

John Jenkins Rar



FREDDIE HUBBARD, trumpet; JAMES SPAULDING, alto sax and flute; HERBIE HANCOCK, piano; REGINALD WORKMAN, bass; CLIFFORD JARVIS, drums.

YOU'RE MY EVERYTHING

PROPHET JENNINGS

HUB-TONES

FOR the past few years, young trumpeter Freddie Hubbard has

the low rumination of Lament For Booker. There is, above all, an exuberance in his horn that functions as a happy antidote to much of the overly introverted work that characterizes the present area. One need say nothing more about his skill and versatility than to report that he has recorded with Blakey,

Coltrane, and Ornette Coleman.

Hubbard represents the jazz mainstream, a word originally employed by jazz writer Stanley Dance to describe such men as Coleman Hawkins, Buddy Tate, and Vic Dickenson. By now, it should be apparent that the true mainstream, or central position in jazz is the one occupied by such groups as the Horace Silver Quintet and Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers, of which Hubbard is a member. In the early days of both groups, they represented something of an advance; combining the language of Charlie Parker with material derived from the oldest blues and gospels, and solidifying the resultant style into a new vocabulary. At the same time this change was taking place, the various small groups led by Miles Davis were contributing new concepts of rhythm and space, as well as a modal approach based on far fewer chords than the boppers These approaches, in turn, have developed into a unified

been releasing a series of albums, both as a leader of various

groups and as a sideman in various others, which definitely

mark him as the most exciting young player of his instrument

in jazz.

novations.

language, which is now the true jazz mainstream: it is the language of players like Curtis Fuller, Hank Mobley and Jackie McLean, and it is the language of Freddie Hubbard.

Hubbard, however, is perhaps the most forward-looking member of the new mainstream. Significantly, his last album prior to this (Ready for Freddie, Blue Note 4085) employed as a rhythm section McCoy Tyner, Art Davis and Elvin Jones. Two of these men are presently members of John Coltrane's group and the third, Davis, has worked with Coltrane on many occasions. Hubbard, in his own playing, suggests that he may be forging a link between the new mainstream and Coltrane's in-

Hubbard's style is a highly unusual mixture of elements, blended with extraordinary cohesion. He is a deeply lyrical player, somewhat in the manner of Miles Davis. Unlike many young trumpet players who have been influenced by Davis, however, Hubbard has sacrificed none of his formidable technique. He is easefully at home in all ranges of his instrument, from the slashing, accurate high notes of For Spee's Sake to

Hubbard has come into his own as a powerful, individual jazz personality. Part of this maturity is reflected in the pieces which Hubbard has written for this album. Nearly every musician who gets his own LP comes to the studio with a few lines written out, but they are seldom more than a starting point for the solos, and deserve only the slightest consideration. Hubbard's pieces, I think, amount to much more than that. Prophet Jennings, named for a New York painter who is a friend of several musicians, is a gentle, Eastern-tinged piece of unusual structure. It gains much from the voicing, flute and muted trumpet. Hub-Tones is based on an incessantly repeated figure, and might not even seem to be a blues until Hubbard begins his solo, coming to the breath-taking descending phrase in the second four bars. In its emotional freedom and attention to structure — Hubbard is obviously playing the piece he wrote,

not just taking a few blues choruses — this is one of the very best solos he has ever recorded. The longest track is Lament for Booker, dedicated to the late trumpet player Booker Little, who was a close friend of Hubbard's. Hubbard refers to it as a ballad, a phrase which often means, when used by a jazzman, nothing more than that a piece is played slowly. Lament is something more than that, I think, an unusually successful example of a mood of melancholy contemplation sustained for an uncommon period of time. For Spee's Sake, an uptempo blues, is for James Spaulding, who plays alto saxophone and flute here. A friend of Hubbard's, Spaulding was part of an Indianapolis group which Hubbard had before coming to New York. His startling opening phrase on the album's one standard, You're My Everything, is sufficient to announce the Coltrane influence, but he has found his own voice within that style. Equally at home and versatile on both instruments, he more than justifies Hubbard's remark, "He will be heard from."

The rhythm section is made up of three of the brighter talents on the East coast. Reginald Workman, who was with Coltrane at the time that the saxophonist was using two basses, provides constantly changing and expanding. In solo and support, he is indispensable to the album's success. Herbie Hancock, who plays regularly with Donald Byrd, is rapidly coming to attention as an important new pianist. His is an unusual style, combining elements of funk with some of the techniques most closely associated with Bill Evans. Clifford Jarvis, tasteful and driving, is being more and more widely used, and this record should indicate why. It is to Hubbard's credit that this album achieves a surprising

further evidence here that the function of the bass in jazz is

Blue Note 4115

degree of unity. There is little of the haphazard feeling that too often attends blowing sessions by pick-up bands. The five men who perform here are obviously in agreement about the music, and how it should be approached. It would be easy to mistake this for a group which works regularly. Part of that is simply because all the players are part of the new mainstream, the part that is seeking beyond the accepted common language to find ways of extending it. The rest is because of Hubbard's unusual talent. After hearing this recording, I remarked to him that it sounded as though he had been spending more time on his writing. "You mean, he asked, "that you think it's getting better?" I do, and I think the same of his playing. And to someone who is so young, and has accomplished so much already, perhaps that is the only compliment needed.

-JOE GOLDBERG

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LAMENT FOR BOOKER

FOR SPEE'S SAKE

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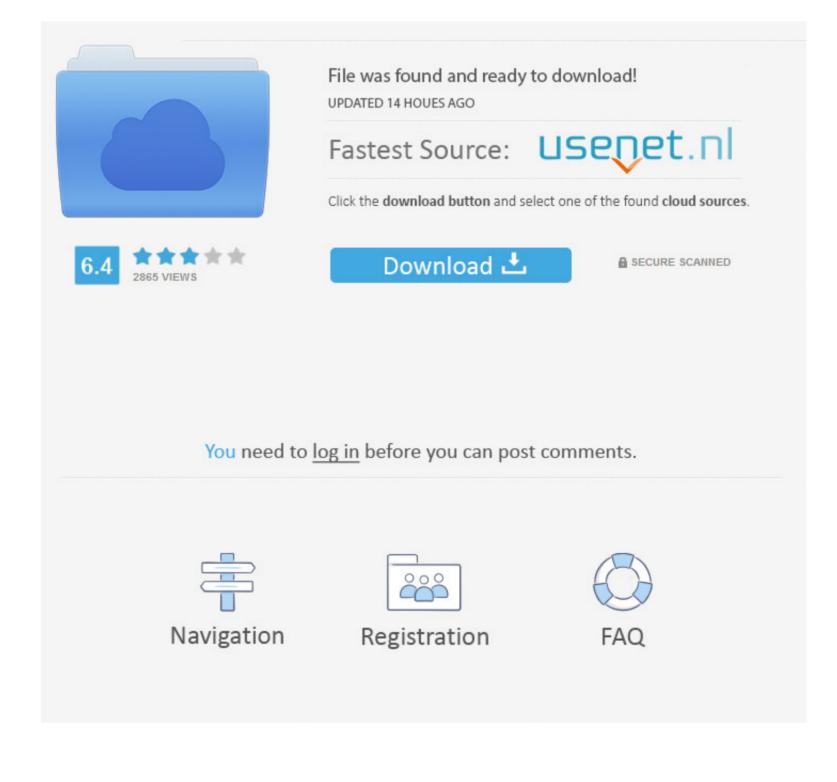
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John Jenkins Rar



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