

TOUCHING EXTREMES / Massimo Ricci
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UWE OBERG / CHRISTOF THEWES / MICHAEL GRIENER – Lacy Pool

HatOLOGY

Steve Lacy's music is a mixture of irony, erudite dissonance and charmingly slanted geometries, whose significance can only be confirmed by musicians gifted with responsive wittiness. Unquestionably, pianist Oberg, trombonist Thewes and drummer Griener possess the physique du role for the task, and Lacy Pool is as a heartfelt and intelligent homage as you could hope for, one of those records that require at least three or four spins before understanding its influence, but that will be constantly replayed later on. Of the ten pieces, eight are reworked originals; the other two, both outstanding, "After Hemline" and "Tarte" were realized by the trio, yet still include quotes from Lacy's work. Those in the know don't need to be alerted about what "covers" are tackled, or differently stimulated; versions such as "Flakes", all played on razor-thin intersections and lovable hints to the prototype, shine of a unique light enhanced by the atypical orchestration, the whole devoid of any kind of incongruity. Thewes is a spectacular illustration of how the trombone may be used to depict the melodic structure of a tune while incarnating the clownish side of a performer, his action amidst the continually shifting rhythmic accents in "The Dumps" absolutely admirable as example. Griener establishes rules and defrosts pretentiousness, entirely at ease in any condition – from swing to deconstruction. Oberg is a logically watertight instrumentalist, authoritative when necessary, actively linking parts without the necessity of overplaying, owner of a crystal-clear vision of the keyboard that sees no taboos, equally careful in applying the mandatory respect for those who came earlier and opened the road. Great players, luminously entertaining album.