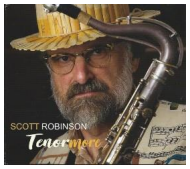
Scott Robinson – Tenormore (2019)



1.And I Love Her 2.Tenor Eleven 3.Put On A Happy Face 4.Morning Star 5.The Good Life 6.Tenor Twelve 7.Rainy River 8.The Weaver 9.The Nearness Of You 10.Tenormore Scott Robinson - tenor saxophone Helen Sung - piano, Hammond B3 Martin Wind - string bass Dennis Mackrel - drums

When attempting to lend form to the term “rara avis” in jazz, Scott Robinson instantly appears in the mind’s eye. He’s most easily recognized these days as a horn heavy on the most standard of heavy horns, adding ballast and low-end individuality to the sound of Maria Schneider’s orchestra with his baritone saxophone, but Robinson is also beyond proficient—a virtuoso, in fact—on numerous instruments that most people don’t even know exist. His arsenal includes theremin, ophicleide, sarrusophone, alto clarinet, echo cornet, bass marimba, contrabass banjo, and a few hundred other rarities.

Long before Robinson acquired his treasure trove of instrumental curiosities, his heart belonged to the second instrument he ever owned (behind a 1927 Conn alto saxophone from his grandfather) and the first instrument he actually purchased: a silver 1924 Conn tenor saxophone procured from a Maryland antique store in 1975. That tenor has been a constant for Robinson since it came into his life, so it’s only fitting that the horn receives its due on what is, surprisingly, the multi-instrumentalist’s first all-tenor date. In some respects, such a project seems limiting for a man who thrives on diversification. But the album itself makes an important point which counters that line of thinking: the man, not the vessel, is the music. The range of expression that Robinson is capable of eliciting from a single horn—this single horn, for this affair—is astounding.

Opening on a stratospheric four-note motif that introduces a solo take of “And I Love Her,” Robinson’s vision proves rangy from the start. There is romance in the music for sure, but also

a hint of feral snark. As the program plays on, Robinson works his tenor for all it's capable of while also thriving in the atmospheres he creates with his A-list bandmates—pianist/organist Helen Sung, bassist Martin Wind, and drummer Dennis Mackrel. This quartet bumps and grinds its way through an eleven-bar blues aptly named "Tenor Eleven," turns "Put On A Happy Face" into a ballad that balances the scales of emotions with rueful revisionism, sets a cool-headed take on "The Good Life" into motion with some free improvisation, and visits church on Wind's soulful, organ-enhanced "Rainy River."

Scott Robinson may typically take instrumental variegation to a level unsurpassed in this music, but that shouldn't diminish his position as a tenor saxophonist of note. In that most crowded of fields, he still stands out. ---Dan Bilawsky, allaboutjazz.com

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