



December 2008 CD OF THE MONTH

Bill Cunliffe

“The Blues and the Abstract Truth Take 2”

Resonance Records

“The Blues and The Abstract Truth”, a 1961 album by Oliver Nelson is one of only a handful of true classics of the jazz canon.

The recently released tribute album by Bill Cunliffe may not reach the legendary status of the original but it will stand out on its own merit as an excellent recording that also reinforces the legacy of the first without being an imitation.

Pianist Cunliffe, like so many other jazzers of his generation, was highly influenced by Oliver Nelson’s musical masterpiece. He opted to render a heartfelt homage by re-recording the same 6 songs in the same order as Oliver and then adding 2 self-penned “Nelson-esque” compositions to round out this exciting session. Accompanying Bill are his long-time Vail Jazz Festival mates, alto saxist Jeff Clayton and trumpeter Terell Stafford as well as bassist Tom Warrington, drummer Mark Ferber, veterans Andy Martin and Bob Sheppard on trombone and tenor sax respectively, among others.

The last 15 to 20 years has seen a multitude of jazz artists & composers tributes alongside numerous concept albums, most falling short of their intended goals or becoming simply a mirror image of their inspired subjects, Bill Cunliffe’s “The Blues and The Abstract Truth, Take 2” for the upstart Resonance Records label not only achieves its objective of paying respect to an all-time great recording, it maintains an artistic merit worthy of its own accolades.

