



Kelly Sутtenfield

tenor saxophonist Ohad Talmor seems a natural progression.

Swallow's clear tone and sinuous, driving lines on five-string undergird this set of mostly original compositions, a followup to the trio's 2011 CD, *Playing in Traffic* CD. His tunes are among the most infectious, starting with "Get Lost." Talmor's horn hops and skips over Swallow's burrowing lines and Nussbaum's propulsive tumbles before the start of a long, shimmering solo by the bassist, who uses a plectrum, rather than his fingers, to achieve his distinctive sound. "Then Again" has similar appeal, with Talmor offering short, sometimes syncopated responses to rising and falling bass and drums; while "Anything You Want" has

Swallow and the saxophonist moving in tandem before diverging.

"Ups and Downs" is a pretty ballad with an octave-jumping melody, penned by Carla Bley (and frequently performed by Bley and Swallow). Talmor also contributes compositions, including the playful, starting-stopping "It Did," which opens the album. He also penned the relatively somber "Meli Melo"; the starkly sculpted, open-air "Parallel Fifths"; and "Flight to Missoula," featuring the saxophonist's long, conversational solo over an ambling, chunky groove. Nussbaum distinguishes himself on his own composition, "Warp," and on "Now Four 2," which he co-wrote with Swallow. Capping the program is

the trio's moody and ultimately haunting rendition of "You Go to My Head." Brainy, yes, but emotional, too. — Philip Booth

Kelley Sутtenfield/Tony Romano

Among the Stars

(self-released)

A duet disc by singer Kelley Sутtenfield



and guitarist Tony Romano, *Among the Stars* is a quiet delight that imperceptibly draws you in. The album opens with a unique arrangement of "Fly

Me to the Moon," on which Sутtenfield's whisper of a voice and Romano's subdued acoustic guitar suit each other perfectly. A stark and haunting read of Neil Young's "Harvest Moon" follows, maintaining the romantic, nocturnal ambience that pervades this stellar collection.

This approach works on a variety of material. The pair reinterpret "Wash Me Clean" by k.d. lang at a languorous tempo, using just voice and guitar to keep the proceedings uncluttered and spacious. They also reconstruct the Carole King/Gerry Goffin classic "One Fine Day" as an extremely laid-back ballad that sounds completely different from The Chiffons' hit. While never torpid or boring, it's light enough to be evanescent. In fact, that sparseness explains the album's appeal.

As on the opening cut, Sутtenfield and Romano strip down and rearrange Rodgers and Hammerstein's "People Will Say We're in Love" so dramatically as to render it nearly unrecognizable. Sутtenfield's voice on "Until It's Time for You to Go" is less breathy, until she stretches out. And her take on Bob Dylan's "I'll Be Your Baby Tonight" closes the disc with an appropriate late-night feel. Rather than ending the track with a chord, Romano chooses a couple of single notes to echo Sутtenfield's plaintive vocal. That's the case throughout the recording. His accompaniment, mostly single notes with only a few strummed chords, is always light and sensitive to the singer. Sутtenfield and Romano obviously subscribe to the notion that less is more, and it's hard to imagine a more intimate and enjoyable disc. — Ross Boissoneau