Wes Montgomery - A Day in the Life (1967)

By the time Wes Montgomery recorded this album (his debut for A&M), he was a major name in the pop world. Montgomery's melodic renditions of current pop hits caught on and were played regularly on Top 40 radio. In most cases the guitarist did little more than play the melody, using his distinctive octaves, and it was enough to make him saleable. Of his three A&M recordings, A Day in the Life (the first one) was by far the best and, although the jazz content is almost nil, the results are pleasing as background music. "Windy" was a bit of a hit; the other selections (which find Montgomery backed by muzaky strings arranged by Don Sebesky) include "Watch What Happens," "California Nights," "Eleanor Rigby" and the title cut. ---Scott Yanow, Rovi