

LIKE1

<>

John Donegan - The Irish Sextet: Light Streams

By Ian Patterson

February 20, 2024

342 views

Irish pianist John Donegan may not be a household name, but the Cork musician has walked with giants, playing with the likes of [Art Blakey](#), [Art Farmer](#), [Barney Kessel](#) and Ireland's own jazz great, guitarist [Louis Stewart](#). He has also been on something of a roll with his Irish sextet, with *Light Streams* quickly following on the heels of [Shadows Linger](#) (Jayde Records, 2022). And with a third sextet album on the near horizon, Donegan is enjoying an Indian summer.

Once again, Donegan delivers a program of ten original compositions. The format, as on *Shadows Linger*, stays faithful to the classic hard-bop school of jazz, with catchy heads—played in richly textured unison by tenor saxophonist [Richie Buckley](#), alto and soprano saxophonist [Michael Buckley](#) and trumpeter [Linley Hamilton](#)—preceding a feast of impassioned solos. Drummer [John Daly](#) and bassist [Dan Bodwell](#)—possibly the only Irish-speaking American in the country—swing hard, though theirs is a partnership of subtly shifting dynamics which warrants a close ear.

There is more than a hint of [John Coltrane](#)'s blueprint on "What's This?," with the Buckleys' barreling solos and Donegan's muscular, [McCoy Tyner](#)-esque riposte walking a thin line between homage and the sincerest form of flattery. Still, it is hard to resist the tidal force of the collective passion. The Buckley brothers, who carry on a rich family jazz dynasty, are both in compelling form throughout. So too is Hamilton, with his intervention on "Reflect on This" being an album highlight.

Donegan's arrangements take full advantage of the dynamics at his disposal; his multi-part horn lines—for unison and counterpoint—are handsomely committed, while the freer passages that invite saxophones and trumpet to play fast and loose, notably on "Showtime," share something of the swagger of [Charles Mingus](#)' ensembles.

However, some of the most alluring play comes at slower tempi. Donegan pens a pretty ballad, with Bodwell delivering a fine solo on the brushes-steered "Along Came Freddie," while tender solos from Michael Buckley, on soprano, and Richie, on tenor, illuminate "Close Nearby." The pick of the bunch is the impressionistic title track, which features an enchanting flute solo from Michael Buckley, and a beautifully weighted response from the leader.

There is a fluid round of baton-passing on the brightly swinging "Seb's Story" and samba-fueled exuberance on "Sinto-me Bem." Donegan is the sole protagonist of "Sonorial," a delicate piano miniature which shows a more introspective side of his playing. The sextet finishes on a rousing note with "Blues for KJ," Burning solos pepper this infectious number, with its shades of [Fats Domino](#)'s blues shuffle and proto-rock 'n' roll jambalaya.

With good tunes, handsome arrangements and more cracking solos than one can shake a hurl at, this is a highly enjoyable set from the veteran Irish pianist and a sextet which is really into its stride.

ADVERTISEMENT

★★★★☆

Track Listing

What's This?; Close Nearby; Reflect On This; Along Came Freddie; Seb's Story; Light Streams; Showtime; Sonorial; Sinto-me Bem; Blues for KJ

Personnel

John Donegan

piano

Michael Buckley

saxophone

Richie Buckley

saxophone

Linley Hamilton

trumpet

John Daly

drums

Dan Bodwell

bass, acoustic

Additional Instrumentation

John Donegan: piano; Michael Buckley: alto saxophone, soprano saxophone, flute; Richie Buckley: tenor saxophone; Linley Hamilton: trumpet, flugelhorn; Dan Bodwell: double bass; John Daley: drums.

Album Information

Title: [Light Streams](#) | Year Released: 2023 | Record Label: Jayde Records

COMMENTS

0 Comments

1 Login ▼

Start the discussion...

LOG IN WITH

OR SIGN UP WITH DISQUS ?

Share

Best [Newest](#) Oldest

Be the first to comment.

Subscribe Privacy Do Not Sell My Data

DISQUS

About John Donegan

Instrument: Piano

[Related Articles](#) | [Concerts](#) | [Albums](#) | [Photos](#) | [Similar To](#)

ADVERTISEMENT

For The Love Of Jazz

All About Jazz has been a pillar of jazz since 1995, championing it as an art form and, more importantly, supporting the musicians who create it. Our enduring commitment has made "AAJ" one of the most culturally important websites of its kind, read by hundreds of thousands of fans, musicians and industry figures every month.

You Can Help

To expand our coverage even further and develop new means to foster jazz discovery and connectivity we need your help. You can become a sustaining member for a modest \$20 and in return, we'll immediately hide those pesky ads vastly improve your AAJ experience and allow us to vigorously build on the pioneering work we first started in 1995. So enjoy an ad-free AAJ experience and help us remain a positive beacon for jazz by [making a donation today](#).

ADVERTISEMENT

TAGS

John Donegan/The Irish Sextet Album Review Ian Patterson Light Streams Jayde Records John Donegan Art Blakey Art Farmer Barney Kessel Louis Stewart Shadows Linger richie buckley Michael Buckley linley hamilton John Daly Dan Bodwell John Coltrane McCoy Tyner Charles Mingus Fats Domino

ADVERTISEMENT

MORE

Light Streams

John Donegan - The Irish Sextet

Korean Fantasy

Kim Dae Hwan / Choi Sun Bae

Verbs

Simon Nabatov 3 + 2

Presents Jo Kondo's Works For Piano 2015-2020

Satoko Inoue

POPULAR

Compassion

Vijay Iyer

The Complete Obscure Records Collection 1975-1978

Jazz Hands

Bob James

Rich Halley, Ethan Phillion And Other Releases

CONNECT

About Us
Our Staff
Write For Us

MORE ACCESS

Newsletter
Content Plug-Ins
RSS

FOR MUSICIANS

Primer
Toolkit
Options

ADVERTISE

Rates and Options
Place Order

Privacy Policy | We do not sell or share your personal information

© 2024 All About Jazz | Jazz Near You All rights reserved.

SHOWCASE

Best Of Tobin Mueller, Vol.... By Tobin Mueller

BUY NOW

FEATURED

Water Speckled Midnight

By Q3

BUY

Knights Of The Round Table

By Madre Vaca

BUY

UP NEXT & LIVE!

Tue, Feb 20, 2024

Pittsburgh, PA

Mila Shadel Trio

Con Alma

6:00 pm

LEARN MORE

GIVEAWAY

Eligible winners: 4
Days remaining: 38

Win A Chance To Attend Jazzahead! 2024

ENTER

sponsored by Jazzahead!

SONG OF THE DAY

Soul Glide

From *Soul Glide*

by [Tony Adamo](#)

BUY

FEATURED VIDEO

Watson's Blues by Bill Mo...

Watson's Blues

with Martin Budde

PREMIUM

ADVERTISEMENT