

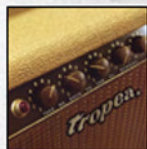


JazzTimes

AMERICA'S JAZZ MAGAZINE

TROPEA

Take Me Back To The Ol' School (STP)



If there's a recent CD with a more apt title than this one, let's hear it. John Tropea, whose fuzzy and piercing guitar soloing was heard everywhere on Deodato's popular first two CDs, as well as on numerous albums by Harry Chapin, Paul Simon, Eric Clapton and others since, offers a new retro-cool CD with good friend and hipster bassist Will Lee assisting on four originals. There's delectably bouncy smooth ("Cuban Nights," "Cute Song"), slowed-down blues chill ("Close But No Guitar") and funky organ things (the title track).

What you want to hear, though, are the divergent five covers: Stevie Wonder's "You Are My Heaven" with Lee and Lalah Hathaway trading vocal leads; Charlie Parker's "Donna Lee" as rigorous fun, with soloing by Tropea, Peterson and saxophonist Ronnie Cuber; Eddie Kendricks' "Keep on Truckin' (Baby)," with Lee's *Late Show With David Letterman* cohort and fellow New York cool dude Paul Shaffer on clavinet; Marvin Gaye's reharmonized "Let's Get It On"; and the Beatles' "The Long and Winding Road," lovingly presented as a jazz ballad with Hathaway.

Take me back, too. **JT**

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