

"Waits & Measures"

Pete Robbins | Playscape recordings (2006)

By Glenn Astarita (from AllAboutJazz.com, October 2006)

To coincide with an extensive tour of the northeastern US, Brooklyn-based alto saxophonist Pete Robbins has issued his second effort as a leader. And it offers a rock-solid glimpse of his artistry, chops and interesting methodology, all steeped within copious jazz-related genres. Simply stated, Robbins is a style master who sets himself apart from many of his peers.

Spanning hip, jazz-funk motifs and multidirectional currents, Robbins orchestrates a dense, tight-knit and capacious sequence of overtures on *Waits & Measures*. Eliot Krinsky's dirty Fender Rhodes piano and Mike Gamble's slightly fuzzed-out electric guitar lines impart a jazz-fusion edge in various spots. However, Robbins' fluent alto sax lines and cagey arrangements generate a buoyant musical vista, complete with power-packed cadenzas and off-kilter shifts in momentum.

The band sustains interest by maintaining a sense of evolution and drama; rapidly paced funk or bop grooves often blossom into climactically oriented unison passages. Gamble sports a hard rock sound and demeanor on "Cankers and Medallions," where Robbins and saxophonist Sam Sadigursky execute ominous undercurrents that eventually segue into capricious movements. In sum, Robbins should win over a horde of admirers with this outing, which conveys asymmetrical parts chops, gusto, funk, fusion and a clear-sighted view of the jazz canon.