

LOVE, DAD Liner

Artist: **Larry Newcomb Quartet**
Album: **Love, Dad**
Label: **Essential Messenger Records**
Add Date: **January 29, 2021**

Veteran jazz guitarist Larry Newcomb and his son bassist Jake Newcomb team up for a high-quality straight ahead jazz quartet set.

The Newcombs, who are joined by pianist Thomas Royal and drummer Dave Marsh, perform six of the guitarist's originals plus swinging versions of four standards.

Larry Newcomb, who is considered one of the top all-round guitarists on the scene today, has played in a wide variety of settings during his productive career but his true love is modern straight ahead jazz. **Love, Dad** is his fifth recording as a leader and it features him along with his talented son bassist Jake Newcomb, the consistently inventive pianist Thomas Royal, and the supportive Dave Marsh on drums.

The quartet performs fresh renditions of four standards plus the leader's originals. The set begins with a relaxed version of "You Stepped Out Of A Dream" that, with its melodic guitar, piano and bass solos, serves as a fine introduction to the group. The guitarist's "Essential Messengers" has a light Latin feel and chordal work that recalls Wes Montgomery in spots, but advanced harmonies all its own. Newcomb's quirky and almost Monkish "Cliffhanger Blues" displays his sly wit and has a particularly colorful piano solo.

"Love, Dad," which is dedicated to Larry Newcomb's three sons, is based on the chord changes of "Stella By Starlight" and is a cooker that inspires thoughtful solos. Jake Newcomb is in the spotlight on Oscar Pettiford's classic "Tricotism," taking the melody and a subtle yet inspired solo. The leader's "Soirée" is an original jazz waltz with a French feel to it and features one of his more adventurous solos of the program.

A change of pace is next in "Secret Agent Man," certainly an offbeat choice for a jazz date but one that works well. This rollicking performance gives Newcomb an opportunity to revisit his roots. The heartfelt ballad "Hearts In Suspension," a modern jazz waltz "Love Intentionally," and a swinging "The Song Is You" conclude the enjoyable album.

Larry Newcomb was originally a blues rocker and worked along the way as lead guitarist with the touring bands of many pop and rock artists including Peter Noone (of Herman's Hermits) and Leslie Gore. However while attending the University of Maine, he became interested in jazz. He has since earned Masters and PhD degrees in Music from the University of Florida and studied with such notables as guitarists Bucky Pizzarelli, Pat Martino, Jack Wilkins, Howard Roberts and Mark Elf. In his career he has played with

many of the top jazz musicians in New York and Florida including Reuben Wilson, Bob Mover, Bob Cunningham, Benny Powell, Manny Duran, and Brian Charette.

A busy educator as well as a performer, Larry Newcomb previously recorded four albums as a leader: **Nothing But the Heart**, Cliffhanger, **Live *Intentionally!***, and Living Tribute, the latter with Bucky Pizzarelli. All are quite worthy but Love, Dad is his most inventive and mature recording to date, an excellent sampling of his guitar artistry and original approach to playing creative jazz.