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Ian Shaw - A Ghost in Every Bar, the Lyrics of Fran Landesman

British Jazz singer/pianist Ian Shaw's latest release, *A Ghost in Every Bar, the Lyrics of Fran Landesman* released on the [Splash Point Records](#) label celebrates the music of the iconic **American lyricist** and **poet, Fran Landesman. Pianist composer Simon Wallace**, Fran Landesman's longtime collaborator, joins Ian Shaw on this 15-track memorable tribute release.



[Ian Shaw - A Ghost in Every Bar, the Lyrics of Fran Landesman](#)

A Ghost in Every Bar, the Lyrics of Fran Landesman: *Feet Do Your Stuff, Only Why No More, Small Day Tomorrow, Spring Can Really Hang You Up The Most, In A New York Minute, Love Go Round, In A Matter Of Moments, Down, Nothing Is Mine Now, Scars, Stranger, Killing Time, Noir, Nothing Lasts Forever, Ballad Of The Sad Young Men*

Personnel: Ian Shaw - vocals and piano on *Love Go Round, In A Matter Of Moments*, and *Ballad Of The Sad Young Men*, Simon Wallace - piano, Sue Richardson - flugelhorn on *Ballad Of The Sad Young Men*

Neal Richardson produced ***A Ghost in Every Bar, the Lyrics of Fran Landesman*** for the UK-based [Splash Point Records](#) label. The release features songs composed by Fran Landesman and Simon Wallace, with the exception of the songs, *Spring Can Really Hang You Up The Most* and *Ballad Of The Sad Young Men* written by Fran Landesman and Tommy Wolf, and the song *Small Day Tomorrow* written by Fran Landesman and Bob Dorrough.

To appreciate the artistry of the release, it helps to know a bit about Fran Landesman, Ian Shaw, and Simon Wallace. Fran Landesman was an American born in New York City in 1927 who was the definitive free-spirit, lyricist, poet, wife of writer/publisher Jay Landesman, mother of Cosmos and Miles Landesman, and friend to many including Ian Shaw.

The Landesman family moved to London in 1964 and in the mid-1980s, Ian Shaw became friends with Miles Landesman, and together they formed a punky pop band called, "In Bed." Through his friendship with Miles, Ian Shaw describes how he met the legendary Fran, "One morning, I found the sheet music to the seminal *Spring Can Really Hang You Up The Most*. I didn't know this song ... but precociously sight-sang and played it. Fran came running downstairs shouting, who's playing my song! ... From that moment we became firm friends and I was to include a Fran song on practically every record I made."

Years later, Fran stated that after hearing so many people including the legendary Ella Fitzgerald, Mark Murphy, Chaka Khan and others sing *Spring Can Really Hang You Up The Most* written with Tommy Wolf that, "Frankly I was tired of hearing *Spring* until I heard Ian Shaw sing it." High praise indeed for Ian Shaw,

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whose voice and talent allows him to adapt a song and make it his own, while telling the tale of the story behind the lyrics so well.

In 1994, Fran met Welsh-born composer Simon Wallace, and despite a 30-year gap in their ages, they connected musically, writing more than 300 songs together before her death in August 2011. ***A Ghost in Every Bar, the Lyrics of Fran Landesman*** features Ian Shaw's vocals and Simon Wallace on piano. The 15-track release opens with, *Feet Do Your Stuff*, where Ian does a nice of bit of scat before singing the lyrics that explain the genius of Fran, and Simon's piano composition is dead-on fabulous. The lyrics are witty and snappy advising, "... When you're in an iffy spot, It's better to play and run away, Than stay and risk getting shot, Don't try to bluff, There just isn't time enough, Kiss your lover goodbye, Zip your zipper and cry, Feet do your stuff! ..."

Ian slows the pace with a grand lament, the heartbreaking song, *Only Why No More*, before segueing into the Fran Landesman and Bob Dorough song, *Small Day Tomorrow*. Instead of the usual phrase "a big day tomorrow" explaining that you have much to do, I love Fran's turn-of-phrase here, a "small day tomorrow" extolling the virtues of being a drop-out, having nothing to do, the ability to stay up late, not go to bed, sleep away the day, and enjoy life.

In A New York Minute is a gorgeous combination of lyrics, vocals, and piano composition. Ian's vocals capture Fran's lyrics that quintessentially describe the beauty of New York City as well as its flaws. "... It looks so romantic up in Central Park, But don't stroll around there when it's growing dark, While the dreams are dancing in your eager head, In a New York minute you could wind up dead, Or you could get lucky if your timing's right, You can take the apple in a single bite ..."

Other memorable songs on the release include *Down, Nothing Is Mine Now, Scars, Stranger, Noir,* and *Nothing Lasts Forever*. Ian Shaw takes over the piano from Simon Wallace to show his prowess as a jazz pianist as well as a singer on the songs, *Love Go Round, In A Matter Of Moments,* and *Killing Time*.

The release closes with the heartbreaking Fran Landesman and Tommy Wolf song, *Ballad Of The Sad Young Men*, where the talented Sue Richardson joins Ian Shaw and Simon Wallace, where she contributes a hauntingly beautiful flugelhorn piece.

From beginning to end, ***A Ghost in Every Bar, the Lyrics of Fran Landesman***, Ian Shaw does justice to Fran's lyrics, as well as to the piano compositions of her collaborators Simon Wallace, Tommy Wolf, and Bob Dorough.

Read other reviews of Ian Shaw's CDs in the [Music Scene](#) including: [Ian Shaw - The Abbey Road Sessions](#), and [Ian Shaw - Somewhere Towards Love](#).

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Websites where you can procure ***Ian Shaw - A Ghost in Every Bar*** are [Splash Point Records](#), [Amazon](#), [Virgin Media](#), and [CD Universe](#).

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