

Chuck Mangione Quartet – Alive! (1972)

Written by bluesever

Sunday, 09 October 2011 08:42 - Last Updated Tuesday, 19 August 2014 19:09

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01 *High Heel Sneakers* - 10:54 02 *Legend of the One-Eyed Sailor* - 11:27 03 *St. Thomas* - 6:41 [play](#) 04 *60 Miles Young* - 12:03 Personnel: Chuck Mangione - flugelhorn, trumpet, electric piano Gerry Niewood - tenor & soprano saxophone, flute Tony Levin - bass Steve Gadd – drums

This album was recorded on Chuck's first tour abroad at Ronnie Scott's club in London. Before that he had never played outside the USA. In fact, in the album's liner notes, he expresses amazement that he's able to tour Europe. Needless to say, this was to change very quickly. The band played the Montreux Jazz Festival first and then went to London to play Ronnie Scott's club for a week. Audiences were blown away by this band and they got standing ovations everywhere they went. It's easy to see why. This is an incredible band of young extreme virtuosos playing at their smoking best. By extreme, I mean extreme!!! These guys can play anything at any pace, tempo or speed and still sound soulful and tonally rich. You have Steve Gadd on Drums, Tony Levin on Bass, Gerry Niewood on Sax and Chuck on Flugelhorn and Electric Piano. If you're a Steve Gadd fan or a drummer and haven't heard this album, get ready to be blown away!!! Gadd sounds like three drummers here and plays at tempos that would give anyone else a heart attack. Gadd started out playing with Chuck and his brother Gap in the late 60s (Gadd's first recording is on Gap Mangione's 1968 "Diana in the Autumn Wind" album) and feels completely at home with this music. Levin didn't become famous until he started playing with Peter Gabriel and King Crimson but here he displays the monster chops and musicality that made him one of the top session musicians of the 70s. Gerry Niewood had been with Chuck's band since 1968 and plays like a man possessed on top of this monster rhythm section. However, it must be said that it's Chuck's playing that takes this album and turns it from a great album into an absolute masterpiece. Every flugelhorn solo he crafts here is a virtuosic work of art that soars on hallowed ground. Not one ounce of compromise anywhere. Absolute jazz at its absolute best. More like fusion really but that's only because you won't hear any bebop beats on this record and not because you won't hear incredible improvisations.

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It's really a disgrace that an album this great has never been released on CD while you have tons of mediocre jazz cds getting released and then re-released with remasters and bonus tracks years later. It is a great sounding, warm live recording that just blasts out of your speakers. This album is superior to the "Live at the Hollywood Bowl" album whose first half is drowned in overdone orchestral arrangements. Highest recommendation. Buy the LP and if you don't have a record player anymore, clean the grooves and have someone who does have a record player transfer it to CD for you. --- Tuco H.

Flugelhornist Chuck Mangione became a household name during the 1970s and '80s due to some pop hits, but this LP (now out-of-print) actually contains his finest playing. Mangione, who also contributes some background electric piano, teams up here with Gerry Niewood (tripling on tenor, soprano and flute), electric bassist Tony Levin and drummer Steve Gadd. Together they stretch out on lengthy versions of "High Heel Sneakers," "Legend of the One-Eyed Sailor," "Sixty-Miles Young" and "St. Thomas." The fire heard during these performances is a sharp contrast to Mangione's more popular recordings. Well worth searching for. ---Scott Yanow, allmusic.com

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