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SURFING THE WAVES OF POPULAR CULTURE
BY MICHAEL GILTZ & FRIENDS

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The Body Of Ray Charles Is Exhumed And Propped Up On Stage For Customers To Look At While A CD Of His Music Plays

Okay, maybe not. But it's probably the next step. Starbucks and Concord records are partnering to release a "new" CD called "Ray Sings, Basie Swings," which combines vocals from a Ray Charles concert in the 1970s with music newly recorded by the Count Basie Orchestra. Thus, we'll have new versions of "I Can't Stop Loving You," "Georgia On My Mind" and so on to go along with the ten thousand versions that already exist. I shudder to think of some casual music fan making this their first and only Ray Charles purchase when there are dozens of brilliant albums and compilations available that would turn them into life-long fans. What would possess them to do this? Ray Charles already has a catalog as long as your arm -- why add to it with this grotesque bastardization? And the guys in the Count Basie Orchestra should be ashamed of themselves for playing on it. Ten years from now they probably WILL be onstage playing this music while Ray's body is propped up on a piano bench for the fans to see. And they'll have no one to blame but themselves. Why couldn't Starbucks just promote some of Ray's tremendous catalog? Why not urge people to buy "Modern Sounds In Country & Western?" They'd have a lot more satisfied customers that way.

POSTED BY MICHAEL IN NEW YORK AT 4:17 PM



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