

# Editors' Picks

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BY BOBBY REED

## Bill Warfield & The Hell's Kitchen Funk Orchestra, *Mercy, Mercy, Mercy*

(Blujazz)

Many listeners would rather boogie than concentrate. On the new album with his Hell's Kitchen Funk Orchestra, trumpeter/bandleader Bill Warfield offers some tracks that would be irrefutable additions to a party mix, including hip-shaking renditions of "Mercy, Mercy, Mercy" (the Cannonball Adderley Quintet

hit written by Joe Zawinul) and "Fire" (the Ohio Players' 1974 funk masterpiece). The band's name reflects a mixture of street smarts, diversity and danceable rhythms, all of which come to play on a fiery rendition of the Tito Puente tune "Fiesta A La King." The dance-party vibe takes a sophisticated turn on Warfield and drummer Scott Neumann's Afro-Cuban-influenced arrangement of Fats Waller's "Jitterbug Waltz," wherein the horn charts are like a mighty wave that will make listeners forget all their troubles. The band delves deep into funk/fusion territory with a rendition of the Randy Brecker tune "Some Skunk Funk," and then swings like a gate on "Cry Me A River," featuring a roaring organ solo by Jakub Zomer. The instrumentation on every track features alto sax, tenor sax and two trumpets, with the addition of bass trombonist Dan Magan on two songs. Warfield doesn't offer anything overly complicated on these octet and nonet recordings, but that doesn't mean the music lacks complexity. Sometimes it takes a highly intelligent musician to propel you onto the dance floor.

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