

Andrew Hill and Chico Hamilton

Music

★★★★★

Dreams Come True (Joyous Shout!)



Copious odds and ends tend to turn up in the wake of a prominent musician's death.

In the case of the brilliant, enigmatic jazz pianist Andrew Hill, though, such activity actually climaxed in the decade preceding his 2007 passing at age 75, yielding material both revelatory (a dazzling solo box set on Mosaic) and merely curious (reissues such as *Lift Every Voice*). One might have anticipated a few more scraps, but *Dreams Come True* is not ephemera: It's a major work befitting its fairy-tale title.

For one, the disc—a 1993 studio encounter with legendary drummer Chico Hamilton—is wholly unique within Hill's discography. A frequent bandleader and solo

performer, the pianist never released a full duet session during his lifetime. Moreover, though Hill recorded with many topflight postbop drummers, Hamilton hails from a very different era. An eclectic maverick still vital at age 87, he helped pioneer chamber jazz in the '50s, and later found steady work in film scoring.

Here, Hamilton doesn't accompany Hill so much as each simultaneously pursues his individual muse. This results in fascinating juxtapositions, such as "Watch That Dream," where Hamilton gets funky on a tambourine while his partner drifts through luminous free-time balladry. On the Bird-and-Diz staple "Shaw Nuff," Hamilton hurtles through fiery swing while Hill toys with abstracted boogie-woogie. No pianist achieved a more seamless blend of weirdness and warmth, and few recordings illustrate that as potently as this one.—*Hank Shteamer*