

Some Other Time (A Tribute to Leonard Bernstein)
Nils Landgren with Janis Siegel (ACT Music)
by Marcia Hillman

Swedish trombonist/vocalist Nils Landgren turns to the field of American musical theater to pay tribute to the legendary Leonard Bernstein, choosing six songs from *West Side Story*, three from *Wonderful Town*, two from *On The Town* and "A Simple Song" from Bernstein's *Mass*. Landgren is joined in this project by vocalist Janis Siegel, Jan Lundgren (piano), Dieter Ilg (bass), Wolfgang Haffner (drums) and Germany's Bochumer Symphoniker.

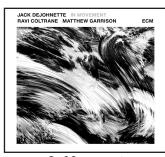
Arranger Vince Mendoza (who also conducts the orchestra) treats each song as a little vignette, instrumental accompaniment befitting the material, i.e. some songs are done only with a quartet and some with the orchestra. Some are completely instrumental while others have vocals—either by Landgren and Siegel separately or as a duo, where the former's soft quality and the latter's clear, multi-textured voice blend well (as in *West Side Story*'s "Something's Coming" and *On The Town*'s "Some Other Time"). Appropriately, Landgren's gentle tone fits "A Quiet Girl" perfectly and Siegel does an inspired and touching rendition of the seldom done "The Story Of My Life" from *Wonderful Town*.



Landgren's trombone is featured on most of the tracks, with inspired solos on "One Hand, One Heart" and "A Simple Song" (done as an instrumental with a gospel feel). Also notable is his work on the Overture, one chorus of the song "America" from West Side Story, his trombone sounding like a trumpet fanfare. The Symphoniker is featured on an unusual swinging, uptempo version of "Maria" from West Side Story.

Landgren, Siegel, Mendoza and the Symphoniker have succeeded in creating a fitting tribute to Bernstein and the richness and depth of his music. It would have pleased Maestro Lenny.

For more information, visit actmusic.com. Janis Siegel is at Mezzrow Aug. 23rd. See Calendar.



In Movement
Jack DeJohnette/Ravi Coltrane/Matthew Garrison (ECM)
by David R. Adler

One needn't look far for evidence of Jack DeJohnette's multifaceted artistry, which continues to grow and surprise: last year's AACM-themed *Made in Chicago*; new solo piano LP *Return*; 2012 ECM boxed set reissue *Special Edition*. To this list we can add *In Movement*, a trio outing with saxophonist Ravi Coltrane and electric bassist Matthew Garrison. DeJohnette plays drums and also piano, his first instrument.

The historical resonance is deep: Garrison's father, Jimmy Garrison, played bass with John Coltrane and died at 42 (after which DeJohnette helped raise Matthew, his godson). Ravi Coltrane, son of John and Alice Coltrane, lost his hugely influential father when he was just two. Both heirs of creative giants, Coltrane and Garrison live in a different time and have done the work of finding their own identities. They're now among the most compelling voices of their generation. The rapport they find with DeJohnette is at once powerful and seemingly effortless.

Leading off with "Alabama", not simply a John Coltrane tune but a near-sacred Civil Rights lament, is a bold step that with this trio feels instantly right. The tone is contemplative and the trio returns to that mode of conversation frequently through the session. It's satisfying that these players, who could unleash deadly chops at any time, instead give us an album so free of flash or pretension. Subtlety prevails, even when freely improvised passages are at full-tilt or when Garrison activates fuzz-tone and those enveloping, overtone-rich rock bass chords interact with DeJohnette's hip, flexible groove.

Coltrane plays three horns with uncommon force and control: tenor on "Alabama" and "Two Jimmys" (for Garrison and Jimi Hendrix); soprano on DeJohnette's classic "Lydia" and a piano-centric "Blue in Green"; and sopranino on Earth, Wind & Fire's "Serpentine Fire" (which is fiery indeed) and the collectively composed title track. The latter's extreme high register captures the spirit of Gary Bartz and Steve Grossman with Miles Davis, though Garrison's guitaristic chordal approach on the bass, warm in tone and intricately voice-led, gives the music an atmosphere all its own. At the heart of it is DeJohnette, articulating every detail, every eighth note on the cymbal, with clarity and intention.

For more information, visit ecmrecords.com. DeJohnette is at Tompkins Square Park Aug. 28th as part of SummerStage/ Charlie Parker Jazz Festival. See Calendar.

