

## Mp3 Mark Little - Isn't Art It!



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Impressive technique, a broad harmonic vocabulary, a sensitive feel for phrasing. Performs with consuming intensity and yet compelling sensitivity. A master of anthem jazz and a master of expressive nuance. 11 MP3 Songs JAZZ: Traditional Jazz Combo, BLUES: Texas Style Details: Mark Little Biography "Little displays deep understanding of Jazz's mainstream modes. Classicism slip through too." Jazz Times Jazz Pianist, arranger, composer, recording artist: these words define this extraordinary musician... and his talents. He brings acoustic, straight-ahead jazz into the future with contemporary chordings and fresh arrangements. Jazziz describes his style as likable "modern mainstream." asked to describe his own music, Little shifts the focus to other musicians who especially move him: Rachmaninoff, Mozart, Bill Evans (with whom he studied), Hampton Hawes, Martial Solal, Steve Kuhn, Keith Jarrett, Jaki Byard... Horowitz. "I give up on trying to tell you how my group sounds," he says, "but I can tell you that it's way beyond technique. When it's right I feel liberated, free to play the cards as they fall, to let the spirit move through me. That's why I play music." While he plays,gospel,blues,pop,country and western equally well, he prefers jazz because it is,in his words, "music with spirit." Perhaps his attraction to the spirit of jazz is so strong because his musical foundation was established "in the church" in Amarillo,Texas,where he was born and raised. Little began piano lessons at the age of four,studying with the director of his church choir. Mastering the music quickly,he played by rote and then,flying in the face of tradition,he expanded with his own versions. Far from putting down her students as a musical vandal,his teacher enthusiastically encouraged him toward further innovation, a path Little has pursued ever since. Mark played his first professional gig at six years of age. He joined an R B group when he was 14,touring with them for four years. Moving from Amarillo to Austin in 1970, he began playing country and western with Willie Nelson,among others. But he was drawn to jazz, understandably, since he had always been an

improviser. He received a scholarship from Berklee School of Music where he studied with teachers such as Bill Evans and Madame Chaloff (mystical, charismatic mother of the late baritone saxist, Serge Chaloff) He returned in 1975 to teach there. In 1980, he migrated to the West Coast. His first performance was at the legendary Keystone Corner in San Francisco. The next year was a jazz pianist's dream as he played with a host of jazz greats who appeared at the Keystone. Little became the pianist of choice for Cleo Laine and John Dankworth, working with them at such prestigious venues as Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center in New York City, the Opera House in San Francisco, and Dorothy Chandler Pavilion in Los Angeles. Their concert at Royal Albert Hall in London was recorded and featured on the Cavalcade of Stars series on PBS. He composed and arranged for Bobby McFerrin, as well as performing with him at the Playboy Jazz Festival in Los Angeles. He toured the United States and Europe with Maria Muldaur, working at Fat Tuesday's in New York City and Ronnie Scott's in London, among other places. On tour with Art Farmer and Clifford Jordan, Mark played the hottest clubs on the West Coast including Yoshi's in San Francisco East Bay. As pianist and musical director for the group African Roots of Jazz, he performed for Winnie and Nelson Mandela. In 1990, he was named Outstanding Jazz/Blues Instrumentalist by the San Francisco Council on Entertainment. Little has worked with a multitude of eminent jazz artists, including Joe Henderson, Pharoah Sanders, Grady Tate, Eddie Henderson, Calvin Keys, Morgana King, Joe Lovano, Ted Curson, Shorty Rogers, Chico Freeman, Bobby Hutcherson, and Steve Mien. He recorded his first album a leader-dreamwalk'n -with saxophonist Alex Murzyn, bassist Tim Hauff and drummer Curt Moore. A beautiful and intriguing mixture of exciting up-tempo tunes, jazz standards, rollicking Brazilian rhythms, gospel, and touching ballads, reflecting Mark Little's eclectic good taste in music, it received accolades, from fans and reviewers. Dreamwalk'n (MR 1001) was the first release on Monarch Records. Little's second CD on the Monarch label, The Tribe, an October 1995 release, was recorded live-in-the-studio featuring the same musicians as dreamwalk'n with the exception of Peter Barshay on bass. Keyboard magazine's Bob Doershouch says, "In quartet, trio and solo settings on original tunes and other repertoire, Little plays with exceptional sensitivity on this disc... The Tribe welcomes Mark Little to the front ranks of jazz piano." Mark's third CD, "Birthright" is a solo live performance, recorded at Maybeck Studios. This is the first recording for Cara Little Music, which is Mark's independent label. "Herewith a couple of sentences as promised. Congratulations on "Birthright," and the best of luck with it! "Mark Little's spirited playing amply demonstrates his total immersion in the music he

loves, not to mention his wholehearted commitment to it. His fluent improvisations explore ever-changing routes with a surprise around nearly every corner; they sometimes display extraordinary virtuosity and sometimes almost disarming simplicity, yet are never devoid of interest. He shows himself to be an exciting performer whose work is still developing; this bodes well for the future of this highly individual artiste." John Dankworth Little's brand new CD for 2003, isn't art it! are all of his original compositions. Showing is mastery of composition and melodic harmonizing; a totally inspirational, moving expression of Little's versatility of styles and creativity. A pianist with heart and soul; moves you with every note.

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