



FUMIO ITABASHI Watarase (1982)

Label

WEWANTSOUNDS

Format

LP

Catalog Number

WWSLP 088LP

EAN

3700604754510



Store Price

\$23.39

Release Date

04/05/24

Territory

NORTH AMERICAN EXCLUSIVE

Genre

FILE UNDER - I - JAZZ

***we
want
sounds***

DESCRIPTION

Wewantsounds announces the reissue of **Fumio Itabashi**'s highly sought-after album *Watarase*, hailed as one of the great Japanese jazz albums and featuring Itabashi on solo piano playing an inspired mix of standards and originals. Recorded in 1981 for Denon and released in Japan the following year, the album has since reached cult status among international jazz connoisseurs, thanks to Itabashi's inventive piano playing and to its cult title track, a superb lyrical spiritual composition. Newly remastered by Nippon Columbia using their ORT mastering technology, the album reissue features original artwork including a two-page insert with a new introduction by **Paul Bowler**. Born in 1949 in Tochigi, Fumio Itabashi studied piano at the renowned Kunitachi College of Music in Tokyo, where **Joe Hisaishi** also studied. After finishing his studies, he quickly began recording as a session player for Japanese heavyweights such as **Sadao Watanabe** (making his recording debut on Watanabe's 1972 self-titled album), **Terumasa Hino**, and **Kohsuke Mine** before recording his first album as a leader – accompanied by his trio – with the album *Toh* released by Frasco Record in 1976. In October 1981, Itabashi entered Nippon Columbia's Studio 1 to digitally record a new album using Denon's PCM digital recorder as a follow up to *Nature*. The album, called *Watarase* was cut in just two days and feature Itabashi on solo piano, playing a couple of standards ("Someday My Prince Will Come" and "I Can't Get Started") and four originals plus "Msunduza," a **Dollar Brand** composition from 1975. The album highlights the pianist's dazzling technique oscillating between energetic passages as on "Msunduza" and more serene ones as heard on "Someday My Prince Will Come." The high point of the album is undoubtedly its title track, "Watarase" which has become a favorite on the international jazz scene over the years. Paul Bowler, in the liner notes, draws comparisons between Itabashi's and **Pharoah Sanders**' playing, noting that they both "possess a similar open-hearted blend of spiritualism, passionate intensity and melodic beauty." *Watarase* was never widely available outside of Japan (with only a limited edition in 2018). Wewantsounds is therefore delighted to bring this classic back in circulation, newly remastered in Tokyo by Nippon Columbia for all Japanese jazz lovers to enjoy.

TRACKLISTING

01. Someday My Prince Will Come (8:12)
02. Msunduza (4:31)
03. I Can't Get Started (4:38)
04. Tone (8:04)
05. Watarase (7:38)
06. Miss Cann (5:09)
07. Good Bye (8:59)

HIGHLIGHTS

- Reissue of **Fumio Itabashi**'s highly sought-after album *Watarase*, hailed as one of the great Japanese jazz albums and featuring Itabashi on solo piano playing an inspired mix of standards and originals.
- Newly remastered by Nippon Columbia using their ORT mastering technology, the album reissue features original artwork including a two-page insert with a new introduction by **Paul Bowler**.
- The album highlights the pianist's dazzling technique oscillating between energetic passages as on "Msunduza" and more serene ones as heard on "Someday My Prince Will Come."

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