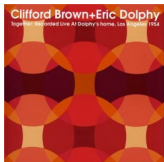


Clifford Brown & Eric Dolphy - Together (1954)

Written by bluesever

Friday, 15 February 2013 16:59 - Last Updated Sunday, 24 August 2014 13:55

Clifford Brown & Eric Dolphy - Together (1954)



1. *Deception* 2. *Fine and dandy* 3. *Unknown original tune* 4. *Crazeology* 5. *Old folks* 6. *There'll never be another you* 7. *Our love is here to stay* Personnel: Clifford Brown (trumpet) Eric Dolphy (alto saxophone) Harold Land (tenor saxophone) Richie Powell (piano) George Morrow (bass) Max Roach (drums)

The combination of Clifford Brown and Eric Dolphy together on any recording will likely have any serious jazz fan salivating. But this compilation, most of which was evidently recorded in the private studio that Dolphy had behind his parents' Los Angeles home, represents tapings of rehearsal sessions that were used to audition a new tenor saxophonist for the band that the trumpeter jointly led with drummer Max Roach. Evidently, Dolphy's participation was due to his friendship with Brown (not to mention providing the studio and, likely, the reel-to-reel recorder used), and he wasn't under consideration to join the band. Given that these tapes were only meant for Brown's use, the fidelity is not terrific and there are dropouts in places, no doubt from the age of the source material. But even though Dolphy's approach to the alto sax was still emerging (he was under the influence of Charlie Parker at the time and had not yet developed his distinctive style that often incorporated sudden interval leaps), it is interesting to hear him playing with what would become the working edition of the band (Brown, Roach, tenor saxophonist Harold Land, pianist Richie Powell, and bassist George Morrow) on two tracks, both of which are unusually long. The sound quality improves somewhat on another session, with Dolphy and Land joining Brown (playing piano) and an unknown drummer. On an unidentified track (credited to Dolphy and Brown, though that's at best a guess), the alto saxophonist's sound is more easily recognizable. Land shines in the Latin setting of Charlie Parker's "Crazeology," while Brown's prowess as a bop pianist might surprise some of his fans. The brief take of "Old Folks" is a bit labored, as if the musicians aren't very familiar with the tune; Brown plays most of it alone, with Dolphy joining in around its midpoint. The final two songs feature Brown on trumpet with an unknown pianist who obviously doesn't seem to be in his league as a performer. It would be interesting to learn who had these long hidden tapes in their possession before they made their way to the RLR label, as no details are provided within the liner notes. This is an interesting new chapter in jazz history that will be worth exploring for hardcore collectors of the works of Clifford Brown and Eric Dolphy, while the audio problems will

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be of minor concern. ---Ken Dryden, Rovi

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