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provocateur, hector, meta-anarchist;

"Have brain, will use; have pen, will poison."

DOUG MUNRO & LE POMPE ATTACK – *The Harry Warren Songbook* (2017 / Got Music)

One day, no one is going to remember Hoagy Carmichael even though he was a giant among Tin Pan Alley denizens and holds the record, if I'm being informed correctly, for the most covered song in all music: "Stardust"...and if that classic doesn't hold the record, it's not far from it. He was also a film actor and one of the first composers to use modern technology (*welllllllll*...it was modern for the 30s, now it's fossilized) to advance music itself, recording techniques, and, of course, his career.

Are ya thinking "Nawwwwww, this Tucker guy's crazy! Hoagy's immortal!!" Well, then look to the fact that Harry Warren's already almost completely forgotten even though we all know so many of his tunes that it's hard to believe his moniker elicits little more than head-scratching and the inquiry "Harry Warren?? Isn't he the guy who lives down the street, on the corner, the one with that barkity chihuahua?" Fame can be very fleeting, dear reader, very fleeting indeed.

Warren wrote 800 songs during his 40-year career and was one of the most prolific of all composers, from then to now, writing for film. His work appears in 300 flicks, and it's likely, if you preceded Gen X, the Millenials, and etc., you know most if not all the cuts on this spunky old-timey CD ("Jeepers Creepers", "(I've Got a Gal in Kalamazoo", "Chattanooga Choo Choo", etc.)...all, that is, except for the ones his great nephew, guitarist Doug Munro, wrote for this occasion: "Blues for Harry" and "You Again". Munro, however, arranged the chosen selections uptempo into a hot/gypsy jazz format and recruited an impressive roster to champion the cause alongside own effusive chops: Vic Juris, Vinny Raniolo, Ted Gottsegen, Howard Alden, and Ernesto Pugliese...and that's just the guitar players.

Each of the several sessions stretching over two months feature rotating rosters of three fretsmeisters simultaneously along with drums, bass, and, in two occasions, violins. The guitarists' lead lines switch around frequently with accompanying comping from companion pickers, making not only for

piquancy but frequent Reinhardt / Grappelli comparisons as well while also harkening to cats like Herb Ellis, Barney Kessel, and other kindred souls of the era.

There's plenty of excellent soloing from all the six-stringers, and their hand-offs from one to the next make for interesting variations in tone, attack, velocity, and vocabulary. Munro, no stranger to chopsmanship, is so well surrounded that it's difficult to pick him out in the many flurries of improv. That's all to the good, as no ardent listener ever complains about being overwhelmed with impeccable riffs and sonorities within daunting acumen, and *Songbook* is well freighted with such.

For those who followed *F.A.M.E.* before it ceased, I reviewed Doug's excellent solo guitar gig:

<http://www.acousticmusic.com/fame/p06163.htm>

...and then his trippy DVD instructional:

<http://www.acousticmusic.com/fame/p09673.htm>

...but this is music of a bygone era and, like jigs and reels, deserves the lavish treatment accorded (after all, *le pompe attack* translates as 'magisterial regard'), as the project was three years in the making. The quartet of sessions resulted in many many *many* songs being recorded, 16 of which compose *The Harry Warren Songbook*, so, since this is such rarefied fare (*hmmm*, does Doug's looking like the offspring of Col. Sanders and Leon Redbone have anything to do with it?), can we hope for a *The Harry Warren Songbook, Vol. 2* and, dare I say it?, perhaps a *The Harry Warren Songbook, Vol. 3*? Well, if there's any justice in the Era of Trump (good luck on that!), some hip retro label will catch wind of this and underwrite the venture. Meanwhile, would someone see to it that Robert Crumb, Jim Woodring, Steve Martin, and the aforementioned Redbone get copies of this disc? They love this stuff.