

Kyle Eastwood - The View From Here (2013)

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01 – From Rio To Havana 02 – For M.E. 03 – The View From Here 04 – Sirocco 05 – Luxor 06 – Une nuit au Senegal 07 – The Way Home 08 – The Promise 09 – Mistral 10 – Summer Gone 11 – Route de La Buissonne 12 – Lucky Six Personnel: Kyle Eastwood - double bass, electric bass; Graeme Blevins - soprano saxophone, tenor saxophone; Graeme Flowers - trumpet, flugelhorn; Andrew McCormack - piano, electric piano; Martyn Kaine - drums.

Kyle Eastwood's boyhood in Carmel, California, may have been where and when he began his love of jazz, but as an adult his love of France seems to impact more and more on his music. Eastwood's sixth album, *The View From Here*, doesn't always show this influence explicitly but it's there nonetheless and it's giving the bassist's music a distinctive and delightful vibe.

As an album title, *The View From Here* doesn't share the Francophile origins of previous Eastwood releases such as *Paris Blue* (Candid Records, 2005) or *Songs From The Chateau* (Candid Records, 2011) but song titles such as "Mistral" and "Route De La Buissonne" (which namechecks the studio in Pernes-les-Fontaines where the album was recorded) certainly give very direct hints. The gently bucolic nature of much of this music suggests that it's not Big City France that gets the Eastwood love. Rather, it's the countryside, the small towns, the mediaeval villages, that inspire him.

This inspiration isn't limited solely to the band's leader and bassist. All of the tunes on *The View From Here* are originals but with the exception of the lovely "Mistral," written by trumpeter Graeme Flowers, Eastwood shares composer credit with at least one other band member. One point to note here—the sleeve of the preview CD lists Flowers as the trumpeter in the band but Eastwood's own website names Quentin Collins (who also gets writer credits on two tunes) as the trumpeter.

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"Mistral"'s mood is carried on through tunes such as "The Promise" and "Luxor"—both by Eastwood and pianist Andrew McCormack—and "The Way Home," underpinned by a simple yet soulful bass riff and featuring a warm but rather melancholy tenor sax solo from Graeme Blevins.

Of course, rural France isn't all quiet starlit nights and romance, it can also be a place to get down and dance. "Route De La Buissonne" has an insistent, funky, groove courtesy of Eastwood's double bass and Martyn Kaine's drums, topped off by an instantly catchy melody from McCormack on piano. "Une Nuit Au Senegal" blends Senegalese rhythms with punchy horn riffs from Flowers (or Collins) and Blevins, once again the result is irresistibly danceable.

On the album cover, Eastwood is pictured holding a double bass, but it's his fluid, lyrical approach to the electric bass guitar that results in the album's loveliest moments. His playing on "Summer Gone" is rich and romantic, the upper register phrases on "For M.E." have the precision, speed and lyricism of the great flamenco bassist Carles Benavent.

The View From Here is a mature, consistent, recording. No surprises, nothing leaping out of left-field, but plenty of warmth, charm and grace. ---Bruce Lindsay, allaboutjazz.com

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