

by far the standout solo voice, is graceful and inventive. But there is little else here to crow about.

But in the spirit of full disclosure I would be remiss not to recognize and mention the leader's nearly enchanting arrangement of a mini-suite of three of Arlen's more identifiable Wizard of Oz songs. Smith's unaccompanied version of "The Lollipop League" sounds as if it is being plucked on a magical toy guitar, and is followed by a "Follow the Yellow Brick Road" that benefits greatly from the confluence of guitar, trombone, and piano beautifully mimicking the voices of the movie's Munchkins. Capping it off is a flowing "We're Off to See the Wizard" via a Wes Montgomery-like groove-line. But being within a nearly 80-minute-long CD it's hardly enough to justify an endorsement.

Charles Winokoor

FILIPE MELO, DEBUT, CLEAN FEED 48.

Debut / I Got Rhythm / Pensativa / Isn't She Lovely / Strictly Confidential / Jingles / That Old Feeling / Sweet Georgia Brown / Jessica's Day / Memories of You. 57:18.

Melo, p; Bruno Santos, g; Bernardo Moreira, b. February 1-3, 2004, Lisbon, Portugal.

The Portuguese label, Clean Feed, has been garnering well-deserved praise as of late for its top shelf releases from cutting edge American artists. For the most part, the Portuguese releases on the label have been somewhat overlooked, but are equally interesting, mostly for their range. On his debut, pianist Filipe Melo, along with his trio mates, guitarist Bruno Santos and bassist Bernardo Moreira, favors a stripped-down setting that results in a relaxed demeanor.

Compositionally, the majority of this session is drawn from the Songbook, though they commence with a Melo original, "Debut," that sets the stage as a cheerful Blues-based stride. As a starting point for the standard material, "I Got Rhythm" is a straight-up small group Swing arrangement, with Santos' eight note strums, Moreira's walking bass, and Melo's Classically-tinged piano colors. As for the Bop-like numbers, the trio takes an easygoing stroll on Stevie Wonder's "Isn't She Lovely," the skip of Bud Powell's "Strictly Confidential," Wes Montgomery's "Jingles," an obvious showpiece for Santos' limber lines, the Blues-hued "Sweet Georgia Brown" (with tinges of Monk) and the strut of Quincy Jones' "Jessica's Day." The set also looks to the lesser known "Pensativa" by Clare Fischer, a lovely Latin number, as well as the nostalgic "That Old Feeling" and the album's closer, a touching solo piano portrait, "Memories of You."

Not to sound too cliché, but this is the perfect sort of laid-back set that works well on a Sunday afternoon. You're likely to get more edge out of other releases from Clean Feed, but discs such as these demonstrate the label's broad (and admirable) aims and some stellar work of Lisbon's finest young talents.

Jay Collins

1) CARLI MUNOZ, MAVERICK, PELOSENEL 1004.

Maverick / You Don't Know What Love Is / Margot / A Cool Night in the City / Katira's Waltz / Entre Nous / Three Little Steps to Heaven# / In the Wee Small Hours of the Morning / Yellow Moon Tune+. 60:21.*

Munoz, p; Eddie Gomez, b; Jack DeJohnette, d; David Sanchez, sax on *; Don Byron, cl on #; Jane Scarpantoni, cel on +. September 9-10, 2001, NYC, NY.

2) DAVID KANE, GREY MATTERS, MAGELLAN 3.

Grey Matters / Moon and Shadow / Stealth Plan* / Catching Threads / Crypt-Zoology* / Winter Rose / Sparks / Wally Dug* / Unified Fields / Solo Improvisation. 53:36.*

Kane, p; Drew Gress, b; Michael Smith, d; David Liebman, ts, ss on *. January 14 & 15, 2005, Hampton, NJ.

3) FRANK HEWITT, FOUR HUNDRED SATURDAYS, SMALLS 10.

Lullaby in Rhythm / Blue Gardenia / Oblivion / Manteca. 59:31.

Hewitt, p; Chris Byars, ts; Mike Mullins, as; Ari Roland, b; Jimmy Lovelace, d. August 21, 1999, NYC, NY.

4) BRIAN LYNCH, CON CLAVE, CRISS CROSS 1271.

Tom Harrell / La Sitera / JB's Dilemma / Across the Bridge / Liberated Brother / La Mulata Rumbera / Awe Shocks / Invitation. 70:19.

Lynch, tpt; Ralph Bowen, ts; Luis Perdomo, p; Boris Kozlov, b; Ruben Rodriguez, b; Ernesto Simpson, d; Roberto Quinero, perc. October 14, 2004, Brooklyn, NY.

You can't ask for much better trio support than Munoz has enlisted on (1). Balancing dark dissonance with sunny optimism, Munoz pens memorable themes and is a generous improviser. He plays with the infectious brio of a player like Horace Silver and he likes it pretty hot for the most part. His somewhat flowery rendition of "You Don't Know What Love Is" really doesn't hit the mark for me, as it seems to winnow out all the bitter, chastened heart of the tune. But that one misfire aside (well actually, the closing "Yellow Moon Tune" is a bit schmaltzy, with Scarpantoni reduced to background color), the trio is brimming with confidence on tunes like Keith Jarrett's bright "Margot" or Munoz's own sultry "A Cool Night," where DeJohnette and Gomez play with endless rhythmic invention. And it's at these moments—nowhere more so than on "Wee Small Hours"—when Munoz's flow is most evident and his highly lyrical style (relatively thin on rhythmic changeups) sounds best. Though David Sanchez and Don Byron provide excellent contributions on their lone tracks, the trio is really what compels. And in all honesty, as enjoyable as the leader's playing is, I spent most of my time just listening to the great Jack DeJohnette. That's no negative comment on the fine Munoz, just another commendation of this fabulous bassist and drummer, the heart of this above average piano trio.

Kane's limber group on (2) pursues generally soft-toned impressionistic post-Bop, heavy on the circuitous lines, dense harmonies, and quirky