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The Complete Blue Note/UA Curtis Fuller Sessions (# 166) (CD)

Text from mosaicrecords.com announcing this set:

"A major, and I don't use the term lightly, period of artistic development for Fuller is encapsulated in the wonderful new Mosaic box." - Chris Hovan, Jazz & Blues

Can you imagine a musician with the range to play alongside Coltrane, Bud Powell and Jimmy Smith?

Alfred Lion could. Curtis Fuller not only brought new intensity, energy and chordal innovation to the world of jazz, he also brought an unparalleled range of understanding.

His first hero was J. J. Johnson, but Detroit-native Fuller (who came of age along with Kenny Burrell, Thad Jones, Yusef Lateef and Betty Carter) had his own concept. Alfred Lion knew it when he heard it. Which is why Alfred put him on Coltrane, Smith and Powell dates almost immediately upon hearing him, and quickly signed him to his own contract with the label.

Curtis brought attention to himself not only for his playing, but also for his writing. He was among the best composers of the era, as evidenced by charts for his own dates and pieces he created for other musicians.

Now, Mosaic is happy to present The Complete Blue Note/UA Curtis Fuller Sessions, the first opportunity to hear all of this trombone player's recordings as a leader from this fertile period in hard bop (1957-1958) under one cover.

A blur of recording activity

Within three months of joining the label, Curtis had his first album. Within the year, he recorded three more, all brimming with melodic advances and Fuller's rich, brilliant sound, so unusual for an instrument that in the wrong hands can be dull and plodding. This is music with a confident stride to match the big city's beat and the swift intelligence to master its special rules.

Later, he would reinvigorate Benny Golson's Quintet (which evolved into the Benny Golson-Art Farmer Jazztet) and the early '60s Jazz Messengers, but with those first four quintet dates of his own in '57 and '58, Curtis Fuller established his own easy, buoyant feel on the instrument and its place in the music scene.

First timers

This five-LP or three-CD set includes his four Blue Note albums - three of which, *The Opener* (with Hank Mobley), *Bone and Bari* (with Tate Houston) and *Volume Three* (with Art Farmer) are released in stereo here for the first time.

The fourth Blue Note album, *Two Bones*, features Slide Hampton as "bone number two." It was never released at all in the U.S. (or anywhere in the world except briefly in Japan during the late '70s).

Also included is a 1959 United Artists date originally called *Slidin' Easy*, with Lee Morgan and Hank Mobley. Rhythm sections throughout included pianists Bobby Timmons, Sonny Clark and Tommy Flanagan, bassists George Tucker and Paul Chambers, and drummers Louis Hayes, Charlie Persip, Arthur Taylor and Elvin Jones.

Included in the brochure are original session photographs by Francis Wolff, the original liner notes by Robert Levin, Leonard Feather, Nat Hentoff and Ira Gitler plus an essay by Michael Cuscuna.

"The fare is 1950's style bebop, and Fuller's gorgeous tone and wealth of ideas are showcased here like nowhere else." - Stuart Kremsky, IAJRC Journal

Discography

All sessions recorded at the Van Gelder Studio, Hackensack, New Jersey, unless otherwise noted. Only the original U.S. issue number is given.

(A) Curtis Fuller (tb), Hank Mobley (ts), Bobby Timmons (p), Paul Chambers (b), Arthur Taylor (d).

June 16, 1957

tk3 Lizzy's Bounce BLP 1567

tk6 Soon -

tk8 A Lovely Way To Spend An Evening (no ts) -

tk10 Here's To My Lady (no ts) -

tk12 Oscalypso -

tk14 Hugore -

note: Issued here in stereo for the first time.

(B) Fuller (tb), Tate Houston (bari), Sonny Clark (p), Paul Chambers (b), Arthur Taylor (d).

August 4, 1957

tk2 Algonquin BLP 1572

tk5 Bone And Bari -

tk7 Nita's Waltz -

tk8 Again (no tb) -

tk10 Heart And Soul (no bari) -

tk13 Pickup -

note: Issued here in stereo for the first time.

(C) Fuller (tb), Art Farmer (tp), Sonny Clark (p), George Tucker (b), Louis Hayes (d).

December 1, 1957

tk3 Quantrale BLP 1583

tk4 Two Quarters Of A Mile -

tk6 Little Messenger -

tk8 It's Too Late Now -

tk9 Jeanie -

tk12 Carvon -

note: Issued here in stereo for the first time.

(D) Fuller, Slide Hampton (tb), Sonny Clark (p), George Tucker (b), Charlie Persip (d).

January 22, 1958

tk2 Pajama Tops (J) GXF 3064

tk3 Slide's Ride -

tk6 Loquacious Lady -

tk10 Mean Jean -

tk14 Fuss Budget -

tk15 Oatmeal Cookie -

tk17 Da-Baby -

note: On GXF 3064, the drummer was misidentified as Al Harewood.

There are two dropouts during the first solo of Da-Baby. They were on the original tape and cannot be repaired.

(E) Fuller (tb), Lee Morgan (tp), Hank Mobley (ts), Tommy Flanagan (p), Paul Chambers (b), Elvin Jones (d), Gigi Gryce -1, Benny Golson -2 (arr).

Nola Studios, NYC, March 9, 1959

tk5 Down Home -1 UAS 5041

tk6 Down Home (alt tk) -1 unissued

tk7 CTA -1 UAS 5041

tk17 When Lights Are Low -2 -

tk4 I Wonder Where Our Love Has Gone -2 -

tk5 Bongo Bop -2 -

tk6 Bit Of Heaven -2 –

Album index:

- BLP 1567 The Opener
- BLP 1572 Bone And Bari
- BLP 1583 Curtis Fuller-Art Farmer
- GXF 3064 Two Bones (Japan)
- UAS 5041 Sliding Easy

Original sessions produced by Alfred Lion (A-D) and Tom Wilson (E)

Produced for release by Michael Cuscuna

Executive producer: Charlie Lourie

Recording engineer: Rudy Van Gelder (A-D), Lewis Merrit (E)

Mastered by Ron McMasters

All photographs by Francis Wolff

Design direction: Richard Mantel

Design production: InkWell, Inc.

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