

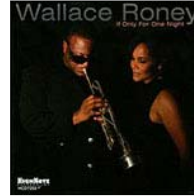


If Only for One Night

Wallace Roney | HighNote Records

By [John Kelman](#)

Wallace Roney's six-year association with HighNote--beginning with *Prototype* (2004), followed by *Mystikal* (2005), and culminating with *Jazz* (2007)--has allowed the trumpeter to amass a body of work far more indicative of where he's always wanted to be than his largely mainstream run with Muse in the early 1990s. *If Only for One Night*--culled from a four-night run at New York's Iridium--continues to paint a broader picture of an artist for whom the lifelong arc of [Miles Davis](#) remains an influence, but one distanced from mere mimicry through greater technical facility and an all-encompassing approach to collating a broad set of interests that's in sharp contrast with Davis' more linear evolutionary approach.



Most telling is Roney's statement in Francis Davis' liner notes. "I'm not sure Miles had to give up what he already had to get where he was going," says Roney, referencing Davis' well-documented and lifelong rejection of what came before. Unlike most for whom the spirit of Davis looms large, rather than focusing on a single period, Roney integrates aspects spanning Davis' four-decade run, as well as touchstones from the work of [John Coltrane](#) and [Herbie Hancock](#).

With longtime musical partner/brother/saxophonist [Antoine](#) and bassist Rashaan Carter back from *Jazz*, what's most striking is how seamlessly Roney's quintet navigates the broad stylistic markers demanded by both the original material and covers ranging from Hancock's still modernistic-sounding "I Have a Dream," from *The Prisoner* (Blue Note, 1969) to a darker look at Brenda Russell's lyrical title track (made famous by Luther Vandross), and [Tony Williams'](#) "Only With You," which rivals the rhythmic intensity and effervescent swing of the original on *Angel Street* (Blue Note, 1988), when Roney was a member of the late drummer's quintet.

Roney's quintet is as comfortable with an even fierier take of *Prototype's* fusion-esque "Quadrant" as it is the intensely swinging "Metropolis," from *No Room For Argument* (Stretch, 2000)--two originals that demonstrate the trumpeter's acute ability to fashion an eclectic nexus--one clearly hidden to his mentor--where all his innovations meet. Roney's chops have never been more exhilarating or tastefully focused, whether waxing prolific on "Metropolis" or more intently thematic on his closing, *a capella* "FMS."

The group's youngest members demonstrate Roney's ever-astute skill in locating unknown but remarkable talent. Cuban keyboardist [Aruán Ortiz](#) organically combines synth washes, choppy organ and Hancock-like clavinet to accompany Wallace and Antoine Roney's fiercely funkified solos on "Quadrant," but turns to acoustic piano for his own impressive solo, while drummer Kush Abadey merges contemporary rhythms and post-bop elasticity throughout, his fluid, less-direct approach turning Davis' "I Love What We Do Together" (previously only recorded as a demo by Davis in the mid-'80s) from what might have been slicker fare into something that relentlessly grows from a simmer to a boil.

With even greater emphasis on high powered blowing and group chemistry than recent studio efforts, *If Only for One Night* is the live album Roney's been harboring for the past several years and further consolidation of where he's been...and where he's going.

Track Listing: Quadrant; If Only for One Night; Only With You; I Have a Dream; Metropolis; Let's Wait Awhile; I Love What We Make Together; FMS.

Personnel: Wallace Roney: trumpet; Antoine Roney: soprano and tenor saxophones, bass clarinet; Aruán Ortiz: keyboards; Rashaan Carter: bass; Kush Abadey: drums.

Wallace Roney: If Only for One Night

(High Note)

4 / 5



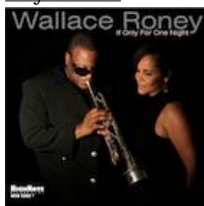
John Fordham

guardian.co.uk, Thursday 22 April 2010 23.30 BST

[A larger](#) | [smaller](#)

Buy it from 

Buy the CD



Wallace Roney
If Only for One Night

Highnote

2010

As the excellent Village Voice columnist Francis Davis remarks in the insert, trumpeter Wallace Roney's rare secret – despite all his Miles Davis connections, personal and musical – lies in "confronting (Miles's) massive influence whole". Roney (*below*) and his fine young band would have played Ronnie Scott's this week but for volcanic intervention, and on the evidence of this live recording from New York's Iridium club, the reschedule will be well worth the wait. Plenty of trumpeters play Miles's notes, and get close to his sound – but Roney goes deeper, because he also shares the uncanny timing and dramatic instincts, and the vision to conceive a moment-to-moment improvised solo as a narrative whole. The opening Quadrant has a post-Bitches Brew electric feel, while the title track evokes the Miles of My Funny Valentine but turns funky. Only With You is jazzier and more Art Blakey-like, Metropolis recalls the mid-1950s Davis quintet and the Janet Jackson vehicle Let's Wait Awhile is a delicious piece of trumpet-ballad sensuality.

Wallace Roney: If Only for One Night

Print

By Mike Hobart

Published: May 1 2010 02:00 | Last updated: May 1 2010 02:00

Wallace Roney

If Only for One Night

(High Note)



Wallace Roney's acoustic quintet develops the linear freedoms and harmonic disciplines of Miles Davis's classic 60s model – Roney understudied Davis in the trumpeter's final years – and adds dark urban flavours for contemporary edge.

