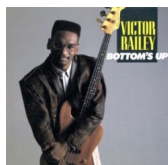


Victor Bailey - Bottom's Up (1990)

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Victor Bailey - Bottom's Up (1990)



01. *Kid Logic*
02. *Joyce's Favorite*
03. *Miles Wows [Live]*
04. *Round Midnight*
05. *Bottom's Up*
06. *Hear the Design*
07. *In the Hat*
08. *For Wendell and Brenda*

Personel:

Victor Bailey (bass guitar, synthesizers, background vocals, drum program (on 4,5,6));

Clyde Criner, Jim Beard (piano/keyboards);

Richard Tee (Hammond Organ);

Wayne Shorter, Branford Marsalis (soprano saxophone);

Michael Brecker, Alex Foster, Najee, Bill Evans (tenor saxophone);

Donald Harrison (alto saxophone);

Terence Blanchard (trumpet);

Kevin Eubanks (acoustic guitar);

Wayne Krantz, Mike "Dino" Campbell, Rodney Jones, Jon Herington (electric guitar); Marcus Miller (bass);

Lonnie Plaxico (acoustic bass);

Omar Hakim, Dennis Chambers, Richie Morales (drums);

Mino Cinelu, Steve Thornton (percussion).

In the 1980s and 1990s, Victor Bailey realized that finding an opportunity to record fusion could be a real challenge. Many labels were looking for either young hard boppers in Armani suites or NAC/smooth jazz artists, and Bailey was neither. Bailey wasn't Kenny G any more than he was Wynton Marsalis -- he was a fusion-oriented electric bassist along the lines of Jaco Pastorius

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and Stanley Clarke. Despite the obstacles, Bailey did get a chance to record fusion in 1989, when he provided his first album as a leader, *Bottom's Up*. This CD boasts an impressive list of players; Bailey's guests include Michael Brecker on tenor sax, Wayne Shorter on soprano sax, Terence Blanchard on trumpet, Kevin Eubanks on acoustic guitar, and Omar Hakim on drums. With such a cast, *Bottom's Up* should have been superb. But the album is uneven and inconsistent; some of the tunes are memorable, and some are pedestrian. The CD's most interesting track is an unlikely version of Thelonious Monk's "Round Midnight," which literally hundreds of artists have recorded over the years -- the ballad has been recorded so often that producer Orrin Keepnews described it as "the national anthem of jazz." Bailey, to his credit, manages to bring something fresh to "Round Midnight," providing a fusion interpretation and giving us a rare chance to hear the great, if overdone, standard played on the electric bass. Other noteworthy tracks include the mysterious "Joyce's Favorite" and the angular yet funky "In the Hat," which has a strong Weather Report/Joe Zawinul influence and features saxman Bill Evans (not to be confused with the famous pianist) on tenor. But overall, this CD isn't great. Nonetheless, *Bottom's Up* has its moments, and the stronger tracks indicated that Bailey was someone to keep a close eye on. ---Alex Henderson, Rovi

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