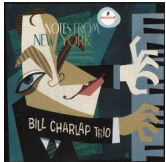


Bill Charlap Trio - Notes From New York (2016)

Written by bluesever

Friday, 10 March 2017 16:14 -

Bill Charlap Trio - Notes From New York (2016)



1. *I'll Remember April* [04:55] 2. *Make Me Rainbows* [07:04] 3. *Not A Care In The World* [05:59] 4. *There Is No Music* [06:08] 5. *A Sleeping Bee* [04:52] 6. *Little Rascal On A Rock* [05:07] 7. *Too Late Now* [08:54] 8. *Tiny's Tempo* [05:59] 9. *On The Sunny Side Of The Street* [05:03] Bill Charlap – Piano Peter Washington – Bass Kenny Washington – Drums

It's worth remembering that no artist is constantly obligated to reinvent the wheel. Sometimes, just making a really great wheel can be an accomplishment in itself. And while no one would say *Notes From New York*, the new outing from the Bill Charlap Trio, represents a paradigm shift in the piano-trio canon, it's an album of such instrumental invention and brio that it easily stands as the year's most purely delightful recording thus far.

Charlap's piano technique is singular and stunning in the way it weds a chiming, almost dainty touch to a leaping, top-to-bottom keyboard attack. If "muscular elegance" is not too much of an oxymoron, it's the perfect phrase to describe the pianist's approach. His album-opening rendition of "I'll Remember April" is a master class in fast-paced swing, drummer Kenny Washington's staccato rhythms driving Charlap to ever-rising single-note explosions. "Tiny's Tempo" bustles along with effortless flair, showcasing a bouncy solo from bassist Peter Washington, and Charlap lightly trips his way through "A Sleepin' Bee"; there, Kenny Washington's shuffling brushes provide an unwavering companion on the journey.

But Charlap's trio also brings considerable vitality and élan to *Notes From New York's* moodier material. The pianist's low-register block chords give "Make Me Rainbows" an admirable sense of ardor, with Peter Washington's walking strings adding just enough blues to the mix. "There Is No Music" blends polished refinement with a somber, minor-keyed tenderness and darkly shimmering Charlap glissandos. The whole affair closes with "On the Sunny Side of the Street," which Charlap, playing unaccompanied, reinvents as a bittersweet ballad full of longing and

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echoey empty spaces. But even when it's tugging at your heartstrings, Notes From New York is a luxurious, exquisitely pleasurable experience. Charlap and his trio have given us a "wheel" that rolls on straight and true. --- Matt R. Lohr, jazztimes.com

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