

Brooks and a young future star named Chick Corea in the piano chair. This group, with several personnel changes, continued until 1969, recording a string of albums for Blue Note. Probably aware that opportunities for playing straight-ahead jazz were dwindling, Mitchell became a prolific pop and soul session man in the late '60s, and he toured with Ray Charles from 1969 to 1971 and blues/rock guitarist John Mayall in 1971-1973. Having settled in Los Angeles, he also played big-band dates with Louie Bellson, Bill Holman, and Bill Berry; made a number of funk and pop/jazz LPs in the late '70s; served as principal soloist for Tony Bennett and Lena Horne; and kept his hand in hard bop by playing with Harold Land in a quintet. He continued to freelance in this multifaceted fashion until his premature death from cancer at age 49.

Blue Mitchell

The Thing To Do



Gene Taylor - Aloysius Foster - Chick Corea - Junior Cook



Mastered in DSD256

This Blue Mitchell date is a classic, particularly the opening "Fungii Mama," which is really catchy. The trumpeter's quintet of the period (which includes tenor saxophonist Junior Cook, the young pianist Chick Corea, bassist Gene Taylor, and drummer Al Foster) also performs two Jimmy Heath tunes and a song apiece by Joe Henderson ("Step Lightly") and Corea. The record is prime Blue Note hard bop, containing inventive tunes, meaningful solos, and an enthusiastic but tight feel.

Owner of a direct, lightly swinging, somewhat plain-wrapped tone that fit right in with the Blue Note label's hard bop ethos of the 1960s, Blue Mitchell tends to be overlooked today perhaps because he never really stood out vividly from

the crowd, despite his undeniable talent. After learning the trumpet in high school -- where he got his nickname -- he started touring in the early '50s with the R&B bands of Paul Williams, Earl Bostic, and Chuck Willis before returning to Miami and jazz. There, he attracted the attention of Cannonball Adderley, with whom he recorded for Riverside in 1958. That year, he joined the Horace Silver Quintet, with whom he played and recorded until the band's breakup in March 1964, polishing his hard bop skills. During his Silver days, Mitchell worked with tenor Junior Cook, bassist Gene Taylor, drummer Roy Brooks, and various pianists as a separate unit and continued recording as a leader for Riverside. When Silver disbanded, Mitchell's spinoff quintet carried on with Al Foster replacing

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- 1 Fungii Mama 7:47
- 2 Mona's Mood 5:17
- 3 The Thing To Do 7:04
- 4 Step Lightly 10:25
- 5 Chick's Tune 9:35

Recorded by Blue Note on July 30, 1964.
Producer - Alfred Lion Recorded By - Rudy Van Gelder



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