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It's nice to hear a mainstream set hit the ground running like this. Saxophonist Pete Mills opens his *Art and Architecture* with the frictionless propulsion of "Dot Com," a tune that zips forward on the rhythm section momentum of a sleek monorail riding a cushion of magnetism, on a workout that lets you know that straight ahead jazz is alive and well, juiced up even, in the hands of a younger generation.

This is only Mills' second CD as a leader, but he sounds as though he's been playing for forty years. The late Joe Henderson keeps coming to mind as I listen to this one. On up tempo originals like "Dot Com" and "Spin Dri," Mills' articulation and smooth flow of continuously fresh ideas feels very Henderson-like, with a tone that's not quite as sweet, with a little more tang in the sound. Indeed, Mills' closer here, Billy Strayhorn's "Isfahan," is the same song with which Henderson opened his marvelous *Lush Life* (Verve, '92); and both players treat the melody with a nimble and delicate affection, just sax and bass.

Mills also covers Strayhorn's "Chelsea Bridge," an achingly beautiful tune done wonderful justice by Mills and the band. In addition, the saxophonist tackles Monk on "In Walked Bud," with just bass and drums behind him, in a loose atmosphere that Mills handles with aplomb.

Mills' originals—seven of the ten tunes here—are all strong, including the zesty "Pumpkin Shoes" and the funk groove "Clubfoot"; but I've got to single out "Seven Shades of Blue," a cool-flowing bossa nova with adroit acoustic guitar accompaniment by Peter McCann. The style fits Pete Mills' sound the way it fit Stan Getz's; and I'm going to guess there's a full-on bossa nova CD in Mills' future.

An outstanding set of mainstream sounds—sax and rhythm section perfection.

~ **Dan McClenaghan**