Mp3 Morgan Bouldin - Wide Open Spaces



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Smooth jazz interwoven with electronics, a dash of funk and r&B to create landscapes of carefully crafted sound. 11 MP3 Songs JAZZ: Smooth Jazz, URBAN/R&B: Contemporary urban Details: Another inventive keyboardist, Texan Morgan Bouldin, offers a nexus of styles-from tribal to jazz to modern funk, tracing Afro history and influence in music and story, on Wide Open Spaces. Bouldin draws on his musical vocabulary to build natural, theme-supportive arrangements, like the classic-style R&B tones of "Funny Face," with its step-up rhythms and vintage, bright organ sounds, and the lumbering groove and bittersweet, moody tones surrounding "Emptiness Is Sometimes a Good Thing." Among the best examples is the heavily textured "Washing the Spears," which peppers a walking-funk feel and deep-in-your-chest bass with spindly guitar accents, trumpet calls and chant vocals for a bracing, timeless quality. Bouldin's centerpiece here, the complicated story-song "We Like to Run (The Battle of Isandhlwana)," carries this universality further-meshing jazz piano and R&B features with heavy hip-hop grooves and a rap lead to convey the epic struggle of the Zulu army against British forces with power and grace. -Hilarie S. Grey "...Offers a nexus of styles - from tribal to jazz to modern funk, tracing Afro history and influence in music and story...with power and grace..." - Jazz Times May 2002 Issue ..."Jazz Musician Gives Back to the Community"...2002 Houston Forward Times"Wide Open Spaces showcases Bouldin's evolving power as a composer of both instrumentals and lyric-based songs, most of which radiate an urban sound that blurs the line between smooth jazz and contemporary R&B"....Houston Press "He carries you into a place that feels exotic and peaceful"... Lake Charles American Press "A variety of influences sets this CD apart from the kind of smooth jazz discs that aspire to background music and nothing more"...San Antonio Express-News"A fresh collection of modern smooth jazz grooves, tinged with elements of R&B, funk and Afro-fusion"....Houston Forward Times "...Bouldin's new

album spotlights the rise and fall of Shaka Zulu..." HoustonPress "...Morgan's keyboard work is venturesome and distinctive..." Houston Forward Times "...the been-there, done-that Houston keyboardist finds a home in a house of the rising sun ..." HoustonPress Wide Open Spaces, his second CD, is a fine document of that philosophy. Consisting of ten new Bouldin compositions (plus one cover), the album showcases his evolving power as a composer of both instrumentals and lyric-based songs, most of which radiate an urban sound that blurs the line between smooth jazz and contemporary R&B. The disc is also inspired by the interplay of two themes, one connected to basic psychology and the other to African history. The former notion is best exemplified in the title track as well as in "Emptiness Is Sometimes a Good Thing," both of which evoke a need for distance in order to improve perspective. On the other hand, "Washing the Spears," "A Good Day to Die (Dawn Interlude)" and "We Like to Run (The Battle of Isandhlwana)" are products of what Bouldin calls his "Afro-fusion thing," inspired by his fascination with military history in general and with the 19th-century triumphs and defeats of the Zulus in particular. "The African stuff just came from the beat that I started with," he says. "I had studied about Shaka Zulu, so when I found this beat, it all came together. I didn't really plan. The beat just took me there." The album also features guest appearances by some heavy hitters, including trumpeter Barrie Lee Hall (formerly of the Duke Ellington Orchestra), trombonist Frank Lacy Jr., saxophonist Eric Demmer, guitarists Joe Carmouche and I.J. Gosey, and vocalist Monae, among others. Bouldin himself delivers impeccable keyboard work that ranges from electric piano to acoustic piano to organ to synthesizer. He also -- for the first time on record -- sings lead vocals on two tracks. "I love everything about music -- the business, the performance -- but the creativity, making my own original compositions and developing, that's really what it's all about to me," Bouldin says. Satisfied since striking out on his own, he concludes, "I'm in a groove now, and I'm not worried about my ultimate destination in music. I'm just enjoying the trip."

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