

Sound bytes



SANDRO GIBELLINI "Felix" (Tirreno Records)

Sandro Gibellini (gtr) * Piero Leveratto (bass) * Alfred Kramer (drums) * Roberto Suggenti (flute) * Mauro Negri (tenor sax)

Tracks: I Believe In You * Ellis Island * Odd Girl * Some Other Spring * Felix * Omo * If I Should Lose You * Dancing In The Dark

This is the first CD release for Gibellini on his own. Odd indeed, as he is one of the most gifted of the Italian guitarists and possibly the most representative young player as far as mainstream jazz is concerned. Gibellini is in his thirties but already has a

remarkable history to his credit - studio player, much in demand accompanist, member of the RAI Television Big Band in Milan and the Kep-torchestra in Venice, life and soul of endless jam sessions....It's enough to say that the guy is a top class player. Ironically, he had to move to neighbouring Switzerland to let his project be fulfilled.

The recording here is clear but warm and the whole CD has a swinging, cohesive sound. The group, with Paolo Pelegatti on bass and Swiss drummer Alfred Kramer, creates an ideal backing for the guitar's solo flights, catching and developing the leader's hints. Rhythmic strength is truly one of Gibellini's most distinctive features, together with the "thematic" approach which has surely come from an in-depth study of the masters (Wes, Jim Hall and Sonny Rollins above all).

The tracks, both standards and originals, cover a wide range of tempos and feel. The opening "I Believe In You" is first 4/4 bebop at its best; Gibellini gradually builds his solo towards the climax from sparse single-string phrases to block chords. There is an "architectural" concept in most of his solos, although they may shift from the

intimate mood of "Felix" to the aggressive, dissonant blowing on "Love For Sale".

The quintet tracks also showcase the contributions from the wind section, especially Mauro Negri on tenor sax. This young guy (he's in his mid-twenties) has great command of both tone and articulation together with a modern phrasing which reminds one of Joe Lovano (listen to Negri on "Odd Girl").

"Felix", tastefully matching tradition and modernity in a very personal way, is a delightful CD by one of the foremost young Italian (and European) guitarists. Highly recommended ****

FULVIO VARDABASSO

ROYCE CAMPBELL "A Tribute To Henry Mancini" (Episode 1001-2)

Royce Campbell (gtr) * Bruce Barth (piano) * Bill Moring (bass) * Terry Clarke (drums)