



## Here's what the critics are saying about Astrid's *Red Umbrella*

**The Georgia Straight  
(Vancouver)  
June 16th, 2005**  
Tony Montague

On the cover of Astrid Sars' debut album her music is referred to as "global-retro/bossa urban-jazz chill". That's a lot of things to promise. Fortunately the Amsterdam-born chanteuse, alto saxophonist, and composer delivers. *Red Umbrella* is an original and tasty blend, characterized by smart arrangements and smooth-not-silky vocals. Electronics are rarely out of the mix, but used sparingly.

Astrid is backed by a selection of Vancouver's finest musicians on the jazz-world music spectrum – guitarist Kerry Galloway, drummer Randall Stoll, percussionist Rafael Geronimo, and keyboardist Chris Gestrin. Finn Maniche's cello provides a particularly rich undertow for Astrid's voice, which carries echoes of Bebel Gilberto and Marlene Dietrich. The music has flair and finesse. If this is lounge music then we're at the all-night bar in Amsterdam's Schiphol airport in the wee hours.

**The Province  
(Vancouver)  
July 19th, 2005**  
Tom Harrison

**(B)** As genre-hopping goes, this combination of bossa-nova and jazz is confident and stylish. Astrid sings with a soft peddled purr but has strong backing that gives full range to her flute and sax. Co-producer Kerry Galloway adds some imaginative effects as on "You Gave Me Wonder."

**The Vancouver Sun  
July 21st, 2005**  
Marke Andrews

### **3.5 / 5 Stars**

Astrid Sars, who prefers a one-name moniker, describes her debut CD as "global-retro bossa, urban-jazz/chill with smooth vocals," which pretty much covers all the bases. It is also a very hip recording, one which should find a good cross-section of young and old-school listeners.

As a vocalist, Astrid is kind of a cross between Bebel Gilberto and Sade; she'd be at a Brazilian carnivale or an urban-lounge. For the samba-beat *Running Home*, she lays down a silk-edged vocal as Kerry Galloway plays a Brazilian-style acoustic guitar (Galloway, who arranged and produced the record, double-tracks guitar and bass on many of the songs, all of which were written by Astrid). She gives *Heart* a bluesy, chanteuse treatment, and utilizes electronic vocal manipulation for the easy-moving *Spinoff*. Keyboard player Chris Gestrin and cellist Finn Manniche combine beautifully on the ballad *Turn Me Loose*.

Besides singing, Astrid is also accomplished as an alto saxophonist and flutist, her alto sax just right for the slow-groove *Eyes of Abraham*, and her flute solo helping to propel *You Gave Me Wobder*.

