



WITH GRANT GREEN / PAUL CHAMBERS / PHILLY JOE JONES

STEREO
THE FINEST IN JAZZ SINCE 1939

84098 BLUE NOTE

*BLUE &
SENTIMENTAL
IKE
QUEBEC*



STEREO

Blue Note ST-84098

BLUE AND SENTIMENTAL IKE QUEBEC

IKE QUEBEC, tenor sax; GRANT GREEN, guitar;
PAUL CHAMBERS, bass; PHILLY JOE JONES, drums.

BLUE AND SENTIMENTAL
MINOR IMPULSE
DON'T TAKE YOUR LOVE FROM ME

BLUES FOR CHARLIE
LIKE
COUNT EVERY STAR

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The most recent rediscovery is perhaps the happiest of all for Blue Note because of the personal relationship which has existed between the company and the musician for a long time. Actually, it is not so much a rediscovery, for although Ike Quebec did not record for Blue Note from the mid 1940s (*Blue Harlem*, *Facin' the Face*, *Mad About You*, etc.) until he did some 45s in 1959 and 1960, Alfred Lion of Blue Note kept in touch with him. On a Sonny Clark date (*Leapin' and Lopin'*—BN 4091) Quebec made a guest appearance on one number. His full, warm performance on *Deep in a Dream* was perhaps the convincer needed for Blue Note to record him in a set of his own. What followed was *Heavy Soul* (BN 4093) which served everyone notice that he was back!

Heavy Soul was done in the company of Freddie Roach, an organist who is anything but heavy; bassist Milt Hinton, a compatriot from Ike's days with the Cab Calloway orchestra; and dependable Al Harewood, the unobtrusive, steady drummer, most often heard on Blue Note with Horace Parlan.

For *Blue and Sentimental*, the supporting cast is completely changed. The bass-drums team consists of the combination which meshed so well in the Miles Davis group on so many occasions—Paul Chambers and Philly Joe Jones. Instead of organ, there is the guitar of Grant Green, one of the bright new lights on his instrument and a Blue Note recording star in his own right. On one number, *Count Every Star*, Sonny Clark is at the piano, returning Ike's visit to his date. Sonny, however, is not heard in solo.

Any other time you hear a piano in the background, it is being played by Quebec, who started his musical explorations on that instrument long before he joined the Barons of Rhythm on tenor in 1940.

Like the majority of musicians who grew up in the big bands of the 1930s and the early 1940s, Quebec has a large, rich sound and an ability to play with other musicians, no matter whether the group be large or small. The knowledge and experience he brings to his instrument are things a musician cannot go out and buy. That combination of strength and tenderness, each called on specifically when needed, is not something acquired in a few years, either. Ike Quebec is old enough to have had the playing time and young enough in his thinking not to be dated.

In 1954, when the original edition of Leonard Feather's *Encyclopedia of Jazz* was being prepared, Quebec answered the "favorites" section of his questionnaire with Coleman Hawkins, Ben Webster and Stan Getz. Certainly, his general area of reference would be the Hawkins "school" but as Feather pointed out in the notes to *Heavy Soul*, it was evident in the 1940s that Ike had developed a personality of his own. Even his occasional and most welcome rasps are different than the similar effect that Ben Webster uses.

Quebec's style has undergone modernization since the mid-40s but in no abrupt or drastic manner. His admiration for Getz is not reflected in his playing and a mid-50s penchant for Sonny Rollins (I heard him playing in a Rollins groove one night at the Cafe Bohemia in 1955) does not seem to have remained. There are times when he coincides with Gene Ammons as they seem to meet at the same intersection from their parallel but different roads. Basically, Ike is himself and this is praiseworthy in itself. His playing represents the best of a period considered to be one of the most fruitful in jazz and certainly one of its most melodious. The last quality is something that is most welcome today, both for itself and as a leavener.

Ballads are a forte; Quebec's province, you might say. Ike does three lovely ballads here, including the title number which leads off the set. As a ballad balance, he has added two tunes of his own, the swinging *Minor Impulse* and *Like*. They fall between the sentimental of *Blue and Sentimental*, *Don't Take Your*

Love from Me and *Count Every Star*, and the *Blues for Charlie*, Grant Green's tribute to Charlie Christian.

Blue and Sentimental is a tender rendition by Quebec which will put you in mind, in several places, of Count Basie's famous version featuring Herschel Evans and Lester Young. Most of all, it is Ike, pouring his heart into and out of his horn in a moving performance.

