

Sal Mosca -- *Thing ah Majig* -- Zinnia 118CD

The veteran pianist Sal Mosca persists in defying retirement and heart disease and he certainly doesn't sound like a 77-year old, which he was in 2004 when he made this record in his own studio with bassist Don Messina and drummer Bill Chattin. Mosca also defies classification and the restrictions of stylism. Just when you think here is a pianist who likes spare lines, he bursts into a torrent of notes; just when you think he's splashy, he delivers a tender almost mournful touch. His music is like a river that ebbs and flows and sometimes even breaks the dam.

His partners keep up with him as best they can because he is a most adventurous creator. He does have a basic respect for melody, as on "If I Had You," but he can plunge into free form as in "I'll Remember April." Then there is his own cascading composition, "Nowhere," (which gets to somewhere all right).

Mosca was an associate of Warne March and Lee Konitz and follower of Lennie Tristano, but he proves in his eighth decade that he's entirely his own man.

Frank Rutter

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