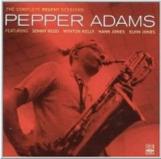


Pepper Adams – The Complete Regent Sessions (2008)

Written by bluesever

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1 *Watkins Production* Watkins 9:35 2 *Stop Navarro* 8:21 3 *Redd's Head* Redd 9:11
4 *Bloos, Blooze, Blues* David 10:15 5 *Seein' Red* Harris 7:24 6 *Like...What Is This?* McKinney 7:36
7 *Skippy* Adams 7:46 Pepper Adams - Composer, Sax (Baritone) George Duvivier - Bass Elvin Jones - Drums Hank Jones - Piano Wynton Kelly - Piano Bernard McKinney - Euphonium Doug Watkins – Bass

A companion release to Hollywood Quintet Sessions, *The Complete Regent Sessions* (including tracks from the LPs Art Pepper/Sonny Redd, *Jazz Is Busting Out All Over*, and *The Cool Sound of Pepper Adams*), also from 1957, features emerging baritone saxophone star Pepper Adams in a series of lengthy jazz jams, unlike the shorter and compact studio recordings he did with West Coast musicians. These two East Coast dates done during the early winter in Hackensack, NJ, at Rudy Van Gelder's house studio feature Adams' running mates who matriculated from Detroit to New York City with him, including Doug Watkins (who was also on the Hollywood tracks), Elvin Jones on all selections, Hank Jones, and Bernard McKinney. These long-winded originals loaded with extraordinary solos mark yet another progression for Adams -- that of a keen improviser the likes of which jazz had rarely heard on his instrument short of Harry Carney, Serge Chaloff, and peer Gerry Mulligan. The first three tracks team Adams with the tart sweet and sour alto saxophonist Sonny Red, offering an interesting contrast to the warmer, dulcet low-end sounds of the bari. Two calypso or Latin swing tunes kick things off -- "*Watkins Production*," where you clearly hear the impressive solo chops of the principals, and the obscure Fats Navarro number "*Stop*," sped up and rushed by an atypically anxious Elvin Jones. "*Redd's Head*" is bop at its best, a hard-driving swinger with a distinctive melody and choppy lead-in to solos that hint at rhythm & blues. Of the remaining five selections, Adams and McKinney emphasize exclusively underground timbres on the opposite ends of the audio spectrum. Stealthy, sneaky, low-down detective music is extracted on "*Bloos, Blooze, Blues*," and McKinney's variation of "*What Is This Thing Called Love?*," retitled "*Like...What Is This?*," reharmonizes the famous standard in a cunning, circular, and hot adaptation. A Barry Harris composition, "*Seein' Red*," might be a reference to Sonny Red in its ribald and hard bop construct, but cools to a slow simmer, while "*Skippy*," from the pen of Adams, seems easy as pie and simple for these masters. Bassist George Duvivier contributes a fabulous bouncy and

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solid solo on "Skippy," and credit must given to the brilliant pianists -- Wynton Kelly on the cuts with Sonny Red, and Hank Jones with homeboys Adams, McKinney, and Elvin Jones. These definitive dates, as well as the Bethlehem label document Motor City Scene with Donald Byrd and Jazzmen Detroit, the earlier Savoy recording led by Kenny Burrell, all belong in the collection of any fan and admirer of Park Pepper Adams III. ---Michael G. Nastos, Rovi

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