

NIGEL PRICE AND ALBAN CLARET

ENTENTE CORDIALE

RELEASE DATE: March 24, 2023

EM05

UPC/EAN: 0796548427910

Nigel Price needs no introduction as one of the leading guitarists in the UK, although it must be said that he is probably looking over his shoulder and keeping a close eye on his co-conspirator on this recording, Alban Claret.

With a reputation as one of the most hardworking and busiest musicians in the business one thing that can always be guaranteed with Nigel is inventive and swinging jazz, and with Alban, he has found a fellow guitarist with whom he can communicate with a high level of intuition and freedom. Nigel says of their first meeting, "Well, it's probably impossible for a great guitarist to move to London and think I won't notice! We played a couple of times at one of Alban's regular gigs and it very quickly became clear that we were going to get on like a house on fire..."

Unusual to find a quartet with a two-guitar front line, but with Entente Cordiale we are presented with just that, in an excellent album that takes us on a journey that features some of the great jazz composers of the 20th century. Some of the compositions are old friends while others may be less familiar, but all are handled with an authenticity and originality that ensures that the integrity of the composer is uppermost while the quartet is able to breathe life into the music in way that allows for some fiery and lyrical solos from both guitarists, superbly and sympathetically accompanied by bassist Mikele Montolli and Matt Fishwick on drums.

The quartet swing hard on 'Bittersuite' composed by Sam Jones and featured on his trio album The Bassist with pianist Kenny Drew. Here Nigel and Alban play Jones's tricky theme in a unison statement that sets things up nicely for swinging solos from both. This deep sense of swing is also present on Woody Shaw's 'The Moontrane' where the rhythm section kick hard and the guitarists dig in with melodic solos that seem to bounce ideas off each other.

The gentler side of the quartet is heard on the lovely reading of 'Self Portrait In Three Colours' by Charles Mingus and featured on the classic Mingus Ah Um, along with a delightful 'Time Remembered' written by Bill Evans in which the dialogue between the guitarists whether soloing or comping is exquisite.

A blow-by-blow examination of the album is perhaps best discovered by listening to this wonderful recording, but it would be remiss not to mention Nigel and Alban's dedication to one of the guitar's unsung heroines who tragically died young, Emily Remler. Their version of 'Blues For Herb' is the epitome of how to swing on a blues, with exhilarating solos from both guitarists.

Unusual a two-guitar front-line maybe, but as Nigel points out "Yeah - two guitars. It's probably a lineup that's not for everyone but, speaking as a guitarist, I think it's twice as good!"



NIGEL PRICE AND ALBAN CLARET WITH MIKELE MONTOLLI AND MATT FISHWICK ENTENTE CORDIALE



TRACK LISTING:

Bittersuite (Sam Jones)
Silver's Serenade (Horace Silver)
The Moontrane (Woody Shaw)
Simone (Frank Foster)
Self Portrait In Three Colours (Charles Mingus)
Blues For Herb (Emily Remler)
Time Remembered (Bill Evans)
I'm Old Fashioned (Jerome Kern, Johnny Mercer)
This Is New (Kurt Weill, Ira Gershwin)
Pensativa (Clare Fischer)

PERSONNEL:

Nigel Price - guitar

Alban Claret - guitar

Mikele Montolli - double bass

Matt Fishwick - drums

CREDITS:

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Studio 45 (March 2022)

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