

John Patitucci - Remembrance [2009]

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1 Monk/Trane 7:15 2 Messaien's Gumbo 5:29 3 Sonny Side 7:27 4 Meditations 5:04
5 Mali 7:16 6 Scenes From An Opera 5:24 7 Blues For Freddie 5:24 8 Safari 6:09 9 Joe
Hen 7:45 10 Play Ball 6:47 11 Remembrance 1:54 John Patitucci: acoustic bass,
6-string electric bass, 6-string electric piccolo bass; Joe Lovano: tenor saxophone, alto
clarinet; Brian Blade: drums; + Rogerio Boccato: percussion; Sachi Patitucci: cello.

The bassist of choice through the years for Chick Corea, Roy Haynes, Wayne Shorter and many other jazz giants, John Patitucci is noted for his daunting technique on both acoustic and electric basses. *Remembrance* is a stripped-down effort with Joe Lovano on tenor and alto clarinet and Brian Blade, his longtime partner in Shorter's group, on drums. The trio plays at a supremely high level, Lovano soloing with his usual command and expressiveness and Blade providing subtlety and strength.

Most of the 11 original tunes pay homage to a host of jazz icons. "Blues for Freddie," for example, is a tribute to the recently departed trumpet titan Freddie Hubbard, "Joe Hen" evokes the inside/outside legacy of tenor sax great Joe Henderson and "Sonny Side" celebrates the indefatigable Sonny Rollins. The title tune, meanwhile, is a short, heartfelt solo piece in memory of the late Michael Brecker, highlighting Patitucci's mastery of the electric six-string and piccolo basses. Patitucci also shows off the subtler, emotional side of the electric bass on the Coltrane-esque "Meditations". On two other tunes, "Safari" and "Mali," Patitucci shows he can throw down a heavy funk groove whether he's playing acoustic or electric. The only track that doesn't work is "Scenes from an Opera," mostly for the incongruous injection of a cello quartet into the otherwise spare arrangements. ---Joel Roberts, allaboutjazz.com

Bassist John Patitucci's tenure with the Concord label has found him working in a variety of contexts, from Latin jazz to string quartets with saxophones, but this, his sixth album for the label and his first release as a leader since 2006's Grammy-nominated *Line by Line*, is possibly his most stripped-down release to date: a straight trio session with saxophonist Joe Lovano and drummer Brian Blade. Blade has been working with Patitucci for several albums now, but Lovano is a relative newcomer to the bassist's discography, having only previously appeared on a few tracks from 2001's *Communion*. This disc, like others in his catalog, finds Patitucci alternating between acoustic and electric bass, and while both approaches are equally worthwhile (the guy's a serious talent), the switching back and forth between funk and swing makes for a slightly disjointed listen. A better idea might have been to divide everything up, putting "Monk/Trane," "Sonny Side," "Scenes from an Opera," "Blues for Freddie," "Safari," "Joe Hen," and "Play Ball" up front and leaving "Messiaen's Gumbo," "Meditations," "Mali," and the short but beautiful title track as a four-song coda. But in any case, there are no bad tracks here -- Lovano's soloing is as deft and muscular as always, and Blade's drumming is powerful without sacrificing subtlety -- so a little style-hopping can be forgiven. ---Phil Freeman, Rovi

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