Michael Brecker Quindectet - Wide Angles (2003)

1. Broadband 6:45 2. Cool Day In Hell 7:50 3. Angle Of Repose 6:41 4. Timbuktu 7:57 5. Night Jessamine 5:20 6. Scylla 10:38 7. Brexterity 6:39 8. Evening Faces 7:13 9. Modus Operandy 5:25 10. Never Alone 5:39 Personnel: Michael Brecker - Sax Alex "Sasha" Sipiagin - Trumpet Robin Eubanks - Trombone Peter Gordon - French Horn Steve Wilson - Alto Flute, Flute Iain Dixon - Bass Clarinet, Clarinet Charles Pillow - Oboe, English Horn Mark Feldman - Concertmaster, Violin Joyce Hammann - Violin Lois Martin - Viola Erik Friedlander - Cello Adam Rogers - Guitar John Patitucci - Bass Antonio Sanchez - Drums Daniel Sadownick - Percussion Gil Goldstein - Producer, Arranger, Orchestra Arranger

Wide Angles is a 70-minute suite spotlighting Michael Brecker's electrifying tenor saxophone accompanied by a 15-piece chamber jazz group. Each of the 10 compositions (all by Brecker except one cowritten with George Whitty and one by Don Grolnick) serves as an extended showcase for Brecker's tenor in its various manifestations-at times driving and fiery, at times poignant and gentle, always emotion-charged and technically prodigious.

Along with moments of genuine creativity many of the tenorist's signature phrases are present, for sure. But after all, they are his own creations, copied by countless others. Brecker's sophisticated compositions cover a wide range of moods, from the reflective to the frenetic, including some infectious, toe-tapping funk. With four strings, trumpet, trombone, French horn, flute/alto flute, oboe/English horn and clarinet/bass clarinet over a rhythm section of guitar, bass, drums and percussion, arranger/orchestrater Gil Goldstein had a broad palette with which to produce a variety of fascinating and engaging settings, some of which suggest contemporary classical influences. And the consummate ensemble performers execute the sometimes-difficult arrangements flawlessly, with bass clarinetist Iain Dixon especially impressive. Except for an occasional improvised solo by an orchestra member (bassist John Patitucci, trumpeter Alex "Sasha" Sipiagin, trombonist Robin Eubanks, guitarist Adam Rogers), the ensemble is there simply to provide a backdrop for Brecker's horn.

Listeners who admire Michael Brecker's playing will find in Wide Angles a rich bounty. --- David Franklin, jazztimes.com

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