

genre-spanning knowledge of songs, and why he's so skilled at taking any tune's emotional pulse. Ever since his big break as a performer, when his lilting rendition of "The Way You Look Tonight" featured prominently in the 1991 hit film *Father of the Bride*, Tyrell has remained a spellbinder, unwaveringly consistent in his straight-ahead, embellishment-free readings.

So *A Song for You* comes as a welcome addition to the Tyrell discography, while offering little in the way of surprise. Guitarist Bob Mann shaped most of the arrangements, all elegantly tailored. A revolving array of strong players—including Mann; pianists Andy Ezrin, Alan Pasqua and Bill Cantos; and bassists David Finck, Trey Henry and Chuck Berghoffer—elevate the bespoke ambience. The playlist offsets charmingly affective treatments of Great American Songbook cornerstones ("Come Rain or Come Shine," "Try a Little Tenderness," "When I Fall in Love," "Them There Eyes") with solid pop hits, ranging from Leon Russell's somber title track to Sacha Distel's breezy "The Good Life." Most intriguing: Tyrell's moving take on Jackie Wilson's "To Be Loved," arranged by Alan Broadbent, and his tender rendering of the Roy Clark-associated "Come Live With Me."

CHRISTOPHER LOUDON

MARTIN WIND

LIGHT BLUE (Loika)



Bassist Martin Wind's 11th album as a leader is more than the sum of its disparate parts, not because of any clever concepts, but because its 10 originals are so supple. This is most obviously due to Scott Robinson's bevy of reeds and the versatility of Gary Versace, who plays piano and organ on the album's front half. "Rose," for example, slides from a pensive piano-trio ballad (with Versace and Wind joined by drummer Matt Wilson) into an Ellington-like horn schmear, made distinctive by Robinson's taragota alongside Ingrid Jensen's trumpet; then Versace flips to organ and recasts the mood on the slow, simmering final section. "While I'm Still Here" is spry gumbo-bop, working a variation of "Sweet Georgia Brown" with Versace on organ and Robinson on tenor. "Power Chords" is a house-quaking rumble, as

Wind matches Robinson's plummeting bass saxophone with deep arco flourishes, Wilson channels his inner rock star with thunderous fills and Jensen plays a scorching, guttural solo.

Save for Wind and Robinson, a totally different ensemble handles the back half of *Light Blue*, showcasing a Brazilian bent that's tailor-made for the composer's melodic amiability. In terms of tone and texture, clarinetist Anat Cohen may be the reigning soufflé chef of jazz. Drummer Duduka da Fonseca is Matt Wilson's tropical dop-pelganger, blending rigorous rhythms with a playful spirit; Da Fonseca's wife, vocalist Maucha Adnet, was a muse for Antonio Carlos Jobim. The surprises are subtler with this crew, which also includes pianist Bill Cunliffe. Cohen and Robinson twine clarinet lines like caffeinated butterflies on "A Genius and a Saint," and the band puts its own spin on samba with "Seven Steps to Rio," featuring Wind on acoustic bass guitar. But it's the adornments that tug the heartstrings so persistently here; listen to how Cunliffe, Cohen, Wind and Da Fonseca seem to take turns verifying Adnet's sweet lamentation on "A Sad Story." **BRITT ROBSON**

PABLO ZIEGLER TRIO

JAZZ TANGO (Zoho)



Titles don't get more to the point than this one: *Jazz Tango* is where the Argentinian pianist and composer Pablo Ziegler has, in a sense, always resided, but perhaps he's never stated his case quite so succinctly before. This release won the Grammy (Ziegler's second) for Best Latin Jazz Album earlier this year.

Jazz Tango features Ziegler's trio, *bandoneon* player Hector Del Curto and guitarist Claudio Ragazzi, performing seven songs by the leader and three by Astor Piazzolla, the late tango master in whose employ Ziegler remained for more than a decade. Both Ziegler and his predecessor are customarily associated with the term *Nuevo Tango*, and by melding the traditions of classic tango with the improvisational openness of jazz, Ziegler certainly moves the former style forward.

This trio doesn't need electric

instrumentation or other contemporary tools to get there. "Blues Porteno," one of the Ziegler originals, unfolds purposefully, radiating an air of mystery—it's going to find its way into a neo-noir film soundtrack one of these days. With Ziegler maintaining the trademark rhythm, Del Curto grabs the first solo, Ragazzi the next and Ziegler the last, each taking the core melody someplace different. If that sounds like a fairly loose definition of jazz, then the more complex numbers, like "Elegante Canyenguito," more than compensate. Here Ziegler moves far out of the tango box and ventures toward free-jazz territory, the guitarist hitting high velocity on his tail and all three eventually settling into an easier though never conventional groove.

Of the Piazzolla tunes, the first, "Michelangelo 70," is the most dynamic; Del Curto demonstrates what Django might've done had he been born in Argentina rather than Belgium. Throughout *Jazz Tango*, the hybrid is familiar but never less than stirring and satisfying.

JEFF TAMARKIN



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