

CD Reviews

The Editor's Choice

Jed Levy

Round And Round

STEEPLECHASE SCCD 31529

Round And Round; Subtle Rebuttal;
Holiday; People Time; Hillside; Cherokee;
These Are My Dreams; Buck's County Blues;
Projectile.

Jed Levy (ts); Bill Gerhardt (p); Mike
McGuirk (b); Jeff Brillinger (d). 3/02.

The first thing to notice about this fine album is what a lot of sax playing you get for your money. Jed Levy's tenor is unstoppable: the music flows out of the horn in torrents. The second thing that strikes you is, what a great band this is and why haven't I heard these people before. They've been hiding their lights under a bushel.

Jed Levy is one of those dependable sidemen who for no good reason has stayed out of the limelight. An apostle of the late Jaki Byard, he has played alongside Cedar Walton, Tom Harrell and Jack McDuff among others. The rest of the band have kept similarly stellar company. Pianist Bill Gerhardt, who possesses a strong and steely comping style, has recorded with Billy Higgins and George Mraz, among others. Bassist Mike McGuirk has worked with John Abercrombie and Eddie Henderson. Drummer Jeff Brillinger, who is a sharp and snappy 'cymbalist', has worked with Zoot Sims and Horace Silver, to name a few.

All that experience shows in the way the guys pick their way lithely through this medium/fast-tempo set. Levy simply lopes along, his reworking of the well-worn standard "Cherokee" flashing by, bright and shiny in the key of G-flat. Passing the baton to Gerhardt, the tune takes on a more impressionistic hue. The point at which the brakes are applied and Levy coasts the number home is a delight. On the original "Buck's County Blues" he demonstrates how to sustain and

resolve breezy improvisation without eventually resorting to blaring and honking.

And of course Levy can play a ballad. Benny Carter's "People Time" is a dreamy, Getz-like exploration (which is appropriate as it was Getz who introduced the number to a wider audience).

If Levy ever makes it to the UK, I want to hear about it.

GARRY BOOTH



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