

**R&B**

## MITCH RYDER

### The Promise

**Producer:** *Don Was*

*Michigan Broadcasting Corp.*

**Release Date:** *Feb. 14*

It's been nearly 30 years since Mitch Ryder's last U.S. album, but he's hardly been a sleeping dog since that John Mellencamp-produced set (*Never Kick a Sleeping Dog*). The rock veteran remains popular and prolific in Europe, particularly Germany, and *The Promise*—released overseas in 2010 as *Detroit Ain't Dead Yet (The Promise)*—certainly showcases his creative growth during the past nearly three decades. This time in the hands of producer Don Was, Ryder displays confident, soul-singer swagger, singing about his life ("Thank You Mama") and these times ("The Way We Were") over the tight, funky underpinning of a crack band propelled by drummer James Gadson, with guitarist Randy Jacobs providing instrumental highlights throughout. The voice that belted out "Devil With a Blue Dress On" is still intact (check out the shouts at the end of "Thank You Mama"), but Ryder is just as effective when he dials it down on the richly emotive "Crazy Beautiful" and a soaring live cover of Jimmy Ruffin's "What Becomes of the Broken Hearted." This album is one promise that's more than fulfilled.—GG