

DON FRIEDMAN

STRENGTH AND SANITY

Moods In Free Time; Looking Ahead; Quiet Please; Strength And Sanity; Calling Softly; Victory And Sorrow; We Speak; Man Of Words (33.54) Vinyl.

Don Friedman (p); Phil Palombi (b); Shinnosuke Takahashi (d) NYC 3 & 4 September 2015.

Newvelle NV004 LP

Back in 1961 trumpeter Booker Little recorded an LP for Candid records in New York featuring some bold, free style but well-structured compositions of his own with a combo including Eric Dolphy, Max Roach and the pianist on this set, Don Friedman. The music was so fresh and original, offering a clear pathway towards development in modern jazz that I've often wondered why these pieces have been so rarely played over the years. Friedman, in what must have been his last recording session, rectified this with an all Booker Little programme including five from his *Out Front* LP.

Friedman remembered it well when he swung into *Moods In Free Time* but the carefully constructed solo and the close integration with his bass and drums demonstrates a personal investment in the music. The pianist's approach to shifting time signatures is his own and he varies the dynamics effectively throughout all these tracks. Although aged 80 at the time of recording, Friedman was still looking towards expansion of the free jazz language and his improvised solo lines are consistently forward looking and fresh. Palombi, inspired by Scott LaFaro, is strong in solo and support and Takahashi is a steady drummer. Palombi's mournful arco intro to *Man Of Words*, Booker's tribute to Nat Hentoff, leads to a startling interpretation of this theme with a lyrical Friedman solo of great beauty.

The sound quality, crisp and clear on 180gram, silver/grey vinyl is among the best I've heard; this record is part of a 6 LP set, supplied to customers by subscription over a period of a year. Pure analogue, all LPs feature gatefold soft feel covers and photography by Bernard Plossu. All new releases, the music is for vinyl only and will not be issued in digital format. Others signed to Newvelle include Jack DeJohnette, Esperanza Spalding and Noah Preminger. More information from www.newvelle-records.com

Derek Ansell.