

sideman, he worked with Benny Carter, Kenny Clarke, Roy Eldridge, and Cab Calloway. In the late '40s, the saxman did a bit of freelancing behind the scenes as a Blue Note A&R man and brought Thelonious Monk and Bud Powell to the label. Drug problems kept Quebec from recording for most of the 1950s, but he made a triumphant comeback in the early '60s and was once again recording for Blue Note and doing freelance A&R for the company. Quebec was playing as authoritatively as ever well into 1962, giving no indication that he was suffering from lung cancer, which claimed his life at the age of 44 in 1963.

IT MIGHT AS WELL BE SPRING IKE QUEBEC



MILT HINTON - AL HAREWOOD - FREDDIE ROACH

Working with the same quartet that cut *Heavy Soul* -- organist Freddie Roach, bassist Milt Hinton and drummer Al Harewood -- Ike Quebec recorded another winning hard bop album with *It Might As Well Be Spring*. In many ways, the record is a companion piece to *Heavy Soul*. Since the two albums were recorded so close together, it's not surprising that there a number of stylistic similarities, but there are subtle differences to savor. The main distinction between the two dates is that *It Might As Well Be Spring* is a relaxed, romantic date comprised of standards. It provides Quebec with ample opportunity to showcase his rich, lyrical ballad style, and he shines throughout the album. Similarly, Roach has a tasteful, understated technique, whether he's soloing or providing support for Quebec. The pair have a terrific, sympathetic inter-

play that makes *It Might As Well Be Spring* a joyous listen.

Influenced by Coleman Hawkins and Ben Webster but definitely his own person, Ike Quebec was one of the finest swing-oriented tenor saxman of the 1940s and '50s. Though he was never an innovator, Quebec had a big, breathy sound that was distinctive and easily recognizable, and he was quite consistent when it came to came to down-home blues, sexy ballads, and up-tempo aggression. Originally a pianist, Quebec switched to tenor in the early '40s and showed that he had made the right decision on excellent 78s for Blue Note and Savoy (including his hit "Blue Harlem"). As a



Ike Quebec - It Might As Well Be Spring

IT MIGHT AS WELL BE SPRING

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MILT HINTON - AL HAREWOOD - FREDDIE ROACH

- 1 It Might As Well Be Spring 6:17**
- 2 A Light Reprieve 5:19**
- 3 Easy - Don't Hurt 6:06**
- 4 Lover Man 5:56**
- 5 Ol' Man River 6:35**
- 6 Willow Weep For Me 5:20**

Tenor Saxophone – Ike Quebec Double Bass – Milt Hinton Drums – Al Harewood Organ – Freddie Roach

Producer – Alfred Lion Recorded By – Rudy Van Gelder for Blue Note Records

Recorded on December 9, 1961, at Van Gelder Studio, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey

Ike Quebec - It Might As Well Be Spring



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