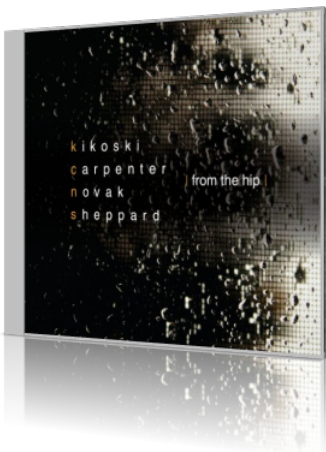


the jazz writer

kikoski
carpenter from the hip
novak
sheppard



It started seven years ago with a special concert at a private studio. It climaxes with the release of *From the Hip* (BFM Jazz, 2013) by Kikoski, Carpenter, Novak and Sheppard.

George Klabin, president of the Rising Jazz Stars Foundation, invited pianist David Kikoski to perform at the May 21, 2006, event. The recording is a select documentation of that performance. With Kikoski are bassist Dave Carpenter, who died two years later; drummer Gary Novak; and saxophonist Bob Sheppard.

The quartet takes on nine standards, from Cedar Walton's "Bolivia" to John Coltrane's "Mr. PC." They played without rehearsal, just knowledge of the original pieces and where the changes were supposed to occur. Beyond that is straight improvisation.

Kikoski leads with not-so-subtle contributions from the rest of the ensemble. The listener is simultaneously engaged with the saxophone while paying attention to what the others are doing. It's solid group play, with each complementing the others, yet still putting his own stamp on the song without distracting from whoever is out front. After Sheppard, Kikoski takes a turn. Then, all others step back while Novak exercises his kit.

"Tones for Joan's Bones" is a lively, delightful piece that was written by Chick Corea for his debut album. Kikoski carries the lead much of the way, with Sheppard providing a jaunty soprano sax solo.

After a moderate, tranquil beginning, "Mr. PC" quickly ups the pace and intensity. The tenor All nine pieces give the musicians plenty of room to play, the shortest track being just over six minutes.

Other tracks interpreted by this ensemble include "How Deep Is the Ocean" and "Autumn Leaves."

Collectively, the four musicians have shared stage or studio time with a wide array of jazz notables, including Peter Erskine, Chris Potter, Christian McBride, Mike Stern, Corea, Toots Thielemans, Marcus Miller, Michael Brecker, Randy Brecker, Horace Silver, Lyle Mays, Buddy Rich, Maynard Ferguson, Woody Herman, Allan Holdsworth, Sadao Watanabe, Alan Pasqua, Herbie Hancock, Brandon Fields, David Sanborn and George Benson.

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