Minor Impulse, as its title implies, is in a minor key. It swings in a medium groove with fine solos by the wide-toned Quebec, the facile Green and Chambers. Notice the ease with which Ike swings.

Don't Take Your Love from Me is a seldom-played ballad from the '40s which Quebec happily revives. Ike's closing solo, after Green has made his point, demonstrates how he can be interesting at even the slowest tempo, a tempo which might drag in less capable hands.

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Green's clear, singing single-line opens *Count Every Star* with Clark filling in quietly behind him. This is really Grant's vehicle for Quebec only has a short, albeit effective, solo before the guitarist returns.

Speaking of returns, it must be obvious to all by now that Ike's comeback is one of the most welcome in a long time. For those of you who have been laboring under the misapprehension that Quebec was in Canada, let me give you a little geography lesson. Montreal may be in Quebec, but Quebec is in New York and Blue Note's got him. Ike's got rhythm. Who could ask for anything more?

—IRA GITLER

Photo by FRANCIS WOLFF
Cover Design by REID MILES
Recording by RUDY VAN GELDER
Users of Wide Range equipment should adjust their controls for RIAA curve.

IKE QUEBEC

IKE QUEBEC, tenor sax; GRANT GREEN, guitar; PAUL CHAMBERS (#1-5,7,8),
SAM JONES (#6), bass; PHILLY JOE JONES (#1-5,7,8),
LOUIS HAYES (#6), drums; SONNY CLARK (#6), piano.

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Original Liner Notes

Produced by Alfred Lion.

Cover & Liner photograph by Francis Wolff.

Cover design by Reid Miles.

Recorded & remastered (2007) by Rudy Van Gelder.

Recorded at Van Gelder's Studios, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey on December 16, 1961 and December 23, 1961 (#6).

Tracks 1-6 originally issued in 1963 on Blue Note BST 84098.

Tracks 7 & 8 originally issued in 1988 on the first CD issue of this album.

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IKE QUEBEC

Influenced by Coleman Hawkins and Ben Webster but definitely his own person, Ike Quebec was one of the finest swing-oriented tenor saxman of the 1940s and '50s. Though he was never an innovator, Quebec had a big, breathy sound that was distinctive and easily recognizable, and he was quite consistent when it came to down-home blues, sexy ballads, and up-tempo aggression. Originally a pianist, Quebec switched to tenor in the early '40s and showed that he had made the right decision on excellent 78s for Blue Note and Savoy (including his hit "Blue Harlem"). As a sideman, he worked with Benny Carter, Kenny Clarke, Roy Eldridge, and Cab Calloway. In the late '40s, the saxman did a bit of freelancing behind the scenes as a Blue Note A&R man and brought Thelonious Monk and Bud Powell to the label. Drug problems kept Quebec from recording for most of the 1950s, but he made a triumphant comeback in the early '60s and was once again recording for Blue Note and doing freelance A&R for the company. Quebec was playing as authoritatively as ever well into 1962, giving no indication that he was suffering from lung cancer, which claimed his life at the age of 44 in 1963.

—Alex Henderson



BLUE AND SENTIMENTAL

Ike Quebec's 1961-1962 comeback albums for Blue Note were all pretty rewarding, but *Blue and Sentimental* is his signature statement of the bunch, a superbly sensuous blend of lusty blues swagger and aching romantic ballads. True, there's no shortage of that on Quebec's other Blue Note dates, but *Blue and Sentimental* is the most exquisitely perfected. Quebec was a master of mood and atmosphere, and the well-paced program here sustains his smoky, late-night magic with the greatest consistency of tone. Part of the reason is that Quebec's caressing tenor sound is given a sparser backing than usual, with no pianist among the quartet of guitarist Grant Green, bassist Paul Chambers, and drummer Philly Joe Jones. It's no surprise that Green solos with tremendous taste and elegance (the two also teamed up on Green's similarly excellent *Born to Be Blue*), and there are plenty of open spaces in the ensemble for Quebec to shine through. His rendition of the Count Basie-associated title cut is a classic, and the other standard on the original LP, "Don't Take Your Love from Me," is in a similarly melancholy vein. Green contributes a classic-style blues in "Blues for Charlie," and Quebec's two originals, "Minor Impulse" and "Like," have more complex chord changes but swing low and easy. Through it all, Quebec remains the quintessential seducer, striking just the right balance between sophistication and earthiness, confidence and vulnerability, joy and longing. It's enough to make *Blue and Sentimental* a quiet, sorely underrated masterpiece. [Some reissues add three bonus cuts, all standards, which fit the program very nicely indeed.]

—Steve Huey

