

# Jazz Scan

Jazz ain't dead; it's just evolving!

Saturday, October 26, 2013

## Kikoski, Carpenter, Novak and Sheppard: From the Hip

**BFM Jazz**

**By Ric Bang**

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This quartet features artists who aren't household names to the general public, but are quite well known in the jazz world.



All have played in numerous name groups during their careers, and all have quite lengthy discographies. Pianist David Kikoski, a Berklee College of Music grad, was a member of the Woody Herman Alumni Band, and Charles Mingus' Big Band and Orchestra; he also worked with Chick Corea, both Brecker brothers and numerous other familiar artists. Bassist Dave Carpenter spent time with Buddy Rich, Woody Herman, Maynard Ferguson and many others. Saxophonist Bob

Sheppard has shared a stage with Herbie Hancock, Joni Mitchell and Stevie Wonder; drummer Gary Novak's sessions have been headed by the likes of Corea, George Benson and Lee Rittenour.

As would be expected from four musicians with such varied experience, the result is primo jazz. This album was recorded in front of a relatively small studio audience in 2006. (The lengthy period from studio to public release isn't uncommon.) There was no rehearsal, merely the desire to create something that each artist "felt like doing at the moment." Five of these nine tracks are beloved standards: "Star Eyes," "My One and Only Love," "How Deep Is the Ocean," "If You Could See Me Now" and "Autumn Leaves." The others hail from less familiar jazz charts: Coltrane's "Mr. P.C.," Corea's "Tones for Joan's Bones," Cedar Walton's "Bolivia" and Toninho Horta's "From Ton to Tom."

The performances utilize meters ranging from ballad to mid- and up-tempo; the common thread is that everything swings nicely, and the rhythm section is particularly tight.

It should be noted that, shortly after this session, Carpenter suffered a fatal heart attack. He'll be missed.

As often is the case with artists of this caliber, even though the music is familiar, their interpretation of each song makes everything new again. As I've noted previously, I'd love to have a group like this close enough to home, in order to enjoy them regularly ... and in person.

Posted by Ric Bang at 6:25 AM

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