

Michael Tracy

Gusting

Sea Breeze Jazz SB-3071 | ★★★

Michael Tracy (s), Craig Wagner (g), Phil DeGreg (p), John Goldsby (b) and Jason Tiemann (d). Rec 2004.

Saxophonist Michael Tracy is known primarily for his work in jazz education at the University of Louisville, where he runs the Jamey Aebersold Jazz Studies programme in Aebersold's home town. He's also a regular tutor at Aebersold's summer schools and is a regular visitor to the UK. The quintet he has assembled for this disc draws on faculty members from the programme in Wagner and Tiemann. Goldsby is a former student on the programme now working with the WDR Big Band in Cologne, and DeGreg teaches in Cincinnati. The music they make is bright and predictably accomplished in a slick contemporary bop vein, featuring strong and coherent soloing and empathic ensemble playing. They delve into funk, Latin and blues in the course of a pleasing set of original compositions by DeGreg, Goldsby and Wagner, and one arrangement, by Tracy, of a standard, 'Sweet and Lovely'. It all follows a familiar formula, but they deliver in fresh and engaging fashion.

Kenny Mathieson