul. The bluesy cha-cha underpinnings of "Blue Pajamas," "Get the Feeling" and "The Slide" are among the remaining highlights, but the whole disc is great -- a smooth timewarp to a simpler time. I have no idea if Friedman named himself after Atlantic City's former mayor, his great uncle Burt, or the urgent need for depilatory cream. What I *do know*, is this guy will make you want to sell everything you own and become a jazz musician... *just because*.

We'll settle for the swanky vintage cocktails and his regular live dates at the Velvet Tango Room -- Mondays at 8PM, Thursdays at 9PM -- where you're likely to hear most of this record in its entirety alongside clever covers of Duke Ellington, Cole Porter and Tom Waits. Visit the nationally-renowned Velvet Tango Room at <http://www.VelvetTangoRoom.com>. Check out Bacharach and hear samples of his work at <http://www.MySpace.com/HarryBacharach>. From *Cool Cleveland* Managing Editor Peter Chakerian peterATcoolcleveland.com