

Diego Urcola *Mates*

SUNNYSIDE 4112
★★★★½

While the title of this date might refer to “mate,” a centuries-old South American “drink of friendship,” it also, and more explicitly, refers to the series of 14 duets that Buenos Aires-born, New York-based trumpeter Diego Urcola conducts with old and new friends. Among those friends are bassist Avishai Cohen and vibraphonist Dave Samuels, both of whom have recorded on previous Urcola outings. The albums *Libertango* and *VIVA* highlight Urcola as a leader, but he’s also been a regular with clarinetist Paquito D’Rivera, the Dizzy Gillespie Alumni All-Stars and Guillermo Klein’s Los Guachos aggregate.

None of that expanded palette obviously surfaces on *Mates*, which also includes exchanges with bandoneón player Juan Dargentón and harpist Edmar Castañeda. In every instance, the music has a singing quality to it, whether it’s samba-infused, balladic or simply playful. Playful is one word that might describe the opener, the traditional “Eleguá.” Its tart and taut melody played in duet with Cohen is a fairly weak beginning to what leads to more magical encounters along the way. Throughout, the selections become more visits than resting places, with only two numbers clocking in at more than five minutes. You might say chops aren’t the order of the day here. Solos are brief, if at all. The intent is tilted more toward the chemistry Urcola engenders between each of his musical partners.

All that said, it is Urcola, the player, who remains center stage, whether playing trumpet, muted trumpet or flugelhorn. The moods tend to be introspective. Bouncy fare offers the counter forward motion that might suggest a lively dance: On Cohen’s “Gadu,” Urcola’s open horn is opposite Cohen’s propulsive plucks, climaxing in an equally rare trilling shout from the leader.

—John Epland

Mates: Eleguá; Elm; Colibrí; A Fala Da Paixão; Gadu; Alfonsina Y El Mar; Preludio #3; Milonga Para Paquito; Float; Samba Pa’ Dos; You Don’t Know What Love Is; El Día Que Me Quieras; Colombian Dixie; Final Waltz. (61:07)

Personnel: Diego Urcola, trumpet, flugelhorn; Avishai Cohen, bass (1, 5, 9, 12); Dave Samuels, vibes, marimba (4, 7, 10); Edmar Castañeda, harp (3, 6, 13); Juan Dargentón, bandoneón (2, 8, 11, 14).

Ordering info: sunnysiderecords.com

Tierney Sutton *After Blue*

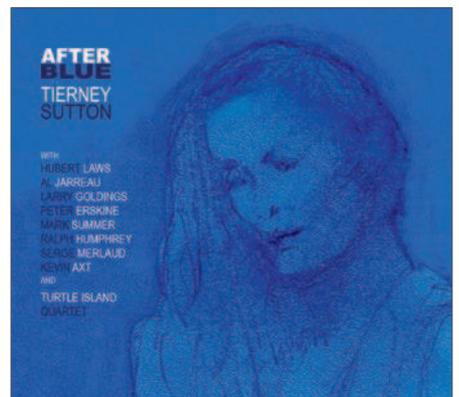
BFMJAZZ 302062419
★★★★½

Before she performed the Joni Mitchell-Charles Mingus composition “The Dry Cleaner From Des Moines” at a recent show at New York City’s Jazz Standard, Tierney Sutton recounted her difficulties learning to sing it as flawlessly as Mitchell did on her 1979 album, *Mingus*. “I thought, how hard could it be? After all, I’m a jazz singer, I sing Bill Evans tunes.” It proved fiendishly difficult to master, but master it she did, as she demonstrates on this album, easily the best collection of Joni Mitchell material since Herbie Hancock’s Grammy-winning *River: The Joni Letters*.

Sutton listened to Mitchell’s music for 10 years before she felt ready to record this homage, and it was time well spent. Sutton is utterly comfortable with the Mitchell canon, singing with great purity of tone and depth of feeling, and arranging the songs in ways that open them up musically while honoring the genius of the originals.

Sutton is widely admired for her cool, limpid tone, her precise intonation, and her modernistic arrangements of standards. Her previous album, 2011’s *American Road*, involved a more radical restructuring and reharmonization of its source material. Here she sticks closer to the original melodies and, despite the album title, covers a wide range of Mitchell’s oeuvre: the 1969 folk of “Both Sides Now”; masterpieces from the iconic *Blue* album; her jazz tunes from the late ’70s and ’80s; and two ballads representing Mitchell’s reemergence in 2000 as the smoky, vulnerable torch singer of *Both Sides Now*.

Reinterpreting iconic songs like “Blue,” “All I Want” and “Woodstock” is no walk in the park. Mitchell owns these songs, in more ways than one. Although it’s impossible that anyone else could



sing “Little Green” with the soul-baring poignancy that Mitchell brought to it, Sutton’s rendition is haunting, illuminated with a somber, probing string arrangement by the Turtle Island Quartet, which also accompanies her on “Blue.” The album is stuffed with various pleasures: a playful vocal duet with Al Jarreau on “Be Cool,” which includes inspired solos by Larry Laws on flute; Goldings’ eloquent piano contributions; and, in the album’s finale, a romantic melding of “April In Paris” and “Free Man In Paris” that works surprisingly well. The juxtaposition of the Great American Songbook classic with Mitchell’s more modern work illustrates Sutton’s contention that “Joni’s lyrics and music can sit next to the best standards.” With this album she proves her case.

—Allen Morrison

After Blue: Blue; All I Want; Court And Spark; Don’t Go To Strangers; The Dry Cleaner From Des Moines; Big Yellow Taxi; Woodstock; Little Green; Be Cool; Answer Me, My Love; Both Sides Now; April In Paris/Free Man In Paris. (58:00)

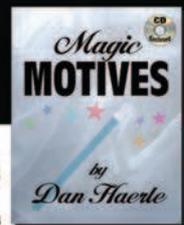
Personnel: Tierney Sutton, vocals; Hubert Laws, flute (5, 9); Larry Goldings, piano, B-3 organ; Peter Erskine (5, 9), Ralph Humphrey (6), drums; Serge Merlaud, guitar (4, 10); Kevin Axt, bass (4); Al Jarreau, vocals (9); Mark Summer, cello; David Balakrishnan, Mateusz Smoczyński, violin; Benjamin Von Gutzeit, viola.

Ordering info: bfmjazz.com

Magic MOTIVES

A METHOD FOR DEVELOPING JAZZ VOCABULARY BY DAN HAERLE

For all instruments. Motives – also referred to as “licks” or “cliches” – are the building blocks of a good jazz vocabulary. This book shows how motives may be developed using five note major, minor, and diminished scales and how to apply chromatic embellishment to those scales. The “magic” appears when you discover that any motives created from these scales may be superimposed over a variety of chords with equally good results. Includes detailed explanation and pages of motives in a variety of harmonic situations, including standard chord changes. Includes a CD of practice tracks from popular Aebersold Play-A-Longs. Play-A-Long parts are transposed for all instruments. Expand your creative universe!



GET THE NEW BOOK/CD SET FOR ONLY \$19.95



CALL 1-800-456-1388 OR VISIT www.jazzbooks.com