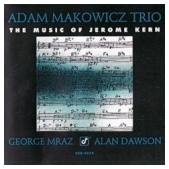
Adam Makowicz Trio - The Music of Jerome Kern (1993)



1. All the Things You Are 2. The Way You Look Tonight 3. Who? 4. The Song Is You 5. I Won't Dance 6. Ol' Man River 7. Long Ago (And Far Away) 8. Smoke Gets in Your Eyes 9. Yesterdays 10. Dearly Beloved 11. I'm Old Fashioned Musicians: Adam Makowicz, piano George Mraz, bass Alan Dawson, drumer

Adam Makowicz is a pianist heavily influenced by Art Tatum. Makowicz explains being amazed (like so many) by Tatum as he listened to him for hours in his native Poland. That led the door to listening to other pianists such as Hines, Teddy Wilson, etc., eventually serving as a catalyst for his going out on his own.

The two influences I notice are Tatum and Monk. Tatum's influence is very strong, felt in the runs throughout many of the songs and also the style of the introductions, although the runs are less pervasive than in Tatum's case. However, when they do appear they are spectacularly performed, and have the advantage of technology that Tatum didn't have, resulting in a very crisp sound.

Monk's influence is more subtle. Like Monk, Makowicz prefers not to stray too far from the melody letting that be the basis of his improvisation, although he can do creative things with the harmony (although not nearly as strident as Monk).

The trio's music is very easy to listen to (it's melodic, and swings), yet has many moments which warrant close listening as well. The average length of the songs is between 5 and 6 minutes, so there is enough time for some exploration beyond a simple statement of the melody. One devise Makowicz uses more often than many is to play in parallel (that is, keeping

the same chords as the melody goes up or down), which leads to some interesting effects.

It is ironic that Kern so disliked jazz musicians "tinkering" with his melodies when they so effortlessly lend themselves to improvisation with wonderful effect in the hands of talented musicians such as these. --- Tom Ewall, polish-jazz.blogspot.com

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