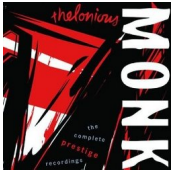


Thelonious Monk – The Complete Prestige Recordings 3CD (2000)

Written by bluesever

Saturday, 29 October 2011 13:06 - Last Updated Thursday, 28 May 2015 09:18

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CD 1 01 – *Flyin' Hawk* – 2:51 02 – *Recollections* – 2:56 03 – *Drifting On A Reed* – 3:06 04 – *On The Bean* – 2:43 05 – *Bye-Ya* – 2:47 06 – *Monk's Dream* – 3:07 07 – *Sweet And Lovely* – 3:36 08 – *Little Rootie Tootie* – 3:07 09 – *Bemsha Swing* – 3:12 10 – *Reflections* – 2:49

[play](#)

11 – *These Foolish Things* – 2:49 12 – *Trinkle, Tinkle* – 2:51 13 – *Think Of One (Take 1)* – 5:41 14 – *Let's Call This* – 5:08 15 – *Think Of One (Take 2)* – 5:47 16 – *Friday The 13th* – 10:36

CD 2

01 – *We See* – 5:18 02 – *Locomotive* – 6:24 03 – *Smoke Gets In Your Eyes* – 4:33 04 – *Hackensack* – 5:13 05 – *Nutty* – 5:19 06 – *Just A Gigolo* – 3:03

[play](#)

07 – *Work* – 5:19 08 – *Blue Monk* – 7:39 09 – *I Want To Be Happy* – 7:46 10 – *The Way You Look Tonight* – 5:15 11 – *More Than You Know* – 10:53

CD 3

01 – *Bags' Groove (Take 1)* – 11:11 02 – *Bemsha Swing* – 9:34 03 – *The Man I Love (Take 1)* – 8:32 04 – *Swing Spring* – 10:46 05 – *Bags' Groove (Take 2)* – 9:19 06 – *The Man I Love (Take 2)* – 7:57

[play](#)

Personnel: Thelonious Monk (piano); Coleman Hawkins, Sonny Rollins, Frank Foster (tenor saxophone); Miles Davis, Ray Copeland (trumpet); Julius Watkins (French horn); Milt Jackson (vibraphone); Gary Mapp, Tommy Potter, Edward "Bass" Robinson, Curly Russell (bass); Arthur Taylor, Denzil Best, Kenny Clarke, Willie Jones, Max Roach (drums).

Thelonious Monk's music is striking as much for its logic and lyricism as it is for its idiosyncrasy and peculiarity. It often recalls the Salvador Dali painting that looks like a murky portrait of the artist's wife from close up, but from a few yards away reveals the clear image of Abraham Lincoln. Take "We See," for instance: it sounds a bit odd on a micro level, but pan out and you hear a very appealing melody with the charm of a Tin Pan Alley standard. Monk was in on seven sessions for Prestige as a leader and sideman between October 1952 (after leaving Blue

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Note) and December 1954 (before bolting for Riverside). Prestige's initial LPs sliced and diced these sessions, so the chronological format of this three-CD box gives the music a welcome cohesion. Of the seven dates, four are particularly rewarding, all of them under Monk's leadership. The October 1952 trio session with trivia-question-answer Gary Mapp on bass and drummer Art Blakey yielded wonderful Monk compositions like "Bye-Ya" and "Monk's Dream." He returned to the trio format two months later (with Max Roach in Blakey's spot) and produced "Trinkle Tinkle," "Reflections," and "Bemsha Swing."

The peak of Monk's Prestige tenure came in 1954. In May, he led a quintet through the originals "We See," "Locomotive," and "Hackensack" (plus "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes"), and four months later, he brought in an exceptional trio (with bassist Percy Heath and Blakey) for readings of "Nutty," "Work," and "Blue Monk." His stunning solo version of "Just a Gigolo" from that session is a perfect illustration of his way of dissecting standards. It's telling that Blakey was the drummer on three of these four sessions. No one knew how to make Monk's quirkiness swing and flow as well as Blakey, who was able to be both proactive and responsive to Monk's unique vision. The box is rounded out by Monk's sideman work behind Sonny Rollins and Miles Davis, plus four 1944 bonus cuts in support of Coleman Hawkins (made for the Joe Davis label) that are pleasant curiosities offering proof of a young Monk's (and Hawkins's) open mind. Though not as celebrated (or consistent) as his other periods, Monk's Prestige tenure includes some of his greatest triumphs. ---Marc Greilsamer, Editorial Reviews

I'm a bit surprised this box set has not received more enthusiastic attention. First off, it contains all original recordings (unlike some of Monk's Columbia recordings), and the list of classic Monk tunes reads long, including Monk's Dream, Hackensack, Nutty, Bemsha Swing, and Trinkle Tinkle. The first CD even has some very early tracks of Monk playing with none other than Coleman Hawkins: a very rare nostalgic treat despite the subpar sound quality of those sessions. In between that beginning and the final cd of Monk playing with Miles and Milt Jackson (on the classic "Bag's Groove" recording), there are many good tunes played with bands featuring among others the likes of Sonny Rollins, Percy Heath, Max Roach, Art Blakey, and Frank Foster. Moreover, these recordings are truly representative of the classic Monk sound that made him so unique and eventually world famous. And 50 years later the music still sounds just as fresh and quirky, partly because Monk was so unique that few would dare or have the imagination to imitate him. One of the few musicians who exercised his full right to artistic freedom. --- Todd Ebert (Long Beach California), amazon.com

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