

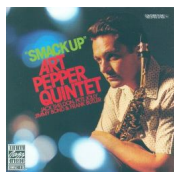
## Art Pepper - Smack Up (1960)

Wpisany przez bluesever

Środa, 18 Styczeń 2012 19:28 - Zmieniony Poniedziałek, 21 Lipiec 2014 12:31

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## Art Pepper - Smack Up (1960)



1. *Smack Up* (4:19) 2. *Las Cuevas De Mario* (7:11) 3. *A Bit Of Basie* (7:25) 4. *How Can You Loose* (6:56) 5. *Maybe Next Year* (4:25) [play](#) 6. *Tears Inside* (7:44) 7. *Solid Citizens [Take 33]* 8. *Solid Citizens [Take 37]*

Lineup: Art Pepper (alto saxophone); Jack Sheldon (trumpet); Pete Jolly (piano); Jimmy Bond (bass); Frank Butler (drums).

Art Pepper's reckless lifestyle tended to overshadow his superb musicianship, and the circumstances surrounding *Smack Up* are certainly no exception. Shortly after recording it in 1960, he spent three years in jail for heroin possession, and one can only wonder if the title of the record is a play on words. Nevertheless, Pepper is in good form, as he usually was despite his troubles, darting over the changes and stitching together sharp, boppish lines without hesitation. Featuring a crack rhythm section and a subtle accompanist in trumpeter Jack Sheldon, one can easily expect a set of expertly played jazz.

However, this album is different from the usual West Coast program of standards and show tunes, in that it features songs composed by other saxophonists associated with the Contemporary label, from the famous (Carter) to the infamous (Coleman) to the downright obscure (Duane Tatro and Jack Montrose). Most of these songs are inspired originals that never would have been recorded again had Pepper not resuscitated them, and the varied selection of artists and styles gives the album a wider reach than Pepper's other records, or most West Coast records for that matter.

The end result is a set that runs through various directions of music from the high-powered swing of Buddy Collette's "A Bit of Basie" to the hard bop of "Smack Up" to the edgy leanings of the Tatro tune "Maybe Next Year." The quintet even explores a soulful groove more commonly found on Blue Note releases with Pepper's own "Las Cuevas de Mario" (in 5/4) and Montrose's

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“Solid Citizens.” Appropriately Jolly sits out for the Coleman tune while Pepper and Sheldon wander over the changes, a little more tentatively than Ornette did.

But the strength of the album, other than the terrific playing, is just that it sounds different, an unexpected foray into little known songs that features energy and swing in equal doses. Perhaps the novelty of the music forced the musicians to approach the material more creatively or purposefully, but whatever the reason, Smack Up is one of the highlights of Pepper’s career, a record that shows that despite his sordid life, he was a master on his instrument. ---David Rickert, allaboutjazz.com

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