



July/August/September 2015
By Bob Rusch

CHARLES MCPHERSON [as] made his recording debut back in 1960 and has rarely led a session where he shared the front line with another sax, preferring (when sharing) it to be a trumpet. On THE JOURNEY [Capri 74136] he leads a quintet [Chip Stephens-p, Ken Walker-b, Todd Reid-dms] and shares the front line with tenor man, Keith Oxman. As Sonny Stitt was burdened by the shadow of Bird, McPherson, a generation later, was in Parker's shadow when he started out. It's not a bad shadow to be in but it's a two edged sword. Over the years McPherson has honed a harder rough tone while retaining the Parker fluency. He has a track record for making excellent bop records. The group and label are familiar to the Denver, Colorado area. They are sprightly and support McPherson well, especially Chip Stephens whose solos are pronounced and fresh. Nine cuts including standards [Spring is Here, Au Privave, I Should Care] and some fine originals [The Decathexis From Youth (by Stephens), Manhattan Nocturne (by McPherson)] make up the program. McPherson up to date.