

# JazzTimes

AMERICA'S JAZZ MAGAZINE

All Hail  
the New  
**KING** of  
**LATIN**  
**JAZZ!**



## FRED HUGHES

### *No Turning Back*

Summit DCD 297 (70:17)

Good title. Considering the talent, technique and taste Fred Hughes displays in this, his first album for Summit as a leader, he would have no earthly reason for turning back. There are three more "T"s" to add: touch, treble and time. As heard in his single-note intros to "Joy Spring" and "My Romance," Hughes loves to toy with the melody in the treble and take some fascinating liberties with the pulse. For "All the Things You Are," it takes a misterioso intro before the Kern classic emerges, surprisingly, in 3/4, with outstanding, Iikeminded support from bassist Steve Zerlin and drummer Frank Russo.

Nothing mysterious about "It's Easy to Remember": Hughes states the theme honestly and directly, again in the treble, and rhythmic support eases him into a lovely, pensive exploration of the tune. Talk about pensive: Clare Fischer's "Pensativa" gets a full-bodied bossa nova workout, building gradually into an exciting Latin swinger, thanks to Russo's busy accents. Zerlin contributes a number of memorable solos— particularly in "Lover Man" where early on he contributes a crucial octave leap behind Hughes. The chemistry between bass and piano is obvious from the very outset.

Regarding the very outset, Hughes cleverly interpolates "Secret Love" into the head of "Joy Spring"—which leads to a hope that he stays in the mainstream. The final three tracks, all originals (including an unacknowledged 11th track), are much less subtle with Russo switching to the sledgehammer two and four of rock.

—Harvey Siders

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