

PLAYLIST | Nate Chinen

Andy Milne

As a bandleader the Toronto-born pianist Andy Milne is primarily known for Dapp Theory, a group that triangulates jazz, hip-hop and funk. He pares down considerably on a pair of new albums, his first in seven years. "Scenarios" (ObliqSound) consists of duets with the harmonica player Grégoire Maret, a former Dapp Theory collaborator, and the results often sound spry and windborne. But Mr. Milne generally does better work on "Dreams and False Alarms" (Songlines), his first solo piano outing. It features a preponderance of cover tunes: by the Police, Bobs Dylan and Marley, and the Canadian bards Joni Mitchell and Neil Young. The interpretations are respectful and resourceful, and since they're anchored to recognizable songs, it's possible to track Mr. Milne's thought process. He doesn't shy away from melody or emotion, and he holds his technique in smart reserve.