

JOSHUA BREAKSTONE

No One New (Capri)



Blending a popping tone with postbop verve, bluesy reiterations, whimsical allusions and nimble exchanges, Joshua Breakstone wastes no time engaging listeners on “Over-Done,” the opening selection on the veteran guitarist’s latest release. It’s a sleek, spirited, nearly eight-minute-long introduction to a trio recording in which everything seems to fall effortlessly into place. Of course, fans have come to expect nothing less from Breakstone over the years.

Some of the album’s highlights, however, belie the guitarist’s preparation. He’s ingeniously reconfigured familiar songs to suit his trio’s purposes. “For Me,” the first of these performances to surface on the album, is harmonically based on “But Not for Me,” yet the arrangement soon generates a sprightly charm of its own, with plenty of help from bassist Lisle Atkinson and drummer Eliot Zigmund. Likewise, “No One New,” the album’s title cut, harmonically references “It’s You or No One,” though it’s easy to lose sight of that fact when Breakstone is dashing through the changes with Zigmund hot on his heels.

The burners showcasing Breakstone’s fluid lines are interspersed with ballads, and none proves more soulfully alluring than the trio’s brush-stroked performance of Jimmy Rowles’ “The Peacocks.” Joe Henderson is also represented, albeit in an entirely different light, when the trio caps the session with a swift and, yes, kicking version of “The Kicker.” Before the vibrant finale, however, bassist Atkinson manages to carve out some middle ground with his catchy theme “Come on Baby,” a tune

that casually evokes small-combo swing—a sweet spot for the trio. **MIKE JOYCE**