Sonny Stitt - Live At Ronnie Scott's (1964)



01. Ernest's Blues (Ranglin) 15:31 02. Home Sweet Home (Traditional) 0:43 03. M-O-T-H-E-R (Johnston) 3:27 04. My Mother's Eyes (Baer, Gilbert) 9:41 play *05. Sonny's Theme Song (Stitt) 1:23 06. Blues With Dick and Harry (Stitt) 14:55 07. It Could Happen to You (Burke, VanHeusen) 10:39 08. Oh, Lady Be Good (Gershwin, Gershwin) 8:26*
play
09. Interview With Sonny Stitt 1:41
Personnel: Sonny Stitt - (tenor, soprano saxophone, piano), Terry Shannon - (piano), Rick Liard - (bass), Benny Goodman - (drums), Phil Bates - (bass - 1,6), Ernest Ranglin - (guitar - 1), Dick Morrisey - (tenor saxophone - 6), Harry South - (piano - 6)

Like hip-hoppers, bebop musicians can be fiercely competitive, and no one was more competitive than Sonny Stitt. His legendary battles with Gene Ammons, in fact, were the essence of musical sportsmanship. Stitt's extroverted nature is impossible to miss on Live at Ronnie Scott's, which was recorded at the famous London jazz club in May 1964. The saxman plays both alto and tenor during this jam session, and his company includes tenor saxman Dick Morrissey, pianist Terry Shannon, and Jamaican guitarist Ernest Ranglin. While Stitt is in good form on "It Could Happen to You," "Lady Be Good," and various blues items, the sound quality is imperfect by 1964 standards -- not bad, but imperfect. There's too much tape hiss, and Stitt's vocal is distorted on "M-0-T-H-E-R" (a cute number that gives us a rare chance to hear him singing). Nonetheless, the performances are generally enjoyable, and while this CD falls short of essential and isn't recommended to casual listeners, it will appeal to Stitt's hardcore fans. ---Alex Henderson.

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