



JOHN BEASLEY presents MONK'estra

QUOTES

"The first time I listened to this album in my car, I nearly missed my exit on the expressway. There is so much hep stuff happening in these new big band arrangements of tunes by Thelonious Monk that I was transported to another realm, one where the car seems capable of driving itself." – **DownBeat**

"Since the 1950s, composer-arrangers have made orchestral versions of Thelonious Monk's music. I have so far heard none that have been quite so bold as John Beasley in recasting what he calls the "architecture" of these dauntingly angular piano pieces for a jazz orchestra. He lifts Monk's melodies away from their native idiom of bebop and replants them in the musically cosmopolitan 21st century. Monk's insistent, almost manic worrying at single phrases is replaced by sudden surprises and changes of direction. The variety of orchestral textures seems endless too. There's a lot to take in, and a lot of conventional ideas to set aside, but through it all Monk's themes emerge as strong as ever." – **Guardian UK**

"...Beasley takes Monk's sturdy tunes on a joyride for MONK'estra. The music of the pianist and composer Thelonious Monk is simultaneously unassailable and ever open to reinterpretation. Fronting a fifteen-piece band well stocked with formidable players, Beasley takes Monk's sturdy tunes on a joyride for MONK'estra - **The New Yorker**

"John Beasley is a pianist and bandleader accustomed to overseeing a lot of moving parts: He recently did an excellent job as musical director for the International Jazz Day Concert at the White House. As on his new album, "MONK'estra," Mr. Beasley appears here with a big band, playing his arrangements of Thelonious Monk's music." – **The New York Times**

On their debut recording for Mack Avenue titled MONK'estra, Vol. 1, John Beasley arranged, conducted and produced all songs on the recording in addition to bringing together many of the most revered jazz musicians to play 9 songs from the Thelonius Monk songbook – big band style! He retains much of the bop style that was rooted in the big-band techniques of the swing era – including the walking bass as a harmonic foundation and the repetitive cymbal patterns of swing while supplanting certain aspects of rhythm, harmony and melody. Beasley also left room on his arrangements for the musicians to improvise and the result is a five-star gem that provides thoughtful and comprehensive interpretations of Monk's remarkable music. – **Sounds of Timeless Jazz**

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