

(ALBUM REVIEWS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 27)



Hello! How Are You?
Caity Gyorgy (La Reserve)
by Scott Yanow

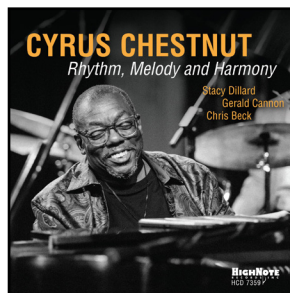
A 26-year old jazz singer from Calgary, Alberta, Caity Gyorgy is best-known in her native country, although it seems obvious that she is on her way to making a strong impact on the international jazz world. She has a very attractive voice, can scat with invention, and is already a masterful jazz vocalist within its tradition, not afraid to take chances in her phrasing and improvising. Additionally, she is a fine songwriter. Gyorgy recorded an EP in 2019 and *Hello! How Are You?* is her fifth full-length release since then.

The vocalist is joined by a swinging and attentive rhythm section comprised of Anthony D'Alessandro (piano), Thomas Hainbuch (bass) and Jacob Wutzke (drums), who fit perfectly within her flights. The quartet introduces eight Gyorgy original songs and gives new life to joyful standards, such as "They Say It's Spring", "Baubles, Bangles and Beads" (which becomes quite a *tour-de-force* for the singer) and a sensitive rendition of a rather wistful "It Never Entered My Mind". Of the new material: the title track is infectious although a bit

lightweight in its lyrics; "Letter from The Office Of" is unexpectedly upbeat and happy, given she turns down an offer for romance in its lyrics; the offbeat and hard-swinging "I Regret to Inform You" and "Familiar Face" contain surprises in their respective stories as well.

As Gyorgy reveals in the album liner notes, she wrote the arrangements of these pieces with the idea of leaving plenty of room for spontaneous ideas as opposed to focusing too much on presenting the lyrics. Her assertive scat-singing is a logical extension of the stories. Filled with confidence, youthful enthusiasm and plenty of knowledge, plus a powerful voice, Gyorgy throughout *Hello! How Are You?* shows that she is already nearing the top of her field.

For more info visit lareserverecords.com. The album release concert is at Dizzy's Club Jun. 22. See Calendar.



Rhythm, Melody and Harmony
Cyrus Chestnut (HighNote)
by Ken Dryden

Over three-plus decades as a leader, Cyrus Chestnut has distinguished himself as a consistently swinging pianist with a sense of joy in nearly everything he plays.

Chestnut is typically heard leading a trio, and although his band's makeup might vary from one project to the next, he expanded to a quartet for this 2024 session, featuring Stacy Dillard (soprano, tenor) with Gerald Cannon (bass) and Chris Beck (drums).

Six of the nine songs are the leader's originals, opening with the groover "Cured and Seasoned", which brings out the band's cohesiveness. His scoring of the French-American standard "Autumn Leaves" showcases its lyricism as a deliberate, swaying waltz, with his sparse chords in support of Dillard's effusive, spacious tenor playing. The pianist's infectious "Ami's Dance" has a bossa nova undercurrent and some of his most driving playing on the date, fueled by the rhythm team of Cannon and Beck, and Dillard's effusive soprano being an added bonus. "Prelude for George" is a bit more somber, suggesting a meditative mood of someone dealing with pain or sorrow, Cannon's bass vamp suggesting footsteps back and forth, awaiting news. The piano/soprano unison line conveys a powerful message sans lyrics.

The mood is lifted with Chestnut's upbeat "Twinkle Toes", showcasing Cannon's nimble bass to good effect. With Dillard returning to tenor, the pianist's journey through "Song for the Andes" is full of adventure, hinting at the spirit of John Coltrane's classic quartet in this driving post-bop vehicle. "Big Foot" is a brisk mix of bop and soul with a bit of Latin flavor, all blended with skill by the quartet. The leader's solo exploration of "Moonlight in Vermont" almost seems whispered with its rich voicings and delicate touch. The band returns, with Dillard on soprano, for the old hymn "There Is a Fountain", a natural choice for Chestnut, given his roots playing piano in church as a youth and continuing to share his faith through his music over the course of his long career. Dillard's playing mimics a

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