

# MIKE TRACY, TRACINGS, SEA BREEZE JAZZ 3062.

August 5 / Melancia / Vera Cruz / September 15 / Favela / Balalaio / Tracing / Once I Loved. 59:29.

Tracy, ts, ss, perc; Renato Vasconcellos, kybds, perc; Steve Allee, p; Pat Lentz, g; Tyrone Wheeler, b; Terry O'Mahoney, Erivelton Silva, d, perc; Greg Byrne, perc; Kathy Jordan, vcl. No place or date listed.

The title, *Tracings*, gives no hint of the music that the CD contains. An alteration of saxophonist Mike Tracy's last name, the song "Tracings" evolves as a freely flowing Jazz waltz allowing Tracy opportunities to develop the tune with clearly conceived logic and tonal qualities that vary with the mood of the song. However, three-quarters of the CD consist of music derived from Tracy's enthusiastic interest in Brazilian music, the other exception among the 8 tracks being "September 15," a liting tribute to pianist Bill Evans. (September 15 was Evans' date of death.) The person who revealed the potential of Brazilian music to Tracy was pianist Renato Vasconcellos, whose presence on *Tracings* is almost as important as Tracy's. Vasconcellos wrote 2 of the tunes, arranged 4 of them and plays piano on 6. "August 5th" is a song that Vasconcellos wrote for his brother, August 5 being his birth date, and it involves a spirited romp split between Tracy's measure-long 16th-note lead-in followed by whole notes preceding an eventual release when Vasconcellos breaks out into a freer solo. Otherwise, Tracy and his group play selected compositions of top-shelf Brazilian composers such as Antonio Carlos Jobim or Milton Nascimento, as Tracy switches between tenor and soprano saxes according to the moods he wishes to convey. Without the bite of a Stan Getz, Tracy nonetheless achieves flowing consistency and a clear sound as the music is played with understated professionalism that relinquishes some of the Brazilian flourishes, like the use of the berimbau or the shakere to attain a street carnival atmosphere. Instead, Tracy and the musicians who accompany him are more interested in the melodies of Brazilian music, which Tracy plays with a rich vocalistic quality on saxophone throughout the CD.

Bill Donaldson