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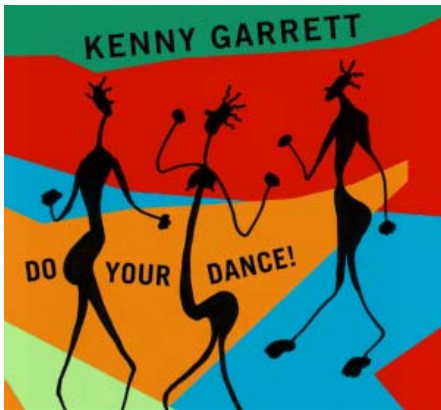
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KENNY GARRETT: DO YOUR DANCE!



I must start off by telling you this, I am a BIG fan of Kenny Garrett. I mean-huge! So when Gary asked if I wanted to review his new CD "Do Your Dance!" well, I just about did my own dance and without hesitation, said YES and have held the CD hostage ever since. I have a confession to make: Kenny Garrett is the first musician that has ever made me cry during a live performance. I'll never forget it. Kenny has a way of speaking through his saxophone in such a way that it does something to your spirit.....and you find your soul talking back. And yes, dancing is something I've also done to Kenny's music, and something I found myself doing to this new album from the very start. The 1st track titled "Philly" (which happens to be what I call my 2nd hometown) reminds me of the city of brotherly love and why I love Kenny the way I

do. It starts off slow and mellow.....and then takes off with such drive and force, you almost fall out of your seat. It catches you off guard, but that's what Kenny does-he doesn't just stay in one lane with his music, he really does take you on a musical trip. Bassist Corcoran Holt, Drummer Ronald Bruner, Jr and pianist Vernell Brown, Jr do a great job of keeping up, I tell you these guys do not disappoint! The next cut "Backyard Groove" reminds me of just that, being in the backyard, lighting up the grill, and enjoying some cool times with some cool people. Kenny's playing though, is like the rays of the hot sun on your back.....so hot yet so it feels so good that you want to remain in that same spot until the "Backyard Groove" is over. Speaking of hot sun, "Calypso Chant" makes you feel as if you're on the beach of your favorite island sipping your favorite cocktail. And are those my feet moving and my hips swaying? Oh yeah.....this cut has a sweet groove that reminds me a bit of my family and the music I grew up on (reggae) without taking away from the music I love (jazz) Kenny slows it down with "Bossa", "Waltz (3 sisters)" and "Persian Steps" which he does with as much intensity as he does the faster paced songs. In "Persian Steps" Kenny puts down the saxophone and picks up the flute and even tickles the ivory on this piece. It's really nice to see & hear this side of Kenny and it is a reminder of not only how talented he is, but how important he is to this music as well. Kenny's notes pierce through you the way a scripture hits you when you feel as if the preacher is speaking directly to you when you haven't set foot in church all year. You find yourself looking around for an explanation, when all the answers are right there in front of you...coming right at you-full speed ahead. Now Kenny Garrett is a musician who, in my opinion, knows who he is and knows the power of his music. So as someone whose 1st introduction to jazz was through hip hop music, I didn't mind seeing a "Rapper" by the name of Donald "Mista Enz" Brown, Jr listed on the line up and included on the songs "Wheatgrass Shot (Straight to the Head)" and at the end of the the title track "Do Your Dance!". I know some of my jazz purists will shake their head but I appreciate Kenny not staying in a box and making his music "available" to listeners who may not otherwise have a straight avenue to jazz music. This is an album where I can truly say "There is something for everyone".....including those who may not even own a jazz record yet. "Do Your Dance" wants you to do just that....it wants you to allow this music to become YOURS...no matter how, no matter what.

Nicole Sweeney
Afternoon Jazz Host

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