

REVIEWS

RAVI COLTRANE

*Spirit Fiction*

[Blue Note]

Ravi Coltrane wasn't quite 2 when his legendary father, John Coltrane, died in 1967. From the start of his career as a saxophonist and composer in the '80s, the younger Coltrane sought to discover his own voice. He began recording as a leader in the late '90s, and each successive recording has further established him as a significant artist—but *Spirit Fiction* is his tour de force. Produced by Coltrane and equally excellent saxophonist Joe Lovano, the album teams Coltrane with two different bands, both staffed with A-list players. There are no compromises—from the first notes of “Roads Cross,” one of six tracks written by Coltrane, the quartet is probing, unhurriedly and freely improvising. Two cover tunes are among the highlights: Ornette Coleman's “Check Out Time” is all geometric, odd-time interplay, while Paul Motian's “Fantasm” hovers languorously in the air, as much about suggestion as definition. *Spirit Fiction* wears the Coltrane name proudly. —JT

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