

David Chesky - Jazz In The New Harmonic (2013)

Wpisany przez bluesever

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1 *Jazz In The New Harmonic* 8:26 2 *Broadway* 9:34 3 *American Culture X* 9:01 4 *Duke's Groove* 8:21 5 *Groove From The Underground* 9:56 6 *Deconstruction* 7:30 7 *Burnout* 9:15 8 *Transcendental Tripping* 7:12 Bass – Peter Washington Drums – Billy Drummond Piano – David Chesky Tenor Saxophone – Javon Jackson Trumpet – Jeremy Pelt

Jazz in the New Harmonic is a strange record. Pianist and composer David Chesky, who works in both the jazz and classical genres, combines them in a 21st-century take on the Third Stream concept. He unleashes a killer jazz quintet (trumpeter Jeremy Pelt, saxophonist Javon Jackson, bassist Peter Washington, drummer Billy Drummond) on tunes composed in contemporary-classical harmony. The resultant album evokes jazz/conservatory fusions of the late 1950s, but it emphasizes the most grating elements of that sound and era. It is deeply, unceasingly dark-too much so to be enjoyable. The rhythm section maintains a pattern throughout: monotonous vamps from Drummond and Washington; sparse, dissonant and blues-less comps from Chesky. The effect is cold and detached, giving even the hip-hop groove of “Burnout” a veneer of bleakness and isolation. The swingers, namely the title track and “Duke’s Groove,” only up the ante with overt noir affectations in their melodies and a sluggish pace. The echo-laden horns do little to help: Dissonant themes like that of “Broadway” enhance the music’s moodiness, but on “Transcendental Tripping” Pelt and Jackson’s vexed interplay cloaks a Latin groove that might otherwise have enlivened the affair.

None of this would be debilitating if the album’s gloom had any apparent thematic purpose. Instead, it’s more like an off-putting byproduct of this jazz-ensemble-meets-classical-harmony endeavor. That’s a shame, because the players on Jazz in the New Harmonic do superlative work. Jackson triumphs, with unexpectedly melodic solos on the title track and “Grooves From the Underground”; Pelt has a fine, bluesy muted solo on “Burnout” and Chesky himself adds artful suspense to “Broadway.” Washington has little to do but shines through anyway thanks to his enormous woody sound. They’re doing their best to develop decidedly unfriendly territory. ---

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Michael J. West, jazztimes.com

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