



DVD: Bob Berg & Niels Lan Doky Trio -The New Morning Concert (1994)

Review Rating: Good

Label/Studio: Inakustic / MVD Visual

Catalog #: INAK-6463 DVD

Region: 0 (NTSC)

Released: June 26, 2007

Genre: Jazz Concert

Synopsis: Live concert from 1994 featuring Bob Berg & Niels Lan Doky Trio at the famous New Morning jazz club.

Directed by: Patrick Savey

Screenplay by: n/a

Music by: Bob Berg & Niels Lan Doky Trio

Produced by: Daniel Farhi

Cast: Bob Berg & Niels Lan Doky Trio

Film Length: 76 mins

Colour

Languages: Dolby Digital 5.1, DTS 5.1

Subtitles:



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Special Features :

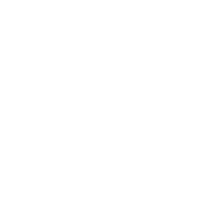
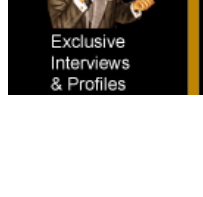
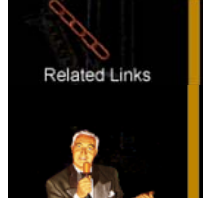
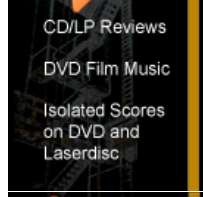
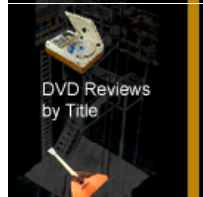
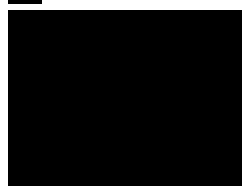
Bonus Performance: "Nancy with the Laughing Face" (8:03) / Bob Berg interview: "The Art and Memory of Bob Berg" (17:15) with 4 un-indexed chapter stops

Comments :

"You can be just as intense with playing very few notes. To me what's important about the music is the intention... What's behind the actual musical statements. I'm trying to find other ways with less notes and with less pyro-techniques to say the same thing." --- Bob Berg (2001)

The folks at the New Morning jazz club were smart to exploit the many brilliant musicians who played on their stage by commissioning the occasional professionally shot concert video, which in this case yielded a fiery jam session with tenor sax man Bob Berg, a powerful player whose career and life were cut short in 2002 by a car accident.

Call it shades of Clifford Brown, but there's something deeply tragic when the surviving music makes it so clear that an artist such as Berg would've enjoyed a long & strong career; and as seen in this superlative concert video, he was a master at taking old standards and, with his associate musicians, stretching them to epic lengths.



"Summer Nights," the first cut on nakustic's superb DVD, runs almost 18 mins., and there's not a dull, indulgent, or padded stretch of material in this dynamically performed fusion of melody, rhythm, and artistic guts. That tough edge – present even in the duet between Berg and pianist Niels Lan Doky in their somewhat Broadway-styled "When I Fall in Love" – is what makes the jazz concerts from the mid-eighties through the nineties so attractive to jazz fans wanting the energy and glee reminiscent of the hard Bebop era.

Distinct in its own right, Berg's contribution to this 1994 concert takes the somewhat saccharine tone of "Summer Nights" – evident in the tune's wistful melody and unabashed bits of flagrant passion – and subjugates it to long swathes of improv without tipping into experimental or free-form jazz; the tune still retains all the qualities that have made it so popular, but it's been reformatted to suit Berg's sometimes coarse solos, Pierre Boussaguet's vibrant and sometimes introspective bass work, Alvin Queen's drums (alternating between soft shading to hard metallic strikes), and Lan Doky's elegant, precision solos.

Lan Doky's work in "Forever Frank" is equally memorable, and his glistening fingering give some colour, class, and smooth tones between Queen's shimmering high-hats, and Berg's heavy theme restatements and hard solos. "No Moe" is most free-flowing piece among the concert's five components, and features meaty, lengthy improves from every musician, while Thelonious Monk's classic "Straight No Chaser" offers a grand jam session to close the evening.

Inakustic's DVD also contains a bonus performance of " Nancy with the Laughing Face," taken from the [New Morning 25th Anniversary](#) 2-disc set. The tune is a slow, affectionate portrait of a dreamy feminine presence, and features delicate piano work from Lan Doky, discrete bass from Boussaguet, and Berg's power isolated to less busy melodic statements, yet delivered with a strong romantic depth.

A tribute featurette, "The Art and Memory of Bob Berg," with interview material with Berg from 2001, has the sax player giving us a personal bio sketch, music samples, performance clips, a collection of stills, and scenes of a graying Berg walking down a London street.

Never intending on becoming a musician, Berg confesses the tenor sax came easy to him, yet he chose to take time off and drive a taxi in New York City in his early years to prove he could make a living without the sax. Afterwards, he hooked up with Horace Silver, and later Miles Davis, in 1984. Berg's pretty candid about his tenure with Davis, and also talks about his preference of performing in front of a live audiences versus recording an album in a studio environment.

A great concert that preserves a magnetic artist at his peak.

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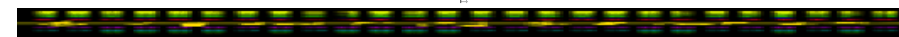
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