

Bob DeVos - Shifting Sands

Contributed by Rick Holland

Personnel: Bob DeVos – Guitar; Eric Alexander – Tenor sax (tracks 2, 5, 9) ; Dan Kostelnik – Hammond B-3 organ ; Steve Johns – Drums ; Gary Fritz – Percussion (tracks 1, 9)

Tracks: Lost And Found, Three/Four Miss C , Mojave , Shifting Sands, Track and Field, Step into Spring, But Beautiful, A Different Dozen, Willow Weep For Me

Bob DeVos

Shifting Sands

Bob DeVos has released a gem on the Savant Label entitled Shifting Sands. DeVos, who is a very modernistic and forward Jazz guitarist, demonstrates his expertise with the B-3 organ trio in a swinging and modern take on this genre.

Unlike so many who pattern their B-3 music after the Jimmy Smith model, this group slants it's attention more to the Larry Young influenced B-3 groups. (I'm not suggesting that emulating Jimmy Smith isn't a noteworthy musical goal!) This trio however captures the post-Trane ideal and applies these musical values. The result is a group entrenched in a swinging concept that applies the lessons of modern harmony.

I loved DeVos concept of sound on this recording. It captured me from the very first track, entitled Lost and Found. I've listened to a few B-3 submissions in the last year, and I admit, I had a preconceived notion on what I was about to hear from Shifting Sands. I was pleasantly surprised by the musical sophistication this disc offered me as a listener. DeVos plays with beautiful musical phrasing. He and his colleagues are fully formed improvisers who can translate their musical

goals. I must also admit, I'm a person who loves a modern take on things, and this group does just that.

By the second track, entitled Three/Four Miss C, (a minor blues in 3/4) DeVos and Erik Alexander play beautiful harmonic ally conceived improvisations. The track has a cool quality, built and entrenched in an East Coast sense of swing. Check out DeVos and Alexander's use of intervallic playing and their emphasis on nice upper structures.

The title track Shifting Sands is also in 3/4 meter. This track is built over a rich harmonic canvas. Organist Dan Kostenik lays a nice harmonic cushion for DeVos to blow over, then comes back and plays a spacious modern solo on B-3. Very hip!!

Not many organ trio's play Jobim with the lightness and thoughtfulness as this group. Again, DeVos delivers a beautiful sound concept on this. Supported very nicely by drummer Steve Johns and Kostenik, this is a very nice interpretation on rarely played Jobim original.

Step into Spring is another tune that seems to embrace the album's mission statement. I must admit I dug the 'feel' of the group, but this tune also embraces Coltrane harmony. The tertian harmony is heard when DeVos moves from the different key centers on this tune. Bob plays comfortably through these harmonies, and admittedly, very gracefully, I did not even notice this until it was brought to my attention. Tertian harmony is such a nice modulation point in composition, and again many modernists embrace this sound.

I finally want to bring everyone's attention to another cut on this disc, entitled But Beautiful. A favorite standard of mine personally, DeVos plays a harmonization upfront (Solo-guitar) that is simply beautiful. He then champions the melody in a Wes Montgomery style that Wes surely would have dug!!

There are no weak cuts on this disc. The music is played thoughtfully and musically throughout. This is a wonderful and extremely tasteful disc that is played by sensitive and thoughtful musicians. I highly recommend this disc, I'm sure you'll enjoy DeVos and company's musical presentation. Thumbs way up Bob!! Congrats and thank-you for your musical take on this great genre!!

For more information about the music of Bob DeVos, please visit:

www.bobdevosjazzguitar.com