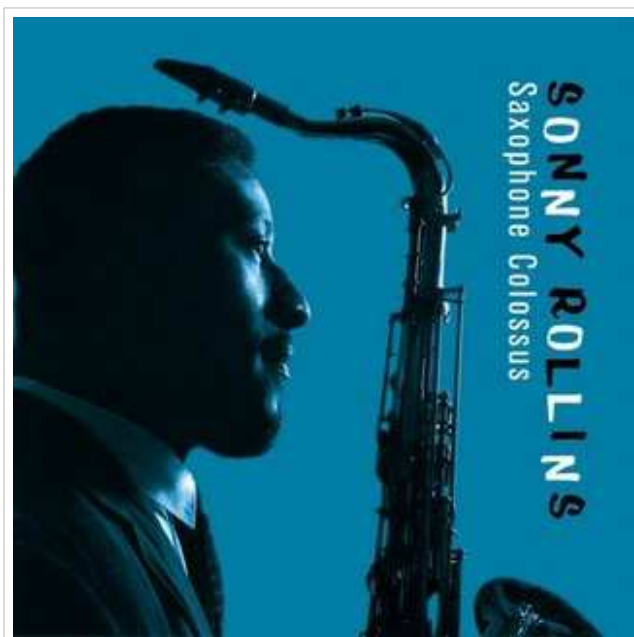


TUESDAY, JUNE 2, 2009

Sonny Rollins, *Saxophone Colossus*



Sonny Rollins
Saxophone Colossus
(Essential Jazz Classics)
Street date: June 2

What can you say? *Saxophone Colossus* is an undisputed masterpiece. For one thing, it leads off with a classic all its own: the infectious calypso melody of the tenor man's "St. Thomas." Those who are new to this album will appreciate Rollins' brilliant consistency through uptempos and ballads and will brighten upon hearing "Moritat," also known as "Mack the Knife." With jazz poet Tommy Flanagan on piano, Doug Watkins on bass and Max Roach on drums, this session was recorded on June 22, 1956, four days before the end of the Clifford Brown-Max Roach Quintet, of which Rollins had been a member for half a year. Brown and the quintet's pianist, Richie Powell, would die in the same car accident, changing a lot of things. But what doesn't change is the colossal nature of this album.

As with other current Essential Jazz Classics releases, this one has a bonus album, *Work Time*, an earlier album Rollins recorded with pianist Ray Bryant, bassist George Morrow and Roach. It shows the promise of things to come.

Posted by Robert Folsom at [11:40 PM](#)
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About Me



Robert Folsom

Robert Folsom is a journalist whose bylines have appeared in *The Kansas City Star*, most recently as *The Star's* Fantasy & Science Fiction book reviewer. While at *The Star*, he also reviewed jazz CDs and