Mp3 Claude Werner Quartet - Thoughts And Recollections

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As good an introduction as you could imagine to the strengths of Claude Werners tenor sax playing- his warm expressive tone is at its most beguiling on these original compositions; an inventive lyrical journey starting in the back alleys of European jazz 9 MP3 Songs in this album (53:56) ! Related styles: JAZZ: Modern Creative Jazz, JAZZ: Jazz quartet Details: Claude Werner reached Newcastle (UK) from his Chilean homeland by a pretty circuitous route that took in New York, Paris, Barcelona, and goodness knows where else (a visiting Danish rhythm section greeted him as an old friend). His list of influences is a short and very select one, running from Coleman Hawkins via Getz and Rollins to Joe Henderson, and Claude places himself squarely in that mainstream saxophone lineage. Thats a tough place to make an impression if youve nothing new to say, so its a mark of Claudes quality that he is able consistently to invest the tradition with his own lyrical inventiveness. You could say much the same about David Carnegie. Its perhaps significant that his most influential teacher has been Al Harewood, a wonderful drummer who over a long career has anchored sessions by a diverse array of jazz greats (from Lou Donaldson to Lee Konitz by way of Dexter Gordon) without ever seeking to thrust himself into the foreground. And thats what David brings to everything he does: immaculate playing at the service of the music, not ego. But lets not dismiss the contribution of the two native musicians on this recording. Bassist Laurence Blackadder provides solid, unobtrusive support throughout, knowing exactly when to lay back and when to push the pulse (listen, for instance, to the way he sustains the momentum beneath Claudes almost soporific sax on the appropriately named Daydreaming). And guitarist Mick Wright is absolutely the right man for the job: to describe a musician as tasteful can sometimes seem like damning with faint praise, but here its just whats needed, a mix of well chosen infills and solos that eschew multi-note pyrotechnics in favour of thoughtful meditations on the music. Of course, thoughtfulness is what youd expect on an album called Thoughts and Recollections, and its the dominant characteristic of this set of tunes. This is also as good an introduction as you could imagine to the strengths of Claude Werners playing. Some of the bands he works with on Tyneside call for a more upbeat post-bop attack: he handles the challenge with aplomb (albeit sometimes at length I once managed to drink two pints during a single

Werner solo), but the warm expressiveness of his tone is at its most beguiling on these more measured accounts of his own compositions. As the albums title suggests, each of the tracks is inspired by some aspect of Claudes life, many of them associated with the recent years in Newcastle - although Fagins Pack refers to days in the jazz underground of Paris and Barcelona. (Fagins Pack was also the original name of this band, until some wag asked which of the quartet was the Artful Dodger!) But the real test of the music is not its programmatic quality, but whether the tunes, and Claudes interpretation of them, stand up in their own right. Listen to it, and youll agree that it passes that particular test with absolute conviction. Paul Bream (Jazz Promoter)

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