

Record Reviews

anchor chain of the Ory imitators. He's one of the more accomplished trombonists in the idiom. Add them all together and you get a perfect example of the kind of traditional jazz that has been lost to us in these days of mechanical rhythm sections and stale and repetitive "improvisation".

The lengthy *Shine* is taken at a surprisingly slow tempo, which gives Dubber a chance for fetching liquid clarinet. I don't share Pat's enthusiasm for his *Minnie The Moocher* but it might make a template for current bands to copy as an audience-pleaser. The leader's occasional vocals are musical and it's intriguing to hear him tackling *Farewell To Storyville* again – I used to have him singing it on a Melodisc 78 with the Christie Brothers Stompers of revered memory. Had Pat begun in the early Mulligan band, then he could have had a more eminent career than George did! The closing five-minute *C Jam* features pure, wailing mainstream tenor. This is a charming, talented and accomplished CD that any mainstream listener would certainly enjoy.

Steve Voce

EDDIE HENDERSON

BE COOL

Smoke Screen; Be Cool; After You've Gone; Loft Funk; Fran Dance; The Moontrane; Naima; The Sand Castle Head Hunter; Nightride; Yoys; Easy Living; Dla Juzi (77.03)

Henderson (t); Donald Harrison (as); Kenny Barron (p); Essiet Essiet (b); Mike Clark (d). New York, 31 October 2017.

Smoke Sessions 1802

The liner notes on Eddie Henderson's new CD speak of making something old feel new as a recurring theme. While the chemistry between this particular group, as Henderson says, is "seamless", I had hoped for something rather more ambitious with more risk-taking. The playing is as solid and cohesive as you might expect from such high-calibre personnel, but without ever setting the pulse racing. It is as if the entire project is too tram-lined and thus restrained by its own remit – to *Be Cool*.

The problem is compounded by the choice of tunes. Henderson does not consider himself a composer, and asked for material from his collaborators. However, the three tracks penned by Kenny Barron, Donald Harrison

and Mike Clark do not stand out as original compositions which have you reaching for the replay button. Harrison's *The Sand Castle Head Hunter* and Clark's *Loft Funk* have a funk feel, the latter a nod to Eddie Harris's *Freedom Jazz Dance*. Cover versions of Woody Shaw's *The Moontrane*, first recorded on Larry Young's Unity album, Coltrane's *Naima* and Herbie Hancock's *Toys* are competent and workmanlike without bringing surprise or new energy to old standards – especially disappointing in the case of *Toys*, a go-to staple of the Mwandishi band, whose genesis marked the breakthrough in Henderson's career.

The inclusion of Miles Davis's *Fran Dance* is a throw-back to Henderson's first meeting with Davis while a student at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. Davis's band at that time included Cannonball Adderley and Coltrane and hearing them play inspired him to make the trumpet his life's work. The most interesting piece, *Nightride*, was written by Henderson's pianist daughter and shows Henderson at his most dynamic and expressive.

Francis Graham-Dixon



THE HI-LO'S

ALL OVER THE PLACE + AND ALL THAT JAZZ

(1) *Bali Ha'i; How Are Things In Glocca Morra?; My Little Grass Shack In Kealakekua, Hawaii; Sand In My Shoes; Autumn In New York; April In Fairbanks; Italian Street Song; Massachusetts; Isle Of Capri; A Nightingale Sang In Berkeley Square; Dixie; Island In The West Indies*; (2) *Fascinatin' Rhythm; Small Fry; Something's Coming; Love Locked Out; Lady In Red; Agogically So; Some Minor Changes; Then I'll Be Tired Of You; Mayforth; Moon-Faced, Starry-Eyed; Summer Sketch; Of Thee I Sing (74.58)*

(1) The Hi-Lo's (Gene Puerling, Clark Burroughs, Bob Morse, Don Shelton) (v) with the Marty Paich Orchestra. Hollywood, March and April 1960.

(2) The Hi-Lo's (Gene Puerling, Clark Burroughs, Bob Morse, Bob Strasen) (v) with the Marty Paich Dek-Tette. Hollywood, June to August 1958.

Jackpot 48769

Before The Beach Boys and The Mamas and the Papas, there were The Hi-Lo's, and these recordings showcase their pioneering vocal harmonies. Of particular interest to jazz fans, though, is that these are the only two albums recorded with the Marty Paich Orchestra, with turns on the spotlight for the likes of Art Pepper on alto sax and Jack Sheldon on trumpet. As such this represents some of the jazziest output from the Hi-Lo's.

Though one of the vocalists, Bob Strasen, is swapped for Don Shelton on *All Over The Place*, the group's sonic unity is extraordinary throughout. The arrangements are creative and colourful, combining vice-like control with easy swing and humour. The first album included here (*All Over The Place*) uses international destinations as its theme, and features such highlights as a twinklingly slow-burning *Autumn In New York*, but the second album (*And All That Jazz*) holds more jazz interest, with a rendition of *Fascinatin' Rhythm* that fairly sparkles and bubbles with energy.

It's also a nicely packaged set, with original liner notes and publicity stills that show the foursome, two tall and two short, engaging in various frolicsome antics. An all-round enjoyable and lively set of recordings.

Sally Evans-Darby

DIMITRI K.

BLUE CAT

Blue Cat; I Saw Her; Down Town; Mystery Bound; Implied; San Juan; In All Aspects; Due Time; Obscurity; Vague Curiosity; That'll Do It; Breakfast In Heaven (55.10)

Jochy Rodriguez, Alexander Pascalev (t); Gabe Carson (s); Jamie Strefeler (o); Roumi Petrova (vla); John Valeri, Van Galen (g); Alvin L. Giles (kyb); Dimitar Kovachev (comp. arr). Orlando, FL, 2018.

dimitrik.com

We don't know who the perfectly accomplished rhythm section are, but those listed above are the



featured artists or soloists on various tracks. The title track might suggest smooth jazz with its cool, Latin-funk vibe but there's no lack of substance or musical command in the writing or playing. The mellifluous mood continues in *I Saw Her*, with some clever oboe and string obbligati to colour the rhapsodic piano, presumably coming from Giles rather than the leader, who is credited with no instruments beyond manuscript paper or its digital equivalent.

Valeri's guitar leads the laidback funk of *Down Town*, maintaining the restraint which characterises the session; the guitar has a hot distorted tone but notewisely smoulders rather than burns; later, in *Obscurity* and *Vague Curiosity*, he stretches a bit more in George Benson style. *Mystery Bound* might remind you a little of Steely Dan's harmony on *Babylon Sisters*. The viola distinguishes *Implied*, which has something of Sting's *Fragile* about it and a Spanish guitar solo provides some improvised colour, but the jazz in this session is as much in the presence of harmony closely associated with jazz as in improvisation.

Hand in hand with the smooth-jazz implication that runs through most of the set goes the expression "library music". However, if you've ever checked you'll know that "library music" doesn't connote poor quality – usually far from it: you can't pass off poor technique or limited scope as ingenious self-expression or artistic individuality in the world of commercial music as you can in so many so-called creative spheres. This is good quality music-making likely, in its gentle way, to add balmy, jazzy atmosphere to any dinner party or soirée.

Mark Gilbert