

## Arashiro Beni

### GEM

Avex Trax

AVCD-23219/B (CD+DVD), AVCD-23220 (CD)

Website: [www.avexnet.or.jp/beni](http://www.avexnet.or.jp/beni)

RELEASE DATE: April 25, 2007 | Dur: 49:03

Click here to purchase Arashiro Beni music on iTunes

1. BAD GIRL
2. Mermaid
3. Losin' control
4. Loved
5. Luna
6. How Are U?
7. Paradise
8. Mirror mirror
9. Sweet but Empty
10. Koibumi (Studio Live Version)
11. No Pain, No Gain (English Version)

**DVD:** 20 minutes, 4:3, Region 2

1. How Are U? -Promotion Video-
2. Luna -Promotion Video-
3. Koibumi -Special Promotion Video-
4. CECIL McBEE -Trailer-

NOTE: Comes with a sticker of the album cover.

The third time is a charm for Arashiro Beni as her third album "GEM" features a great balance of melodic affecting pop tunes, breath taking ballads and indelible melodies.

Arashiro continues to work with YANAGIMAN and CMJK, which both contribute lyrically and musically to many of the tracks on the album.

But if there is one thing that the two have helped Beni come closer to is embracing the music she enjoys and that is soul R&B.

For "GEM", there is a good balance of R&B, ballads and sugary J-POP on this album and since Arashiro Beni is half Japanese and American, for a J-POP artist, you get a good balance of English or/both Japanese lyrics with her songs.

Included on GEM is her 7th CD single "How Are U?" (AVCD-30862, rel. Sept. 2007) and 8th CD single "Luna" and an English version of her coupling song "No pain, No gain" (AVCD-31163, Rel. Feb. 2007).

Songs such as "BAD GIRL", "Mermaid", "Paradise" and "Losin' control" have an urban R&B influence and you feel that this is the style of music that she truly shines.

Interesting enough, these four are songs that she wrote the lyrics for.

But you also get the sugary J-POP songs such as "Mirror mirror" and "Sweet but Empty" but also the awesomely smooth ballads like "Loved", "Luna" and "Koibumi (Studio Live Version)".

The accompanying DVD features the promotional videos for "How Are U?", "LUNA", "Koibumi" and a five minute CECIL McBEE trailer which shows a sexy Arashiro modeling the company's spring clothing line.

In my opinion, her third album "GEM" is such an improvement from her last album and I definitely like where her music is heading.

- DENNIS A. AMITH



## hiro – VOCALIST & BACK DANCER?

### hiro

*itsuka futari de/I will take you*

Sonic Groove

AVCD-16108, Duration: 28:53

Official Website: [www.avexnet.or.jp/hiro/](http://www.avexnet.or.jp/hiro/)

Rel. August 23, 2006

Recently, I noticed a DVD release of a film titled "BACK DANCERS!" (GADH-1102E, rel. Feb. 2, 2007) starring former SPEED vocalist hiro, Sonim, Hirayama Aya and Saeko.

The film is about four women who are background dancers who are forced to retire during the peak of their popularity and the four refuse to go down and persevere and confront their own personal challenges to get back into the dancing world.

Singing the film's opening and ending theme is one of the stars from the film, hiro.

Included on this CD+DVD single is six tracks. The main two songs "Itsuka futari de" and "I will take you". Included is a "NS LateTime Remix" and instrumental track for "Itsuka futari de" and a "TinyVoice's Acoustic Groove Remix" and instrumental track for "I will take you".

Included on the 12-minute DVD is the promotional videos for the two songs and the making of the video for "Itsuka futari de".

It's definitely been a long time since I listened to a hiro song and to tell you the truth, I was



expecting high pitched vocals that I grown accustomed to listening to many times during her years with the group SPEED. But I found her vocals very pleasant and noticed how her vocals have improved over the years.

Also, found it interesting to hear her sing a nearly all English song with "I will take you" and the song definitely showed off her vocals and hitting those high notes.

"Itsuka futari de/I will take you" is a very cool hiro CD single and as of this write up is the latest CD single she has released at this point.

If you are a hiro fan, definitely check this CD single out and also her latest film BACK DANCERS!" which is available now on DVD.