



CD Reviews - May 2015

by George Fendel

***Fluidity*; John Fedchock, trombone.**

A number of years ago, John Fedchock was one of the “young Turks” in the Woody Herman band. His dexterity, combined with a masterful, round tone, earned him a ton of trombone solos with Woody. From there he went on to form his own big band and recorded regularly for Reservoir, a respected label whose owner simply retired. As a result, I’ve heard “nada” about Fedchock for several years. So how glad was I to be made aware of his welcome new quartet album? Very glad!

Fedchock’s quartet includes John Toomey, piano, Jimmy Masters, bass, and Dave Ratajczak, drums. On this winning live performance from 2013, the quartet romps through five wellloved standards, one tune from the Real Book, and a couple of the leader’s originals. With tunes like “East of the Sun,” “I Hear a Rhapsody,” “Make Someone Happy,” “Weaver of Dreams,” “Days of Wine and Roses” and “I’ve Never Been in Love Before,” this is a “can’t miss” performance. Add Joe Henderson’s “Homestretch” and Fedchock’s own work, and you have a perfect set of real deal jazz. As for Fedchock, he hasn’t lost a step: beautiful phrasing, a tone so pretty that one forgets he’s playing a trombone (!), and never a showy “look what I can do” lick. It’s still early in the year, but this may be among my favorite CD’s of 2015.

Summit Records; 2015; appx. 72 min.