

# tune up

**GRAHAME BENT** chills out to the latest hot jazz titles



To earn the epithet "legendary" you would normally expect a musician to have had a long and distinguished career having amassed an expansive discography along the way. Not so with the

legendary **HASSAN**. Born the rather less exotic William Henry Langford Jr, despite his formidable talents as a jazz pianist which saw him cultivate a distinct voice on the instrument Hassan only recorded one album in his entire career - the highly regarded **The Max Roach Trio Featuring The Legendary Hassan** (★★★★) which now gets a high spec vinyl reissue on Speakers Corner. Originally released on Atlantic in '65 the album showcases the evident and manifold pianistic skills of Hassan facing off against one of the greatest and most distinctive jazz drummers of all time - the formidable Max Roach with bassist Art Davis providing the anchor which holds everything together in between. Throughout the seven original compositions which together make up the album, Hassan's idiosyncratic style is matched move for move by Max Roach's apparently loose yet simultaneously right on the spot inventory of drum patterns and fills. The title of the opening composition 'Three-Four Vs Six-Eight Four-Four Ways' hints at the structural complexities underpinning this trio recording, but this is no dry academic exercise, as right from the off Hassan's singular tunes, whether 'Off My Back Jack', 'Almost Like Me' or 'Pay Not Play Not', variously swing, wander, stroll and stagger all over the shop with the sort of charisma and random inventiveness normally reserved for the likes of Thelonious Monk.