

Cadence (USA) August 2010 by David Franklin

From the jaunty, two-beat humor of “Turkey Walk” that opens the album to the high seriousness of “Achilles” that closes it, the Dutch saxophonist/composer Ad Colen’s music exhibits many moods. There is also the contrast between the funky “Carjive” and dancing “Bicicletta” on the one hand, with the moody soprano-piano duet “Lost and Found” and pensive, folkish “Free” on the other. Colen composed or co-wrote all of them but one and his techniques are as varied as his moods. Straight-ahead four-four swing alternates with odd mixed meters. Simple forms alternate with more complex ones. Colen adds flute to the quartet on two tracks and guitar on another to vary the overall sound.

Whatever the ambiance, the music is well-conceived and interesting and the improvisations top quality. Colen plays swinging tenor in a somewhat Rollinsesque manner (his soprano is generally reserved for the more pensive tracks) and his colleagues operate in a mode and at a level consistent with his own.

Ad Colen is an experienced performer whose previous CDs have received positive reviews. This one should also.

David Franklin