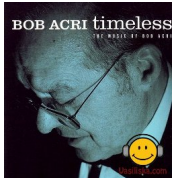


Bob Acri - Timeless (2001)

Written by bluesever

Monday, 26 December 2011 14:02 - Last Updated Monday, 25 January 2021 09:37

Bob Acri - Timeless (2001)



01 - *Tribute To Buddy* 02 - *Lonely Lonely Girl [Solo Piano]* 03 - *R.B. Blues* 04 - *Sleep Away*
[play](#) 05 - *Wake Robin* 06 - *Chromabluz* [Solo Piano] 07 - *Linda Rose* 08 - *Guess Who*
09 - *Lonely Lonely Girl* 10 - *Bossa Nova Viejo* 11 - *Fugue* [play](#) 12 - *J & B Blues*
13 - *Bob's Blues* 14 - *Sleep Away [Solo Piano]*

Musicians: Bob Acri, piano; Bob Acri, Jr., drums and percussion; Jim Acri, drums; Ted Schmuldt, guitar; Scott Mason, acoustic bass.

Bob Acri attended Chicago's Austin High School, the institution that produced Bud Freeman, Jimmy McPartland, and Frank Teschemacher, all of whom were major players in the creation and development of the Chicago jazz style. Unlike his school's famous alumni, Acri had to wait until he was 82 before he got a chance to record. He made up for it in other ways. He held down the piano chair with the ABC/NBC Orchestra, appeared at such high-visibility Chicago watering holes as the Pump Room and worked with Carmen McRae and Barbra Streisand. Acri's program for this debut effort are his compositions, sometimes played solo, but mostly with a crew of highly skilled sidemen, including his sons handling drums and percussion. Neither Acri's playing nor his music are flamboyant. Like his career, they are calm, unassuming, and very musical. A variety of genres are incorporated into his pieces. There are three blues numbers, with "R.B. Blues" featuring some funky guitar by Ted Schmuldt. Latin rhythms get their due with "Bossa Nova Viejo" and "Linda Rose." There's polite swing, "Guess Who," again with Ted Schmuldt making a strong contribution. The guitar player gets in a couple of Western swing licks on "Tribute to Buddy." Acri's piano has the elegance of Teddy Wilson coupled with the lyricism of Bill Evans. He is especially thoughtful and pensive when he plays unaccompanied two very short romantic pieces, "Sleep Away" and "Chromabluz." It's really unfortunate and unfair that Acri had to wait so long to be recorded. And what's even sadder is that it's unlikely his very pleasant-to-the-ear compositions will ever be recorded by anyone else. But this album remains a tribute to his skills and is recommended. --- Dave Nathan, allmusic.com

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It is hard to believe that at the tender age of 82, pianist/composer and arranger Bob Acri is debuting with his first full length Southport CD, as a leader. A fixture on the Chicago scene for 7 decades, Bob Acri attended the famed Austin High, an institution that created its fair share of remarkable "Chicago-schooled" musicians. At age 17, Acri had already stepped up from free-lancing in Chicago's many saloons to having one of the most prestigious musical jobs around - staff pianist with the ABC / NBC Network Orchestra. In his impressive career he once held court at Chicago's famed Pump Room and Mr. Kelly's working with people like Barbra Streisand, Shecky Greene, and Carmen McCrae.

Chicago born in 1918, pianist/composer Acri is a Chicago original. On this recording, he offers a collection of all original songs that span many forms of American song style, from the romantic ballad, to the bossa nova and the blues, with hints of swing and bebop. Acri lists the late great Bill Evans as one of his main musical champions. With sons Bob Acri, Jr. (drums and percussion) and Jim Acri (drums) the essence of a musical family can be felt and heard. Rounding out the ensemble is Ted Schmuldt (a long time ally) on guitar and Scott Mason on the acoustic bass.

"Tribute to Buddy" is a flashy up-tempo romp that swings and bops Chicago style. "Sleep Away" was released previously on the ABC label on track 12 (from Jamie and the Jays-Encore-ABC-592-1959). The Latin-tinged "Linda Rose" will make you dance with its hypnotic winding melody. "Lonely Lonely Girl" repeated with full ensemble, has the elegance of an Ellington tone poem. Bob's piano weaves between the melodic phrases like a mellow wind. "Bossa Nova Viejo" will prove to be the party stopper, another Latin track that builds into an intense frenzy, featuring both of Bob's sons, with Jim on set, and Bob, Jr. on conga and percussion. ---Editorial Reviews

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