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**PHILIPPE CÔTÉ**  
*Lungta*

Philippe Côté, compositions, arrangements, tenor saxophone; David Binney, alto saxophone; 23 others Mythology MR0013 (CD). 2016. David Binney, prod.; Paul Johnston, eng. DDD. TT: 75:34

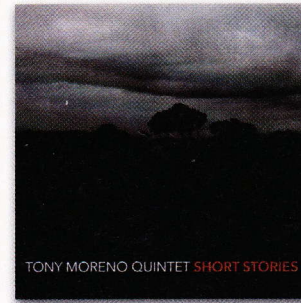
**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**SONICS** ★★★★★

Economic barriers mean that there is never enough orchestral jazz to go around. People who love Gil Evans and Maria Schneider will want to know about *Lungta*.

Philippe Côté is a young composer based in Montreal who made this album by a "backward process." He first laid down, in a studio, quintet tracks featuring alto saxophonist David Binney. Then he composed orchestral music to blend with what the quintet had played and improvised. Wanting "different colors," he wrote scores for 17 wind instruments, including flutes, oboe, bassoon, and French horn. He recorded this second ensemble in a concert hall, then mixed the two recordings into one.

It all sounds improbable, but the outcome is organic and gorgeous. *Lungta* comprises 14 parts connected by recurring resonant motifs. The highlights are two extended forms, "The Rest Is Noise" and the title track. Côté's strength is orchestration. With the wind ensemble he creates rich, deep, complex colors and textures, and keeps them in a state of continuous flow and evolution. His touch is subtle, but he understands dynamic tension. In "The Rest Is Noise," the orchestra looms and broods behind Binney's plangent alto, then gathers itself into a powerful, repetitive, oscillating figure. That figure reappears in "Lungta," a long passage across lights and shadows of emotion. Binney produced this album and dominates the solo space. Côté's writing inspires him to extraordinary, soaring, passionate lyricism.

*Lungta* has majesty. Majesty is like orchestral jazz: There is never enough to go around. —Thomas Conrad



**TONY MORENO QUINTET**  
*Short Stories*

Tony Moreno, drums; Marc Mommaas, tenor saxophone; Ron Horton, trumpet; Jean-Michel Pilc, piano; Ugonna Okegwo, bass Mayimba 815431020165 (2 CDs). 2016. Marti Cuevas, C. Martin Carle, prods.; Max Ross, eng. DDD? TT: 2:08:33

**PERFORMANCE** ★★★★★  
**SONICS** ★★★★★

The irony of *Short Stories* is that it isn't short: two CDs, each a full hour and change. But Tony Moreno has much to say. After losing nearly all his life possessions to Hurricane Sandy, the veteran drummer went through a period of intense struggle, and *Short Stories* is his comeback statement.

The quintet lineup couldn't be more striking in terms of sheer ability and mix of personalities. Trumpeter Ron Horton is bracingly virtuosic. Tenor saxophonist Marc Mommaas has the most personal of tones on his instrument, burnished and warm even while favoring the middle to high registers. Pianist Jean-Michel Pilc turns in a landmark performance, bringing to the session another level of harmonic freedom, flux, and improvisatory fire. One quibble: Ugonna Okegwo, superb and seasoned bassist, is low in the mix, losing this recording some overall balance and oomph.

It could be that Moreno was after a true acoustic room sound, and *Short Stories* does have that immediacy. Each disc leads off with a tune from Kenny Wheeler's classic *Double, Double You* (1984): "Foxy Trot" and "Three for D'reen." The originals—nine by Moreno, one apiece by Mommaas and Horton—are richly melodic and varied, taking inspiration from figures as disparate as Erroll Garner, Miles Okazaki, and Ketil Bjørnstad.

But it's the Ellington standard "C Jam Blues" that most surprises. The arrangement, credited to piano sage Art Lande and his students, turns the core melodic motif into something radically slow and haunting, each lingering note a new harmonic world. —David R. Adler