

DOWNBEAT

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Ernesto Cervini Quartet Featuring Joel Frahm

Little Black Bird

ANZIC RECORDS OG-1104



Bold Canadian drummer Ernesto Cervini exemplifies “float like a butterfly, sting like a bee,” recalling none other than that masterful and exceedingly wry fellow drummer, Ralph Peterson Jr. Cervini’s quick-witted commentary, almost comical percussive flurries and unpredictable bomb-drops are allied to a liquid ride-cymbal beat that flows somewhere between Roy Haynes and Jon Christensen. Also like Peterson (who recorded six acclaimed Blue Note albums in the ‘90’s), Cervini has a clever compositional style that finds perfect expression in the warm, roving lines of saxophonist Joel Frahm, Cervini’s well chosen foil.

Cervini takes compositional inspiration from Radiohead on two songs: “Seven Claps,” a hypnotic track of buoyant cymbal/snare accents, Adrean Farrugia’s spidery electric piano and Frahm’s spiraling wonders; and a cover of “2 + 2 = 5,” here resembling a bubbling Nana Vasconcelos tapestry, not the Oxford-based rock band. “Coconut Bill,” a mischievous blues inspired by Lenny Tristano, has all the forward motion of a circus parade. A woodpecker worthy solo of taps, dribbles and rolls opens the title track, Cervini turning drums into a rainforest symphony, soon accompanied by his group’s excellent interplay.

- *Ken Micallef*

Little Black Bird: Coconut Bill; Mia Figlia; Little Black Bird; Nonna Rosa; Jimmy Rey; On Being Grand; Seven Claps; Cerebrau; 2 + 2 = 5. (60:25)

Personnel: Ernesto Cervini, drums; Joel Frahm, saxophones; Adrean Farrugia, piano; Jon Maharaj, bass.

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