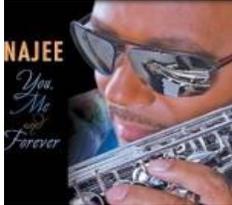




Najee – You, Me and Forever

July 1, 2015



As one of the best known saxophonists/flautists in contemporary jazz, Najee never ceases to amaze with his creativity and imagination, and, with almost 3 decades in the biz, some may incorrectly surmise that he is now just performing a job – going through the motions. Not only is that incorrect, but it couldn't be farther from the truth. One listen to his latest release *You, Me and Forever*, and you'll see my point. For confirmation, the saxman states, "What keeps me going in this business is that no two days are ever the same. This is fun for me. I no longer consider what I do a job." I think that most devout Najee followers figured that out a long time ago.

Here on a very eclectic project where he invites the likes of piano wizards/composers James Lloyd and Kenny G's musical director Robert Damper, producer guru Chris "Big Dog" Davis, vocalist Frank McComb, and longtime associate/collaborator guitarist/vocalist Chuck Johnson to contribute, there's enough color and vibrancy for anyone who listens.

After a great flute demonstration on the jazzy sophisticated lead track "Air," Najee nails an Alex Bugnon-penned/ Chris Davis-produced and tweaked piece called "Fly With the Wind," a hot, funky, bluesy jam with much swagger.

Similar to "Air" in many ways, Najee again lets his eloquent flute do the talking – or singing (as he does often here) – on "Wave" with Damper. There's such a magical, majestic feel to this number that you can't help becoming influenced by its lilting loveliness.

The solidly impressive cover of David Pack and Ambrosia's classic "The Biggest Part of Me" with Chuck Johnson doing a stellar job on vocals clearly illustrates the magnificence of the eclecticism that Najee has poured into this recording.

"The CD reflects my need as an artist to show the different facets of my musical personality," he offers. "I enjoy the challenge of recording music that can be commercially accessible and diverse at the same time."



There's funk, cool jazz, exoticism, and more to be enjoyed here. As usual, there are no disappointments anywhere to be found as the prolific artist again dons another feather in his already overly decorated cap. – *Ronald Jackson*