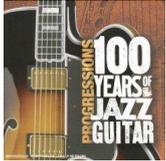


Progressions. 100 Years Of Jazz Guitar CD4 (2005)

Written by bluesever
Friday, 30 August 2019 15:18 -

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1. Carlos Santana — *Europa* [5:05] 2. Phil Upchurch — *Inner City Blues* [6:43] 3. Eric Gale — *Thumper* [4:12] 4. Larry Carlton — *Spiral* [6:13] 5. Lee Ritenour — *Captain Fingers* [7:08] 6. Allan Holdsworth — *Mr. Spock* [6:14] 7. Al Di Meola — *Race With The Devil On Spanish Highway* [6:16] 8. Jeff Beck — *Cause We've Ended As Lovers* [5:43] 9. James Blood Ulmer — *Church* [4:55] 10. Bill Frisell — *Ron Carter* [6:48] 11. John Scofield — *Hottentot* [6:45] 12. Marc Ribot — *Postizo* [4:58] 13. Mike Stern — *Fat Time* [7:26]

Containing a veritable encyclopedia of written information about the guitarists who have molded jazz during its century of development, this four-CD boxed set has it all. From the earliest recorded traces of jazz guitar to Bill Frisell and John Scofield, it's all there for study and listening pleasure.

Early traditional jazz, blues, and ragtime included pioneering guitar refrains from legendary figures such as George F. Dudley, Roy Butin, Sam Moore, Johnny St. Cyr, and Lonnie Johnson. Louis Armstrong didn't always relegate his guitarists to simply keeping the beat. With his Hot Five, they improvised a melody on the front line with as much strength as the leader's powerful horn.

Eddie Condon brought people together and relished his role as rhythm maker. Carl Kress and Dick McDonough provide the earliest example of pure jazz as art when they improvise on "Danzon" with a swinging rapport. Django Reinhardt and Stephane Grappelli follow with a big piece of history, as they swing with a portion of jazz that continues to be loved widely and interpreted freely today. Their acoustic swing and relaxed spontaneity puts a smile on faces young and old, near and far.

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The electric and amplified guitar changed things. As Eddie Durham, on an electric model, interprets "Love Me or Leave Me" with Freddie Green on rhythm guitar, you can feel the mood switching from plain old outdoor country fun to a smoke-filled nightclub where intimacy reigns. It's euphoric.

George Barnes played electric guitar on a 1940 session that included tenor saxophonist Phillip Ward in a swinging affair. Together, they take "Little Rock Getaway" for a stroll through the Swing Era with a lovely quartet. The recording has never been issued before now. Charlie Christian's "Solo Flight" with the Benny Goodman Orchestra in 1941 raised eyebrows and continues to serve as a perceived starting point for the guitar's successful integration into jazz. What follows simply builds upon that cornerstone and continues the tradition of spontaneity, swing, and spirit.

Teddy Bunn and Slim Gaillard provided swinging jazz that was fun. With Nat King Cole, Oscar Moore provided romantic jazz that nestled in comfortably with our senses. Then it was time for Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie to change the way that we view jazz.

Tiny Grimes plays the electric guitar with Bird on "Red Cross" from a 1946 session that finds the guitarist conversin' with Parker and steppin' out for a solo spot that ushered in bebop for keeps.

Barney Kessel, Jimmy Raney, Tal Farlow, George Van Eps, Chuck Wayne, and Les Paul demonstrate how suitable the guitar is as a solo instrument. In 1954, Tony Bennett's voice had the same emotional spirit that it has today. With Bennett, Chuck Wayne gave his interpretation of "My Baby Just Cares for Me" an intimate quality. Les Paul proved inspirational to many aspiring guitarists with his virtuosic display of blazing-fast technique.

Jim Hall and Bill Evans interpret "I've Got You Under My Skin" from a 1966 duo session that showcased the guitarist's fluid melodies and uncanny chorded accompaniment. Kenny Burrell's "Midnight Blue" remains one of the classic modern jazz recordings that belongs in every collector's desert island picks. His searing melodic improvisations come from deep within, as he lets his spirit take the music on a roll. Without that deeply felt inner quality, jazz is meaningless.

Wes Montgomery, Herb Ellis, Grant Green, and Joe Pass appear with fine examples of their stellar contributions to jazz history. George Benson appears with Ronnie Cuber and Lonnie

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Smith on a 1966 interpretation of "Clockwise," which features a fresh, up-tempo organ/guitar combo romp in the hard bop tradition. Pat Martino and Charlie Byrd demonstrate the power of jazz guitar as leader; then we turn to fusion.

Jimi Hendrix, John McLaughlin, John Abercrombie, and Ralph Towner capture a spirit that was beginning to envelop the world through mass audience gatherings and sultry jazz/rock adventures. Their cool approach maintained a jazz outlook while forging ahead into mystical explorations. Experimentation was the keyword. Still is, and should remain relevant to all that we pursue.

Smooth jazz, fusion, and pop/rock appear in the later years to remind us how far the shadow of a guitar's improvised melody extends. Today, we're faced with hundreds of fine jazz guitarists who all deserve our attention. Styles vary, and we eventually settle for one over the other.

More than five hours of influential jazz guitar makes 100 Years of Jazz Guitar monumental in its scope. It's all there in one package. Five of the tracks have never been issued before, and all of it comes with superbly mastered sound. Each track selected for this highly recommended project features a standout guitarist who has made a major impact on the history of jazz guitar.
---Jim Santella

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