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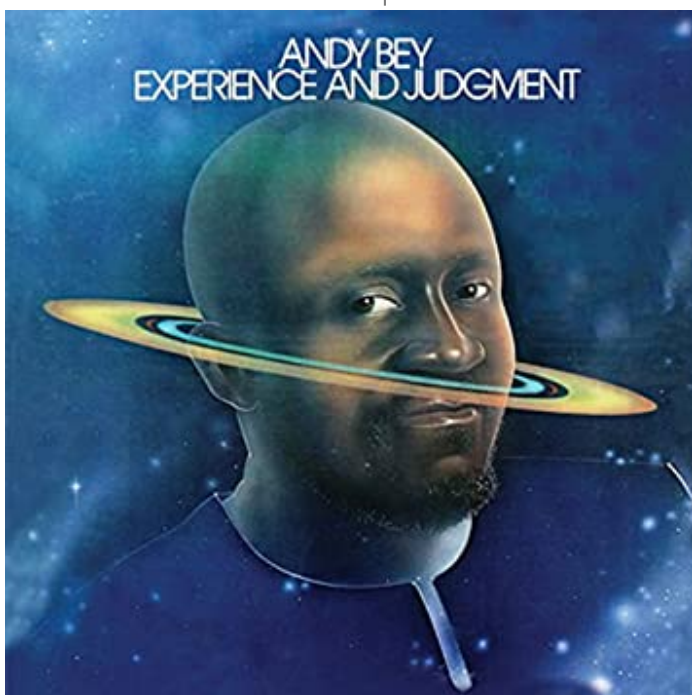
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Andy Bey – Experience And Judgement – Speakers Corner Records

by Audiophile Audition | Feb 5, 2022 | Jazz CD Reviews, SACD & Other Hi-Res Reviews | 0 comments



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Andy Bey – Experience And Judgement – Atlantic Records SD 1654 (1974)/Speakers Corner Records (2022) 180-gram stereo vinyl, 41:43 ****:

(Andy Bey – piano, vocals; Bill Fischer – keyboards, percussion; George Davis – guitar; Richard Resnicoff – guitar; Wilbur Bascomb – bass; Selwart Clarke – violin, viola; Buddy Williams – drums; Jimmy Young – drums; Ira “Buddy” Williams – drums)

Speakers Corner Records has released a re-mastered 180-gram vinyl of Andy Bey’s 1974 Atlantic debut, *Experience And Judgement*. Bey first garnered attention with his sisters on the RCA Victor album *Andy And The Bey Sisters*. They also performed on two Kenny Burrell albums (*Now!Hear!*; *Round Midnight*). Additionally, Bey has worked with Gary Bartz, Stanley Clarke, Gerry Eastman, Max Roach, Louis Jordan and Horace Silver. His four-octave baritone captured the essence of soul and he created a sound that was a precursor to funk.

Experience And Judgment is a groove-filled, succinct 12-song collection of cosmic soul. Side A opens with the pulse-driven spiritual urgency of “Celestial Blues”. With a smooth, hypnotic vamp, Bey pleads for universal awareness as a means of self-discovery. His emotional vocals are compelling, supported by a funky arrangement. Bey’s philosophical musings continue with the jazzier up tempo “Experience”. All of the requisite 70’s instrumentation is there, including spacey keyboards and crisp guitar lines. Again, the vocals are the center of focus, and deservedly so. The musical intensity gets amped up on “Judgement”. There is a relentless funky downbeat, acid-laden guitar and occasional chord changes that articulate the sincere plea for people to “get it together”. Atmospheric glossiness pervades “I Know This Love Can’t Be Wrong”. This arrangement is textured with strings, nasty guitar

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and a head-nodding acknowledgement to love. There is a great fade and re-start in the last minute. In a change of place (“Hibiscus”), Bey flexes his deeper baritone and the musicians back him up with a mellow “space jam”. It is looser with sonic diffusion and Bey extends his vocal range with confidence. Slow-groove dynamics inhabit “You Should Have Seen The Way”. This is an example of a full song getting realized in two-and-a-half minutes.

The psychedelic soul continues on Side B with the halting tempos and aspirational consciousness of “Tune Up”. His natural flowing vocal style meshes well with the understated jagged guitar. The structure is repetitive, but fits the artistic vision. For those with an appreciation for relaxed soul, “Rosemary Blue” is authentic. Bey’s deliberate lower-register delivery is reminiscent of 70’s singer’s. The music is pure r & b. Picking up the pace, “Being Uptight” is updated blues with jazzy syncopation. This might be Bey’s most nimble vocals as he matches the instrumental stylishness. Downshifting the momentum, “A Place Where Love Is” feels laid back, with gospel-laden aesthetics that radiate warmth. There are always subtle jazz nuances that make these songs fresh. “Trust Us To Find The Way” has a breezy countenance to translate Bey’s positive vibe. In a suitable finale, “The Power Of My Mind” exudes a silky resonance that defines “sweet, sweet soul”. Bey is adept at distilling the core elements of spirituality reflected through the prism of hook-driven riffs and deep, moving vocals.

Kudos to Speakers Corner Records for shining a light on an under-appreciated musical artist. This re-mastered vinyl has a vibrant overall mix with great stereo separation. This vinyl pressing is excellent with no hisses or pops.

TrackList:*Side A:*

Celestial Blues;

Experience;

Judgement;

I Know This Love Can’t Be Wrong;

Hibiscus;

Dec 30, 2021

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You Should Have Seen The Way

Side B:

Tune Up;

Rosemary Blue;

Being Uptight;

A Place Where Love Is;

Trust Us To Find The Way;

The Power Of My Mind.

—Robbie Gerson

