

Charnett Moffett - Music From Our Soul (2017)

Written by bluesever

Wednesday, 03 January 2018 13:48 -

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1 *Music From Our Soul* 3:56 2 *Freedom* 5:23 3 *Mood Indigo* 7:05 4 *So What?* 3:41 5 *Come And Play* 5:08 6 *Love In The Galaxies* 3:39 7 *We Are Here To Play* 4:38 8 *Mediterranean* 4:58 9 *For Those Who Know* 5:29 10 *Just Need Love* 6:57 11 *Celestial Dimensions* 1:02 12 *Sound World Suite* 2:56 13 *Freedom Swing* 5:27 14 *Love For The People* *Encore* 0:35 Acoustic Bass, Electric Bass – Charnett Moffett Drums – Jeff "Tain" Watts (tracks: 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13), Mike Clark (2) (tracks: 4, 6), Victor Lewis (tracks: 3, 5) Guitar – Stanley Jordan (tracks: 1, 2, 4, 5 to 10, 12, 13) Percussion – Babatunde Lea Piano – Stanley Jordan (tracks: 1, 7, 13) Piano, Keyboards – Cyrus Chestnut (tracks: 2, 3, 5, 8, 10) Tenor Saxophone – Pharoah Sanders (tracks: 1, 7, 13)

Bassist Charnett Moffett is one of those figures that we tend to take for granted, mostly because it seems like he's simply always been here. The once-upon-a-time child prodigy has been omnipresent on the scene since the mid '80s, holding down the low end for jazz's elite while bringing strength, consistency, and creativity to the fore through his bass work. A short list of Moffett's employers and colleagues reads like a jazz history lesson—saxophonists Ornette Coleman and Kenny Garrett, drummers Tony Williams and Art Blakey, pianists McCoy Tyner and Mulgrew Miller, guitarists Kevin Eubanks and Sonny Sharrock, and multiple Marsalis men have all called on the bassist at one time or another—but he's not merely a sideman du jour. Moffett has made more than a few splashes on his own, releasing a dozen or so albums as a leader, and he's spent plenty of time headlining at notable venues and events. He's been a musical rock and pillar for the past thirty years, and *Music From Our Soul* celebrates that fact.

For this occasion, Moffett assembled a program of music that capitalizes on his many strengths while also highlighting his varied musical exploits and excursions in the present day. There are performances that were recorded live at New York's Jazz Standard, showcasing the trio of Moffett, pianist Cyrus Chestnut, and drummer Victor Lewis; numbers with guitarist Stanley Jordan and drummer Mike Clark that were captured in a live studio setting; recordings from a run of shows at Seattle's Jazz Alley, where Moffett and Jordan combined forces with iconic

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saxophonist Pharoah Sanders and drumming powerhouse Jeff "Tain" Watts; and pieces plucked from Moffett's performance at the 40th International Bern Jazz Festival in 2015, featuring a quartet that includes Jordan, Chestnut, and Watts. When taken as a whole, all of it serves as a portrait of an artist in midlife—Moffett turned fifty on June 10, 2017—and a statement of dominance from one of the most technically gifted and imaginative bass players on the planet.

The fleet-fingered lines, liquid tone, and harmonic perspicacity that are universally recognized as hallmarks of Moffett's work are all here for the viewing. His massive chops and flexibility are on display on the large majority of these pieces and his rapport with these different groups is evident. He supports Sanders' atavistic wails and exhibits a coiled connection to Jordan on "Freedom Swing," moves from mellow and melodious environs to a bluesy barroom and back again on Duke Ellington's "Mood Indigo," hits the gas pedal with Chestnut and Lewis on the feisty "Come And Play," explores pan-African cool on the title track, and gleefully mixes it up with Watts, Chestnut, and Jordan on the rocketing and explosive "For Those Who Know."

Sound quality and balance understandably vary a bit from place to place here—you can't source an album from three different live venues and a studio without encountering that issue to some degree—but musical quality remains incredibly high throughout. Moffett reached the summit three decades ago and he's still right there, bass in hand and fingers at the ready. He remains a giant on his instrument and a stalwart figure in jazz. ---Dan Bilawsky, allaboutjazz.com

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