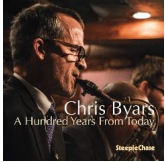


Chris Byars - A Hundred Years from Today (2019)

Wpisany przez bluesever

Piątek, 14 Czerwiec 2019 14:38 - Zmieniony Niedziela, 16 Czerwiec 2019 07:56

Chris Byars - A Hundred Years from Today (2019)



1 *Intention* 8:15 2 *A Hundred Years From Today* 5:16 3 *San Juan Hill* 6:09 4 *Money Can't Buy* 5:25 5 *All The Things Are Redd* 7:40 6 *Lovelace* 5:49 7 *Elevated Tracks* 5:22 8 *Flight* 5:27 9 *Incognito* 5:52 10 *Mountain Top* 9:11 Alto Saxophone – Zaid Nasser Bass – Ari Roland Bass Clarinet – Stefano Doglioni Drums – Phil Stewart Tenor Saxophone – Chris Byars Trombone – John Mosca

Intentional or not, it's a sobering thought experiment considering the current state of regional, national, and global affairs: Will the humans still inhabiting the planet a century hence be living in an egalitarian ecotopia or a desiccated totalitarian wasteland? Very probably the answer is something in-between those extremes. *A Hundred Years from Today* is also the title of saxophonist/composer Chris Byars' latest Steeplechase venture (his tenth) and a hoary Victor Young show tune first published in 1933. Byars knows his jazz history better than most and the session is interspersed with all sorts of underlying meaning throughout the nine inventively arranged originals that join the Young-scripted heirloom.

The date differs from Byars past projects as well in terms of personnel. Contractual conflicts precluded guitarist and band regular Pasquale Grasso from taking part, so the leader retooled the tunes to compensate for his chordal absence. Reduced to a sextet, the group still has a broad and varied sound forwarded by the returning horns of trombonist John Mosca, altoist Zaid Nasser, and bass clarinetist Stefano Doglioni. Bassist Ari Roland and drummer Phil Stewart are both first call prospects when a Byars date comes up as well and neither man disappoints in his appointed role. Byars fields tenor for the duration, but his charts are just as likely to tap his colleagues for solo honors as the brisk Lucky Thompson-dedicated "Intention" makes conclusively clear through salvos from everyone.

Other tunes carry different dedicatees. "San Juan Hill" doffs figurative beret to Monk in honoring

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the pianist's native neighborhood through an intricate 34-bar architecture. Stewart is particularly prominent here, bridging gaps with crisp fills and keeping a cantilevering time. "Money Can't Buy" honors Tadd Dameron in another 34-bar circuit this time grafted to a ballad tempo and another string of concise solos with Nasser's piquant alto constructions the standout. "All the Things are Redd" reveals both its honoree (Freddie Redd) and its chordal sourcing ("All the Things You Are") in a single titular swoop and benefits from another nimble exchange of fours between drummer and horns.

Byars' many years as a fixture at Smalls, a Greenwich Village jazz club, brought him into direct contact with a handful of criminally-unsung first generation hard-boppers. Answering to the first name Jimmy, "Lovelace" was one of the most demanding and dedicated among them. The piece borrows from the bebop staple "Tune Up" and honors the late drummer through a rapid-fire exchange of solo statements anchored by Stewart's blurred sticks. Bud Powell, Charlie Parker, Gigi Gryce, and Dizzy Gillespie earn honorifics through subsequent tracks capping with the cerulean-hued "Mountain Top" where Byars' once again tests his bandmates' mettle on an obstacle course sprint peppered with incisive solos. Conditions a century from now remain far from certain, but there's both certainty and quality to be had herein. ---Derek Taylor, dustedmagazine.tumblr.com

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