



Moving Day
Mark Wade Trio (s/r)
by Marco Cangiano

This is Mark Wade's second outing and confirms expectations set by his debut, a step forward in terms of cohesion of the trio and the music contained therein. This is largely due to Wade's facility as a composer; each tune is built on introductions, different themes that at times take the form of proper movements, frequent meter changes and apt codas. "The Bells", for instance, has three interwoven themes, the first of which is adapted from Debussy and the last one echoing bells heard in Nice's old quarter. "Wide Open" also features two themes, providing a build-and-release tension solved by Wade's melodic solo.

Tim Harrison is a rhapsodic pianist, with an uncanny ability to capture the very essence of each composition. The same applies to Wade, whose solos often introduce new thematic material. Scott Neumann's intelligent use of the full drumset characterizes his very creative and tasteful approach to filling the ample space left by his partners.

The music flows within a prevalence of medium tempos and an unusual melodic richness. The title track is a reflection on Wade's many shifts—15 according to Sammy Stein's very informative liner notes—the feeling of which is opened and closed by a seven-note pattern stating the hesitancy of moving followed by the successive settling-in. In between, different sections alternate nostalgia with hopeful expectation. "Midnight in the Cathedral" reveals an oriental and somewhat dramatic flavor while "Quarter" is influenced by New Orleans and built around two alternating themes underlined by martial cadenzas redolent of a marching band. The two non-originals, "Another Night in Tunisia" and "Autumn Leaves", are reinvented, the former delivered languidly and the latter shifted in spirit, but also through an explicit quote, towards Herbie Hancock's "Maiden Voyage". Closer "Fading Rays of Sunlight" rounds up one of the most interesting piano trio recordings of the year.