

Michel Petrucciani - The Best of the Blue Note Years (1994)

Written by bluesever

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1 *Looking Up* 5:45 2 *September Second* 4:42 3 *Miles Davis' Licks* 4:27 4 *Play Me* 5:16 5 *Home* 5:26 6 *Lullaby* 5:17 7 *La Champagne* 6:15 8 *She Did It Again* 4:03 9 *Our Tune* 7:04 10 *Bimini (Live)* 10:09 11 *Brazillian Suite* 6:24 12 *O Nana Oye* 2:22
Michel Petrucciani - Composer, Piano, Synthesizer, Vocals Frank Colon - Percussion Palle Danielsson - Bass Al Foster - Drums Eddie Gomez - Bass, Bass (Acoustic) Omar Hakim - Drums Jim Hall - Guitar Roy Haynes - Drums Adam Holzman - Programming, Synthesizer Anthony Jackson - Bass, Bass (Electric) Victor Jones - Drums Robbie Kondor - Programming, Synthesizer Tania Maria - Vocals Andy McKee - Bass, Bass (Acoustic) Gary Peacock - Bass Wayne Shorter - Sax (Tenor) Steve Thornton - Percussion Chris Walker - Bass (Electric) Lenny White - Drums Eliot Zigmund - Drums

The single-disc Best Of outing is a mixed blessing. The 12 performances include the wonderful "Bimini" from Power Of Three, as well as trio and quartet takes from arguably his best release, *Pianism*, and six cuts with him playing acoustic and electric keyboards on the same composition. But the disc gives a grab-bag feel for Petrucciani the composer and improviser; we can't tell how his approach evolved, nor chart his growth or stagnation. In addition, the company doesn't even provide complete recording information, omitting the dates for the tracks. A final insult are the ridiculously exaggerated, incomplete liner notes in which Petrucciani is placed in the company of Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington and Count Basie, an absurd comparison. This isn't the way to celebrate or document a musician's contributions to a label. ---Ron Wynn, AllMusic Review

French pianist Michel Petrucciani's combination of rhythmic energy and inspired invention is heard here in several settings recorded between the mid 1980s and early 1990s. While

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Petrucciani can be an arresting interpreter of the standard repertoire, the emphasis here is on his original compositions, many making use of Latin rhythms and deceptively simple melodies. During this period, Petrucciani shifted his orientation from straight-ahead acoustic trios to use of electronic keyboards and additional percussion for a cooler, more layered approach. Listeners will likely make a rapid decision about which style they prefer, but what Petrucciani loses in drama with the expanded groups, he makes up in sustained and textured complexity. The highlight of the CD is the Caribbean-flavored "Bimini," heard in an extended performance from the 1986 Montreux festival with guitarist Jim Hall and Wayne Shorter on tenor. ---Stuart Broomer, amazon.com

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