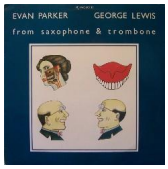
Evan Parker & George Lewis - From Saxophone & Trombone (1980/2002)



1 One 11:01 2 Two 2:02 3 Three 9:50 4 Four 5:03 5 Five 14:53 Saxophone – Evan Parker Trombone – George Lewis

This stunning collection of saxophone and trombone duos was recorded at the Art Workers' Guild in London by Adam Skeaping back in May 1980 and originally released on Incus, a label that Evan Parker ran jointly with guitarist Derek Bailey. The fact that there's no mention of this on this reissue on Parker's own PSI imprint testifies to the frosty relations that still exist between the two giants of improvised music. Fortunately, trombonist George Lewis has remained on good terms with both; in point of fact, it's hard to see how anyone could dislike Lewis if his rambunctious virtuosity and good-humored mastery of the trombone are anything to go by. He can take it up into soprano sax country or plunge it into the piano bottom octave register at will, pop, plop and crackle like a toyshop and go head to head with Parker's legendary circular breathing. Parker's early 1980s albums mark the boundary between his early, angular playing (traces of a jazz past are never far from the surface) and the awesome virtuosity of his later work, especially on soprano. The re-release of this album is cause for celebration indeed -- would that Lewis could use his good offices to negotiate a Parker / Bailey truce, and with it the reissue of their mythic and magnificent first Incus outing, The Topography of The Lungs. ---Dan Warburton, AllMusic Review

Originally issued on LP in 1980, From Saxophone & Trombone ought to offer fans of trombonist George Lewis and saxophonist Evan Parker quite a bit to get revved up about. No frills or hidden agendas to be found throughout these five improvisation based works. You name it—they cover it! The duo explores various harmonic twists and turns amid microtonal sounds and ethereal soundscapes. They dig deep from within while also displaying the utmost

improvisational acumen, as most of us would come to expect.

On the first track ("One"), the artists engage in circular movements and temperate exchanges, as Lewis' droning, muted lines anchors Parker's wide-ranging developments. The duo forsakes an austere approach on numerous occasions. They integrate wit and whimsy into a series of verbose exchanges while frequently veering off into angular dialogues complete with abnormal musical sounds. At times, they seemingly let the chips fall into some sort of randomized order. That's the beauty of it all. However, in lesser hands, these situations do not always pan out. It's all about artistry in motion and the duo's acute cognizance of dynamics and temperance. (Recommended) ---Glenn Astarita, allaboutjazz.com

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