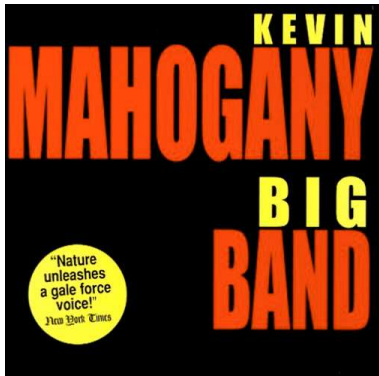


JAZZIZ

Kevin Mahogany

Big Band

(Lightyear)



Last time out, Mahogany took on the Motown sound with decidedly jazz treatments of “Tears Of A Clown,” “Signed, Sealed and Delivered,” “Can’t Get Next To You” and others. Here he harkens back to the likes of “One For My Baby,” “Dear Ruby,” and “Don’t Get Around Much Anymore” with big bands featuring the likes of Pete Christlieb, Pat LaBarbera and Bob Sheppard on sax, Bobby Shew on trumpet and Roy Hargrove on flugelhorn.

Relaxed but powerful throughout, Mahogany never grandstands. The opening “Moonlight In Vermont” swings gently, as Mahogany’s deep, rich voice takes you on a moonlight serenade. The band is powerful and tight, but while Mahogany gives the soloists plenty of space, he more than holds his own in the spotlight. Elsewhere, he takes “One For My Baby” at a languorous pace, the low brass and reeds and trumpets in minor keys setting an appropriate late night mood. Mahogany takes a zesty scat solo in the middle of “There Will Never Be Another You” before Craig Treinen’s alto solo. Tenor solos by Scott Robinson on “Moonlight” and Christlieb on “It Don’t Mean A Thing” are also tasty treats, but that’s the case with all the soloists throughout, including Ramsey Lewis on “In The Evening,” LaBarbera and trombonist Paul McKee on the Mahogany original “Three Little Words” and Hargrove on “Dear Ruby.” They add just the right touch.

Mahogany is soulful and dynamic on every one of the disc’s 10 tracks. His deep baritone is as smooth and effortless as ever, but the presence of a big band gives him a broader palette on which to paint his sounds.

- Ross Boissoneau

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