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JAZZ

Carn Davidson

Murphy (Independent)

The Carn Davidson 9 is a group of very fine Canadian musicians led by trombonist William Carn and saxophonist Tara Davidson. (The other seven are Kelly Jefferson and Perry White, woodwinds; Jason Logue and Kevin Turcotte, trumpets; Alex Duncan, bass trombone; Andrew Downing, bass; and Ernesto Cervini, drums.) All have been mentioned in reviews in this column over the last year or so.

The compositions are by the co-leaders and show their development since the band was formed a few years ago. As expected, there is a great balance between lyrical melodies and more challenging tempos and harmonics. The overall impact is of a band which is very comfortable with its musical range, and the arrangements are tight and crisp. A nonet is a middle-sized band these days, but this group at times sounds bigger. Each of the members has solos that reflect the mood of the piece, and aren't merely efforts to show individual skills. There is a fine team feeling to these tracks, leading to a most enjoyable listening experience.

Both Carn and Davidson are multiple Juno nominees, and while maintaining a busy playing schedule are also on the faculty of Humber College and the University of Toronto. Without doubt, the quality and range of current large ensemble jazz is extraordinary, and a lot of it is Canadian.

And as you might guess from the album cover, Murphy is Carn and Davidson's beloved cat. HHHH

STREAM THESE: Try Again, Murphy's Law, Reason Season Lifetime

— *Keith Black*