

Frank Sinatra

Concert Sinatra

Mobile Fidelity/Reprise

180g

When Frank Sinatra left Capitol and opened his own record label he released a few dozen albums on Reprise over the next couple decades. This 1963 release is one of the best. Despite the title, this is a studio recording of Frank reworking show tunes. The Concert title derives from the fact that Nelson Riddle is conducting an enormous orchestra. Show Tunes Sinatra or Really Big Band Sinatra might have been more accurate, but less catchy. In the event, Nelson's arrangements are lush and Sinatra's delivery and interpretation near the peak of his powers. Like some of the famous Mercury Living Presence recordings, this concert was recorded to 35mm tape, and the recording job is outstanding. This is a big symphonic sound and Frank expands to fill it. The music is Rogers and Hammerstein, not stiring quartet, and the recording suits the material. Sinatra's voice has perhaps never been captured so well. While the original Reprise vinyl was quite nice, it can't stand up to the super-mastering job of Mobile Fidelity's Rob LoVerde who has crafted a sonic masterpiece. This is not recorded sound that would impress in MP3 format, but when everything is done right, and it is here, it's wild again, beguiled again. You'll be bewitched, if not bothered and bewildered.

RECORDING



MUSIC



Jackie McLean

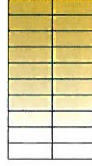
Destination Out!

Music Matter/Blue Note 841165

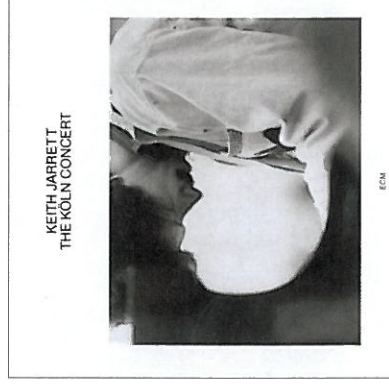
45 rpm

Sometimes you don't hear a record for so long that when you go back to it you are surprised at how good it is and marvel at how you could have forgotten about it. Such was my shock when I put on this new mastering of Destination Out. Grachan Moncur III's sultry trombone playing, Roy Haynes' snap crackle drum and cymbal work, Bobby Hutchinson' textural vibes, Larry Ridley's sure bass and of course McLean's alto add up to chamber jazz to match anything by my hero Eric Dolphy, who was clearly being channeled here. Four vinyl sides and four songs, with plenty of time to spread out. This LP belongs up there in my pantheon of favorite Blue Notes along with Out To Lunch and a few others. The sound is simply remarkable. Listen to Love and Hate, and if this isn't one of the most luscious sounding recordings of a jazz group on record, I'm missing out on something. Each instrument hangs in space and vibrates in every dimension. And unlike some of Van Gelder's stereo recordings, nothing here leaves me thinking that it might have sounded better in mono. Maybe Kevin Gray put some new capacitors in his mastering console. Maybe Rudy's recording set up was a little better than usual. Or maybe the moon and stars were in alignment, but this one is Out there! McLean's best Blue Note, in remarkable sound.

RECORDING



MUSIC



Keith Jarrett

The Köln Concert

ECM

180g

You don't often get a re-release on a bygone format by ECM but this must be its most successful and enduring title, its Tubular Bells in many ways, and it's great to have it on heavy vinyl for the first time. Made in 1975 by a still be-afroed Jarrett it features one of the least appealing sounding pianos in the jazz oeuvre, yet the playing reaches heights that few artists ever achieve. When Jarrett is in the zone he is undoubtedly acting as a conduit to a higher plane, at its best the work on here takes you to places that only music, the highest art form, can hope to do.

Jarrett had reached the apex of his abilities by this time and plays in a stream of consciousness style that is at its most transcendent in the first part. In many ways the performance peaks early but the second part, which stretches over three sides, also has some fine examples of musical beauty, part IIb is particularly good. Jarrett has renounced long improvisations like these in order to focus his energies in relatively short bursts, but there is a lot to enjoy in the blues and boogie woogie driven vamps that carry him from one moment of inspiration to the next here.

The 180g treatment reins in the clangy sound of the piano and gives better stereo depth than standard pressings, equally importantly it's pristine.

RECORDING



MUSIC