

## Chick Corea – The Vigil (2013)

Written by bluesever

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*01 – Galaxy 32 Star 4 02 – Planet Chia 03 – Portals To Forever 04 – Royalty 05 – Outside Of Space 06 – Pledge For Peace 07 – Legacy* Tim Garland (saxophone) Charles Altura (guitar) Chick Corea (piano, keyboards) Christian McBride (bass) Marcus Gilmore (drums) Luisito Quintero (percussion)

"You turned up to our rehearsal," Chick Corea told the Ronnie Scott's audience – more than once – on the debut performance of his quintet, the Vigil. Quite whether the fans who had paid upward of £60 each welcomed the news was a fine point. There were passages in which the boss looked unhappy with the logistics, and the band (two Americans, two Frenchmen and a Brit) operated as if they were a football team getting to know each other after the transfer window had closed. But the piano star, at a sprightly 71, was boldly acknowledging a fact of jazz – that the best of it is always a work in progress.

The set took off with bebop composer Tadd Dameron's Hot House – transformed in Corea's arrangement by an asymmetrically swaying Latin pulse from superb drummer Marcus Gilmore, and boldly shifted accents in the melody. Early ensemble hesitations were despatched by British saxophonist Tim Garland, who took the piece by the scruff of the neck in a tenor-sax solo that swept the register from rugged low tones through an expressively quivery mid-range, to upper split-note wails. Royalty, a Corea theme of abrupt rhythmic shifts and exclamation-mark accents, displayed the virtuosity of the Jaco Pastorius-influenced bassist Hadrien Feraud and harmonically fluent guitarist Charles Altura, though both young sidemen sounded transfixed by the effort of steering through the chords. Pledge for Peace, a disguised waltz, sparked Corea into a vintage acoustic solo of sleekly swinging runs – and the following Galaxy found him cutting loose on the synthesiser over Gilmore's dramatic drumming.

The show wound up on a jaggedly rejigged account of Corea's famous theme Spain, and the

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soloists swapped improv phrases with unselfconscious relish. It had been a while coming, but it didn't sound like a rehearsal then. --- John Fordham, guardian.co.uk

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