



Josh Berman Trio *Everybody Else's Life, Too*

CORBETT VS. DEMPSEY

★★★★

However you define the work, Josh Berman does it. He's an indefatigable organizer, co-responsible for a jazz concert series at Chicago's Hungry Brain that's been running for 25 years. His distinctive voice on cornet, which combines a strong appreciation for the earliest jazz soloists with contemporary techniques, is instantly identifiable. And he has led a series of groups that integrate a deeply considered grasp of jazz history with a commitment to making music in the moment with a particular aesthetic and an

open mind. All of those forces are evident on *Everybody Else's Life, Too*, the latest by his trio with long-time bassist Jason Roebke and new drummer Chris Corsano.

The trio's music bridges song-rooted directness and sound-oriented improvisation. The opening track, "Observers," revisits a piquant theme repeatedly during its not-quite-four-minute duration; pithiness is one of this trio's virtues. In between these iterations the meters blur, and the lines broaden and break. "Last line" suspends tense textural exchanges upon periodic appearances of a sturdy, stalking bass line. The music also inhabits a sound world that spans century-old jazz and the hybrid sonorities of 21st century forms. On the one hand, "Property" and "Second Look" feature bluesy melodies that could easily have been played in Josh Berman's Gang, an earlier project that explicitly engaged with the work of the Austin High Gang. On the other, the abstract assembly of high pitches and metallic abrasions that surfaces during "Scale" reveals a working knowledge of contemporary noise. The trio doesn't just assemble contrasting elements; it transitions between them with practiced confidence, making elegant work of potentially awkward juxtapositions. —Bill Meyer

Everybody Else's Life, Too: Observers; Cities; Anthology; Hold Out; Last Line; Property; Associating; Scale; Three Letters; Style; Second Look. (44:32)

Personnel: Josh Berman, cornet; Jason Roebke, bass; Chris Corsano, drums.

Ordering info: corbettvsdempsey.com