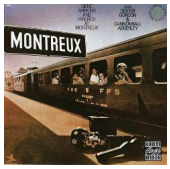
Gene Ammons - Gene Ammons and Friends at Montreux (1973)



1.Yardbird Suite 2.Since I Fell For You 3.New Sonny's Blues 4.Sophisticated Lady 5.Treux Bleu Gene Ammons, Dexter Gordon — tenor saxophone Cannonball Adderley — alto saxophone Nat Adderley — trumpet Hampton Hawes — electric piano Bob Cranshaw — electric bass Kenny Clarke — drums Kenneth Nash — congas

This set was recorded in 1973 at the Montreux Jazz Festival. Ammons, who had been working regularly for about four years at this time, sadly died a year later. In this final period of his career, he enthusiastically embraced modern changes in the jazz landscape, working with younger players and electric instruments. AT MONTREUX finds Ammons in the company of Hampton Hawes on electric piano, Bob Cranshaw on electric bass, drummer Kenny Clarke, and conga player Kenneth Nash.

For Ammons' own tune, the 16-minute "'Treux Bleu," the combo is expanded with Nat and Cannonball Adderly and Dexter Gordon. While much continued and deserved high regard comes from Ammons' strength as a balladeer, it's riveting to hear him fronting a straight-ahead, swinging, post-bebop ensemble. That's not to say that he can't slow things down. Two numbers (Buddy Johnson's "Since I Fell for You" and Duke Ellington's "Sophisticated Lady") glide into the smoky grooves of late-night romance. ---apoloybaco.com

Ammons, whose studio recordings of the period were somewhat commercial, is heard in excellent form playing a blues and three standards with the backing of a fine rhythm section: Hampton Hawes (who unfortunately sticks to electric piano), electric bassist Bob Cranshaw,

drummer Kenny Clarke and Kenneth Nash on congas. Best of all is a 17-minute blues on which Ammons welcomes fellow tenor Dexter Gordon, cornetist Nat Adderley and altoist Cannonball Adderley; the four horns all get to trade off with each other. This is one of the better late-period Gene Ammons records. ---Scott Yanow, Rovi

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