



We couldn't really have asked for a more mellow starting point this month than **MILT JACKSON'S Ballads & Blues** (★★★★). SPEAKERS CORNER LP. Recorded in 1956 and originally released on

Atlantic the following year, produced by Tom Dowd and with arrangements by Ralph Burns, *Ballads & Blues* finds the Modern Jazz Quartet vibraphonist moonlighting from his regular gig and continuing his parallel career as a solo artist in the company of both fellow and former MJQ members John Lewis, Percy Heath, Kenny Clarke and a host of other sidemen including Barney Kessel and Oscar Pettiford as he plays his way through a programme of standards by Cole Porter, Duke Ellington, Irving Berlin and Jerome Klein complimented by three original compositions. With Side One devoted to the ballads side of the equation and Side Two the blues this is the consummate and classy sound of late '50s cool brought to life by one of the masters of the vibes.