One For All – The End Of A Love Affair (2001)

1) - The End Of A Love Affair - (7:35) 2) - Stolen Moments - (7:13) 3) - Corovado - (6:20) 4) - How Are You? - (8:52) 5) - Shinjuke Waltz - (7:22) 6) - Skylark - (6:05) 7) - The Eyes Have It - (8:53) 8) - Street Of Dreams - (6:10) Musicians: Eric Alexander (tenor saxophone), Jim Rotondi (trumpet), Steve Davis (trombone), David Hazeltine (piano), Peter Washington (bass), Joe Farnsworth (drums).

That One For All has remained a viable group since the mid-‘90s is remarkable enough in itself, let alone when you consider that each and every member of the group has any number of responsibilities as leaders of their own projects at any given time.

Their first venture for the Japanese Venus label, The End of a Love Affair finds One For All in the kind of hard bop mode that the Japanese audiences embrace lock, stock, and barrel. There’s even more of a focus on the type of standards that have not previously been explored by the group, namely “Skylark,” Jobim’s “Corcovado,” and Oliver Nelson’s “Stolen Moments.” Of course, what makes for an engaging listen is the manner in which the familiar becomes reborn and pianist David Hazeltine can take a lot of the credit for crafting arrangements chock-a-block full of altered chords and suspended rhythms that find new routes to well-known destinations.

Three of the eight tunes on tap are originals and that’s where the sparks really start to fly. Hazeltine’s “How Are You?” grooves over a 12/8 Afro-Cuban feel that everyone navigates with ease, especially Steve Davis, who adds a smoldering solo that’s one of his best of the date. A rock solid support throughout, bassist Peter Washington steps up front for a harmonious statement that institutes the string of solos on Eric Alexander’s breezy “Shinjuku Waltz.” Then from the pen of Steve Davis, there’s the Blakey-inflected shuffle of “The Eyes Have It” (nice play on words, huh?), with combustible solo moments from Davis, Alexander and trumpeter Jim Rotondi.

More detailed descriptions are really unnecessary for those familiar with the gentlemen that make up One For All; these guys have each developed their individual voices and are among the most in-demand musicians of the current set. And for the uninitiated, this set comes highly recommended as a consummate example of modern mainstream know-how. ---C. Andrew Hovan, allaboutjazz.com

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