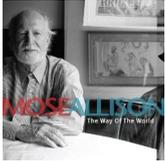


Mose Allison – The Way Of The World (2010)

Written by bluesever

Monday, 14 May 2018 14:59 -

Mose Allison – The Way Of The World (2010)



1 *My Brain* 2:59 2 *I Know You Didn't Mean It* 3:29 3 *Everybody Thinks You're An Angel* 2:58 4 *Let It Come Down* 2:31 5 *Modest Proposal* 2:29 6 *Crush* 2:55 7 *Some Right, Some Wrong* 2:49 8 *The Way Of The World* 2:50 9 *Ask Me Nice* 3:20 10 *Once In A While* 3:32 11 *I'm Alright* 3:12 12 *This New Situation* 2:08 Acoustic Guitar, Electric Guitar, Mandola – Greg Leisz Double Bass [Upright Bass] – David Piltch Drums, Percussion – Jay Bellerose Electric Guitar – Anthony Wilson Piano, Vocals – Mose Allison Tenor Saxophone – Walter Smith The 3rd Vocals – Amy Allison (tracks: 12)

Mose Allison basically retired from studio recording after 1998's dynamite *Gimcracks* and *Gewgaws*. Retired, that is, until producer Joe Henry met him in 2008 and dogged him until he graciously caved in. He coaxed Allison into his basement studio and cut the seven originals and five covers that became *The Way of the World* with a host of players from his own stable in five days. At 82, Allison is as smart, cagey, and inventive as ever. All but one of these cuts feature his weathered but still wiry dry baritone voice that exudes a trademark jazz singer cum beat poet's phrasing. For anyone who's seen him in the last decade -- or heard his jaw-dropping *Live in London* recordings -- his keyboard skills are sharp as an Argentine stiletto: give a listen to the lone instrumental, "Crush." Allison's elastic harmonic sense is as beautifully unruly as Monk's, yet his improvisational ideas are carried by a nimble-fingered force worthy of Bud Powell. The opener, "My Brain," is a smoking rewrite of Willie Dixon's "My Babe." Allison reflects on the ever-changing intellectual capabilities of his gray matter while punching up the piano's middle register. The blues have been at the heart of Allison's piano attack (*Back Country Suite*, 1957), though he's always wedded them to swing, rag, and bop. Henry underscores that with subtle touches: the strummed Gypsy swing mandola on the ironic betrayal anthem "I Know You Didn't Mean It" that engages with a knotty bluesed-out piano break and a warm tenor solo -- à la Ben Webster -- and "Everybody Thinks You're an Angel," a waltz with a Weissenborn guitar, follows a similar principle to delightfully different ends. On "Modest Proposal" Allison humorously asserts the compassionate idea that perhaps God is so weary he deserves a vacation. It's a strutting piano-and-vocal number, where Allison's saloon-singer irony might scandalize a preacher but makes the congregation laugh. The elegant parlor ballad "Once in a While" and the shuffling, not brokenhearted blues of "I'm Alright" also stand out. The latter's addition of

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electric guitar, mandola, and saxophone might seem like frills for an Allison session, but sound perfectly balanced and natural. On the final track, Buddy Johnson's WWII-era pop tune "This New Situation," Allison duets with daughter Amy; the two swing beautifully together. The Way of the World is not a comeback album; Henry had a nagging suspicion that Allison might have something new to say and Allison obliged. In the process they created a gem of an album that proves the pianist and songwriter still has many tricks up his elegantly tailored, eternally hip sleeve. ---Thom Jurek, AllMusic Review

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