



**Alex Koo/Mark
Turner/Ralph Alessi**
appleblueseagreen
CLEVER TREE 201901

★★★★★

**Mark Turner/
Gary Foster**
*Mark Turner Meets
Gary Foster*
CAPRI 74156

★★★

Mark Turner's widespread influence has extended the reach of the unique pianist/didact Lennie Tristano into new generations. And the live *Mark Turner Meets Gary Foster* celebrates the Tristano school in nearly every respect.

Alto saxophonist Foster is another Tristano disciple, and most of the repertoire on the double-disc summit is either composed by the pianist or his saxophonist acolytes, Lee Konitz and Warne Marsh. Those horn players have significant impact on the playing, too, especially on tunes like "Lennie's Pennies" and "Subconscious-Lee," where Turner and Foster channel their intricate interplay. The pair also evokes Tristano's "pure improvisation" motto. On the other hand, both performers seem to have learned Tristano's lessons all too well.

The tenor often reaches high enough, and the alto low enough, that on tracks like "What's New?," it's hard to tell which soloist is which. If their distinctions get lost, though, bassist Putter Smith's is quite apparent, to a fault. His lines are creative, cohesive and cursed with the irritating sound of bass-direct miking.

Fortunately, *appleblueseagreen* is stunningly original. There's no homage to get lost in, and the compositions all are by the young pianist/drummer Alex Koo. There also aren't similar-sounding instruments: Koo and Turner are joined by monster trumpeter Ralph Alessi,

who hails from a separate world altogether.

That said, the three instrumentalists attain something like a classical manner and articulation. Not unexpected on an album that features three self-described "Etudes," although each is a solo piece by Koo with increasingly fraught harmonic structures. That stately approach doesn't constrain them, instead leading the trio to interesting places. The trudging chamber music of "Ghost Parade" pulls apart into dissonant collective improvisations that change shape and feel with head-spinning frequency.

Curiously, the mannerly playing falls by the wayside at the album's center—on the short, funky "Bodily Fluids," which ends without resolution. That's OK: The point was made well before the ending, anyway. A Tristano-school pastiche is nice, but it's in more open territory that Turner shines brightest.

—Michael J. West

appleblueseagreen: enuD; Dune; Funeral March; Ghost Parade; Etude No. 1 "Mirror, Mirror, On The Wall"; Dormilon; Bodily Fluids; Etude No. 2 "The Gaze"; The Lone Wanderer; Etude No. 3; Apples Are Blue But The Sea Is Green; Freedom Pilot. (49:22)

Personnel: Alex Koo, piano, keyboard, drums; Mark Turner, tenor saxophone; Ralph Alessi, trumpet.

Mark Turner Meets Gary Foster: Disc One: Background Music; Teef; Lennie's Pennies; Come Rain Or Come Shine. Disc Two: 317 East 32nd Street; What's New?; Subconscious-Lee. (51:55/35:18)

Personnel: Mark Turner, tenor saxophone; Gary Foster, alto saxophone; Putter Smith, bass; Joe LaBarbera, drums.

Ordering info: clevertreerecords.com; caprirecords.com