Brother Antoine Roney is a long-standing, suitably oblique frontline partner on tenor and soprano saxophones and the young rhythm section rattle, clatter and swish in the modern manner.

Roney is a forceful and atmospheric trumpeter, stretching out in sympathetic company, his rounded tone perfectly captured by this live club recording.

[Copyright](#) The Financial Times Limited 2010. Print a single copy of this article for personal use. [Contact us](#) if you wish to print more to distribute to others.

AUDIOPHILE AUDITION

Wallace Roney – If Only for One Night – HighNote

Wallace Roney reveals his many-sided character on his first live album, If Only for One Night.



Wallace Roney – If Only for One Night – HighNote HCD 7202, 61:35

*****1/2:**

(Wallace Roney – trumpet, co-producer; Antoine Roney – soprano and tenor saxophones, bass clarinet; Aruán Ortiz – keyboards; Rashaan Carter – bass; Kush Abadey – drums)

Trumpeter Wallace Roney presents all aspects of his musicianship on *If Only for One Night*, his first live album. During the hour long, eight track outing recorded over four days in summer 2009 at New York City's famed jazz venue, The Iridium Jazz Club, Roney and his quartet successfully move from bop territory to contemporary pop-slanted compositions, providing fans with a set that showcases Roney's multi-hued personality.

Much, too much in fact, has been said about Roney's association with and influence by Miles Davis. Suffice to say, Roney does share many Davis inclinations, but what of it? There's plenty of Miles Davis in many of today's jazz artists. Yet, listeners can find Roney echoing his old friend and mentor throughout these proceedings. Opener "Quadrant" is a good example. The tune has a funky jazz fusion arrangement that brings to mind Davis' post-1970 work, most noticeable via Aruán Ortiz's bubbly synth and the steady groove by bassist Rashaan Carter and drummer Kush Abadey. Unlike Davis' post-Bitches Brew material, though, the groove never gets squeezed in, particularly when Ortiz switches to piano and rolls out a post-bop solo.

Davis' inspiration is stronger on another party-popping piece "I Love What We Make Together," a number Davis recorded only as a demo, initially dubbed "Al Jarreau," and meant for that iconic jazz singer. The song commences with Roney on muted trumpet (another nod to Davis) and as the tempo builds Roney's younger brother Antoine takes over on saxophone and really works the room over with high-flying flourishes. Roney also shows homage to a fellow Davis alum, the late Tony Williams – whom Roney performed with during the 1980s – during an aggressive hard bop cut of Williams' "Only with You," featuring piercing trumpet lines and boastful sax. While Roney and his band do not match the fire of Williams' original, which included Roney, it gets darn close.

Roney has linked up with pop-shaded singers such as Cassandra Reed, Mary Stallings and Tricia Tahara and has not shied away from pop-affected styles. This contemporary side of Roney's disposition shines during the title track, formerly a radio hit for vocalist Luther Vandross. Roney's trumpet replicates Vandross' glossy vocal while the arrangement maintains a balmy stride. The inclusion of a processed, digital voice, however, mars the otherwise warm mood. The other pop piece is an attractive ballad treatment of Janet Jackson's "Let's Wait Awhile." Roney does for Janet what Miles Davis did for Michael (Jackson's "Human Nature" was a Davis tour highlight in the 1980s). Roney ends with an intimate solo song, "FMS (For My Son)" where he illustrates his higher-register tone and brisk textures. It's a fitting finale for an album that exhibits Roney's full range as performer, arranger, leader and interpreter.

The engineering job is well done. The live sound is closely recorded and mixed effectively. Drums do not overpower the quiet bass pulses, for instance, and subdued keyboard nuances glide smoothly underneath the horn section. The Iridium's space affords a slight echo that suits the material and the nightclub ambiance furnishes a natural resonance that keeps anything from sounding sterile or cool.

TrackList:

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Quadrant | 6. Let's Wait a While |
| 2. If Only for One Night | 7. I Love What We Make Together |
| 3. Only with You | 8. FMS (For My Son) |
| 4. I Have a Dream | |
| 5. Metropolis | -- Doug Simpson |

Wallace Roney, 'If Only for One Night' (Highnote Records)

1970s-style fusion via Herbie, Miles

By [Alonzo Weston](#)

Originally published April 15, 2010 at 9:29 a.m., updated April 15, 2010 at 9:29 a.m.

The 1970s vibe hits you on the first song 'Quadrant' on trumpeter Wallace Roney's new release, "If Only for One Night." It an 11 minute boiler of a tune with Herbie Hancock sounding synthesizers laid over a 1970s fusion groove reminiscent of Herbie and Miles mid-1970 period.

Roney has long been accused of being a Mile Davis copycat. For much of his career he held true to that description. He has the same nocturnally romantic sound on trumpet and like his idol he isn't afraid to take musical chances.

But Roney has carved out other areas in his music and while sounding as close to Miles as anyone, his music still has his own distinctive qualities.

The eight tunes on "If Only for One Night" are a mixture of bebop, post bop 1970s fusion and jazz funk. Even the title tune and Luther Vandross ballad is turned into a moody Miles like soundscape. Each tune carries a certain 1970 motif or shading that brings to mind Mile's soul inflected "On the Corner" work or Herbie's "Headhunters" funk fusion.

Overall this is one of Roney's best. Highly romantic and worth repeated listening.