

Eddie Harris - Silver Cycles (1968/2013)

Written by bluesever

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1. *Free at Last* (Eddie Harris) 3:17 2. *1974 Blues* (Eddie Harris) 4:28 3. *Smoke Signals* (Eddie Harris) 3:02 4. *Coltrane's View* (Jodie Christian) 4:12 5. *I'm Gonna Leave You by Yourself* (Eddie Harris) 3:02 6. *Silver Cycles* (Eddie Harris/Melvin Jackson) 5:52 7. *Little Bit* (Eddie Harris) 5:30 8. *Electric Ballad* (Eddie Harris) 2:56 9. *Infrapolations* (Eddie Harris) 6:39

Eddie Harris (Tenor Saxophone, Electric Piano, Synthesizer) Jodie Christian (Piano) - 1,2,4,9 Melvin Jackson (Bass) - 1,2,4,6,9 Richard Smith (Drums) - 1,2,4,9 Seldon Powell (Baritone Saxophone) - 1,2,5,7 Snooky Young (Trumpet) - 2,5,7 Bruno Carr (Drums, Percussion) - 1,5-7 Richard Davis (Double Bass) - 3,5,7 Ernie Royal (Trumpet) - 1,5,7 Billy Hart (Drums) - 3,5,7 Haywood Henry (Baritone Saxophone) - 5,7 Monk Montgomery (Bass Guitar) - 5,7 Joe Newman (Trumpet) - 1,2 Benny Powell (Trombone) - 1,2 Marcelino Valdez (Drums, Percussion) - 1,6 Phil Bodner (Clarinet, Flute, Oboe) - 5,7 Joe Zawinul (Piano) - 5,7 Bernie Glow (Trumpet) - 1 Melvin Lastie (Trumpet) - 2 Eileen Gilbert (Vocals) - 3,5 Melba Moore (Vocals) - 3,5 Valerie Simpson (Vocals) - 3,5 Maretha Stewart (Vocals) - 3,5

Still riding high from "Listen Here," Harris really started experimenting here with a dazzlingly eclectic LP that must have left his new fans wondering just who the real Eddie Harris was. There is good old Latinized funk in the opening cuts, "Free at Last" and "1974 Blues," but what was one to make of the next one, "Smoke Signals," with its interplanetary Echoplexed electric sax and ethereal wordless female voices? Then it's on to a long-limbed Coltrane tribute on pianist Jodie Christian's "Naima"-like "Coltrane's View," a wailing cry of raw pain with a huge band of horns, strings and voices ("I'm Gonna Leave You by Yourself"), another avant-garde electronic extravaganza ("Silver Cycles") and...well, you get the point; there's a surprise around every bend. The music is by turns swinging, touching, feverish, detached, nightmarish, and peaceful, bursting with new ideas generated from Harris' plunge into electronics. This album has been unjustly overlooked, probably because Harris was selling a lot of records and getting airplay at the time (a cardinal sin for purists), or perhaps for its free, anything-goes '60s spirit. The sound was always curiously distant on LP and on individual tracks reissued on CD; one wonders if this was due to a damaged or third-hand master tape. --- Richard S. Ginell, AllMusic Review

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