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HIP-O SELECT/VERVE

CLIFFORD BROWN/The Singers Sessions with Dinah Washington, Sarah Vaughan & Helen Merrill: Brown was such a protean force in his short time and his many facets make all but the most hard core jazzbo overlook his other accomplishments from this far away in time. Here we find him in one of his roles hanging around the Emarcy stable, backing up some of the greatest singers of the era and giving them a great setting. The Washington's were an informal jam that rose to mythical proportions. The Vaughan session was her first 12 inch recording and it didn't hurt to have a cat on board that knew how to keep attention riveted for longer than 10 inch record lengths and singles. The Merrill set was her recording debut and is loaded with the kind of zip that gave her the latitude to make weepy, moody sets that are too shoegazy today. With mastering and care that out ranks some of the public domain foreign issues that cover some of the same ground, this is a must for the classic jazzbo or those who want to be them. Fine playing from a player that left us too soon and didn't seem to leave behind any false notes.

CHRIS SPECTOR, Editor and Publisher
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