

Stan Kenton - Kenton's West Side Story (1961)

Written by bluelover

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1. Prologue 2. Something's Coming 3. Maria 4. America 5. Tonight 6. Cool 7. I Feel Pretty 8. Officer Krupke 9. Taunting Scene (The Rumble) 10. Somewhere – Finale
Bass – Peter Chivily Drums – Jerry Lestock McKenzie Drums [Latin] – George Acevedo (2) Mellophone – Dwight Carver, Gene Roland, Gordon Davison, Keith Lamotte Percussion [Utility] – Larry Bunker, Lou Singer Piano, Conductor – Stan Kenton Saxophone – Gabe Baltazar, Marvin Holladay, Paul Renzi, Sam Donahue, Wayne Dunstan Trombone – Bob Fitzpatrick, Dave Wheeler, Jack Spurlock, Jim Amlotte Trumpet – Bob Rolfe, Bud Brisbois, Conte Candoli, Dalton Smith, Ernie Bernhardt, Sanford Skinner Tuba – Clive Acker

When the producers of the film West Side Story heard a sampling of what the Stan Kenton Orchestra had done to their score, they were disappointed that they had not thought to ask the band to play on the soundtrack. Johnny Richards's arrangements of ten of the famous play's melodies are alternately dramatic and tender with plenty of the passion displayed by the characters in the story. Soloists include altoist Gabe Baltazar, veteran tenor Sam Donahue and trumpeter Conte Candoli, but it is the raging ensembles that are most memorable about the classic recording. This CD reissue is highly recommended. ---Scott Yanow, Rovi

This is one that ranks up there with the Beatles' "Abbey Road," Coltrane's "A Love Supreme," Brubeck's "Time Out," Sinatra At the Sands," etc., as one of the great albums of ANY genre!! Take a marvelous Bernstein score and give it to collaborators Stan Kenton and Johnnie Richards (who had previously scored BIG on "Cuban Fire") and you end up with a sum greater than the parts. The producers who brought "West Side Story" to the screen were heard to lament after hearing this album, "If we'd known about THIS at the time, THIS would have been the movie score!" Almost all of the score is heard, arranged for the famous "Mellophone Band,"

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with featured soloists Gabe Baltazar, Conte Candoli, Bob Fitzpatrick, Dwight Carver, a percussion section anchored by drummer Jerry McKenzie (with George Acevedo, Mike Pacheco & Larry Bunker) and, of course, Stan. (You jazz and Kenton fans can see where THIS has to lead...). If you loved the show or the movie or just the MUSIC, you're okay here, too! This is just GREAT MUSIC. (The three ballads, done with Richards' scoring for the mellophones up in the stratosphere, will make those little hairs stand up on the back of your neck, and are worth the price of the CD by themselves!!). All of the fire, fun, beauty and emotion of Leonard Bernstein's monumental creation are captured for the ages on this CD. But writing is BORING...LISTENING is ENJOYING!! (I'm sure not gifted enough to describe how great this sounds anyway...it would be like trying to describe a sunrise!). BUY THIS CD....if you don't agree it's magnificent, please have your hearing checked right away!! ---C. Law, amazon.com

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