John Abercrombie - Wait Till You See Her (2009)

01 - Sad Song
02 - Line-Up
03 - Wait Till You See Her
04 - Trio
05 - I've Overlooked Before
06 - Anniversary Waltz
07 - Out Of Towner
08 - Chic Of Araby
John Abercrombie - Guitar Joey Baron - Drums Mark Feldman - Violin Thomas Morgan - Double Bass

John Abercrombie's longstanding partnership with Mark Feldman has yielded several albums of exquisite music, and Wait Till You See Her is no different. The mood is naturally restrained, contemplative, and introspective as you would expect, while there's a common thread of healthy respect that keeps the quartet in the softer mezzo piano range. With acoustic bassist Thomas Morgan and the irrepressible drummer Joey Baron, the electric guitarist and violinist weave their way through one standard and seven originals from Abercrombie that comes straight from the heart. It's not all sedate music -- check out "Line-Up," a fun listen as sneaky melody lines and frisky interplay is infused in a neo-bop context. A sprightly two-step beat, walking along with a brief, folksy musical snippet makes "Out of Towner" a tongue-in-cheek tribute to Ralph Towner. Then there's another cutely titled parody, "Chic of Araby," a bass-led tango with Abercrombie's secretive, snake-like guitar in the lower key dynamic the band prefers. A bluesy and reverent piece, "Anniversary Waltz" is in the midtempo pace that sports a more universal appeal, and it's draped in a pretty, elegant dress. The extremely slow "Sad Song" paraphrases the melody of "Speak Low" as Feldman's violin speaks to the emotions of the fallen, the title selection, a Richard Rodgers/Lorenz Hart evergreen, is reduced to a wisp of an anticipatory theme, and "I've Overlooked Before" has the seascape-at-midnight audio quality evocative of the best film noir soundtrack, ultimately dusky and sighing. One track sans Feldman -- "Trio" -- is a pretty good jazz swinger as you hear the sparse signature sound Abercrombie has held close to his

soul for four decades. Feldman always holds sway with his beautiful and piquant voicings. Alongside Abercrombie, you always know there's a compatible, agreeable sound forged between these high-level contemporary jazz string players. It's not a commanding performance, but the subtle nuances outweigh any kind of loud pronouncements that distract from musicality. At the bottom line, it's another consistent and at times excellent effort from these tried and true modern musicians. ---Michael G. Nastos, ROvi

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