

## Medeski Martin Wood – Combustication (1998)

Written by bluesever

Monday, 19 October 2009 15:08 - Last Updated Monday, 02 February 2015 21:50

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1. *Sugar Craft* ( 3:22) 2. *Just Like I Pictured It* ( 3:27) 3. *Start-Stop* ( 6:38) 4. *Nocturne* ( 4:02) 5. *Hey-Hee-Hi-Ho* ( 3:14) 6. *Whatever Happened to Gus* ( 4:26) 7. *Latin Shuffle* ( 9:04) 8. *Everyday People* ( 5:26) 9. *Coconut Boogaloo* ( 3:57) 10. *Church of Logic* ( 6:38) 11. *No Ke Ano Ahiahi* ( 4:47) 12. *Hypnotized* (13:37) Billy Martin - Drums, Percussion John Medeski - Composer, Keyboards Chris Wood - Bass, Composer, Drums

As the only jazz band to be accepted by the neo-hippies of the HORDE '90s, Medeski, Martin & Wood pulled off the strange coup of being embraced by rock and jazz audiences, who both loved their endless improvisations. They managed to walk the fine line dividing between the two camps, as their funkified soul-jazz was self-referential and cerebral, not earthy and instinctual. That's part of the reason why some soul-jazz diehards didn't embrace MMW -- the ingredients may be there, but it just didn't taste like a real Jimmy Smith record. Perhaps conscious of this, MMW make no excuses about their heritage on their fifth album, *Combustication*. Perhaps because it is their first effort for a real jazz label (Blue Note), *Combustication* happens to be their most adventurous effort yet. Ironically, it's because the group embraces alt-rock and hip-hop conventions like turntable scratching. That ultimately turns out to be just window-dressing, however -- beneath it all, MMW's music remains essentially the same, but the handful of curve balls makes *Combustication* worth close listening for those already on their side. ---Stephen Thomas Erlewine, Rovi

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