

COLIN VALLON TRIO

AILLEURS

Le Paradis Perdu; Babylone; Swing Low; Souris; Trenke; Todorke; Sous-Marin; Je Ne Sais Pas; Robots; Zombie; Mardi; Quand Meme; Elle (56.45)

Colin Vallon (p); Pat Moret (b); Samuel Rohrer (d). Cologne, February 27 and 28, 2006

(hatOLOGY 636)

According to sleeve-note writer Tom Gsteiger, if Schubert were alive today 'he would probably be a passionate jazz pianist' – like the French-Swiss Colin Vallon, whose stirring Romanticism of approach (e.g. the full-chorded power and pianistic range of the well-grooved but also off-centred *Babylone*, penetrating ballad reading of *Sais Pas* and tender rubato touches of *Elle*) includes many an atmospheric sub-

tlety of texture, accent and space, as in the opening *Perdu*, *Sous Marin* and *Meme*. Vallon can stretch out plenty when he so wishes – and rock, as on *Zombie* – but he's also partial to a rewarding miniaturism and judicious use of prepared piano sounds eg the Garnelan-like, lightly popping *Souris* and Dada-oriented *Robots*. The breadth of Vallon's sense of dynamics and form is matched by the range of the programme, which besides its affecting and characterful originals includes Bulgarian folk song (*Trenke*) and Brel (*Sais*) as well the time-worn spiritual *Swing Low* – refreshed here in a reading of patient, probing depth. A new name to me, Vallon (born 1980) is a graduate of the Swiss Jazz School and has been leading this trio since 1999. I have had occasion to remark drummer Rohrer's excellence before, in his work on ECM with vocalist Susanne Abbuehl and pianist Wolfert Brederode; Moret is no slouch either, and together they help the excellent Vallon shape an album of genuine distinction.

Michael Tucker