



BURKE GOULD QUARTET ALBUM “LIVE AGAIN!”

Reviewed by Eric Myers

Label: Jazzhead

Personnel: Rob Burke (tenor & soprano saxophones), Tony Gould (piano), Nick Haywood (bass), Tony Floyd (drum-set)

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This brilliant album is a mixture of highly developed free improvisation on the one hand, but balanced throughout by the exploration of harmonic structures which are unusually beautiful and melodic. The CD runs for an hour, with five tracks only, so the musicians are stretching out. Three compositions are credited to Gould or Burke, plus the traditional tune *Black Is The Colour Of My True Love's Hair*, and one jazz classic, Joe Zawinul's *In a Silent Way*. All are recorded live, either in Melbourne's Bennetts Lane jazz club or at the 2013 Wangaratta Jazz & Blues Festival.



Three of the five compositions are credited to Tony Gould (above) or Rob Burke (below)...



This quartet's music is palpably on the edge – one gets the feeling that anything can happen - but, as always with great musicians, no matter how far out the music becomes, the players take decisions which unerringly enable everything to fall into place. The opening track *But For You* is a memorable tour de force. Following a long passage of free improvisation, the band sets up an infectious groove over a simple Latin/funk motif which enables Burke to fly on soprano. In an inspired exploration of rhythmic comping Gould gets down and dirty, his explosions in the bass clef a reminder that, when it was called for, Thelonious Monk used his elbows on the keyboard. This track is exciting, and very hip.



The armoury available to this quartet includes pithy bass solos from Nick Haywood... PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN

The armoury available to this quartet is unusually comprehensive. It might be the lyricism which has always characterized Gould's playing (eg his composition *Softness of Hair*); it might be a pithy bass solo from Haywood; it might be interaction between Burke and Floyd, reminiscent of the Coltrane/Elvin Jones ethos; it might be out-of-tempo, rhapsodic passages where everyone is free to contribute; it might be building the music to stirring, emotionally-laden climaxes; or, it could be at the end of a piece where one realises you've been on a trip, and your mind is now elsewhere.



Tony Floyd (above): playing drums on this brilliant album, which is a mixture of highly developed free improvisation on the one hand, but balanced throughout by the exploration of harmonic structures which are unusually beautiful and melodic...
PHOTO CREDIT ROGER MITCHELL

No matter how much freedom has been exercised – and that freedom palpably underwrites the music – the end product has the indelible imprint of certainty. Whatever vehicles they choose to utilize, in order to express themselves, these four highly experienced musicians are able to effortlessly convert those vehicles to their strong vision as to how jazz should sound.
