




Ravi Coltrane

Mad 6

Sony Jazz 5108842 | 

Coltrane (ts,ss); George Colligan, Andy Milne (p); James Genus, Darryl Hall (b); Steve Hass (d). Rec. 02

Ravi has made very few albums as a leader. There was a record in 1992 with fellow tenorist Antoine Roney (such a talent, but unheard of for two or three years now and no longer with brother Wallace's band) on Japan's Alfa label, followed five years later by *Moving Pictures* and, in 99, *From the Round Box* via BMG, France, to whom he was signed through a deal involving Steve Coleman and which only recently expired. Obviously constantly overshadowed by his father's achievements, he's never pushed himself into the limelight, seeming content to slowly and quietly form an identity of his own and make his mark.

I well remember a sparsely-attended Jazz Café gig about three years ago. What stayed most in my memory was Ravi's obsession with his drummer. Just as his father had a totally unique, creative relationship with Elvin Jones, so also has his son – but with someone who sounds most like a heavy rock drummer and who dominated the quartet. Maybe that's unfair, because Steve Hass also has a strong feel for jazz. He is one of the driving forces on this new album, which also has former Five Elements member Andy Milne, Ravi's exciting regular pianist, alternating with possibly the more sophisticated harmonic approach of George Colligan. James Genus, who seems to be on every album these days and Ravi's lesser-known regular bassist Darryl Hall are rock-solid, towers of strength throughout.

As for Ravi, he's included two of his father's tunes ('Fifth House' and the currently ubiquitous '26-2'), Jimmy Heath's 'Gingerbread Boy' (on which he plays soprano), 'Round Midnight' which gets a totally individual up-tempo treatment, Monk's 'Ask Me Now', Mingus' rarely covered 'Self Portrait in Three Colors' and five of his own intriguingly titled originals. These include the plaintive 'Mad 6' and the attractive modal 'Avignon'. More solid, steady progress by a very serious young musician. **Tony Hall**