

**JAZZ**

**KEITH TIPPETT  
TAPESTRY  
ORCHESTRA**

Live at Le Mans  
(Edition/Planet)



Four decades ago, the vastly under-acknowledged pianist and composer Keith Tippett took command of British jazz's most ambitious project: Centipede.

Its numbers fluctuated but 55 players participated in the joyous 1971 recording called *Septober Energy*. In 1998, Tippett was at it again, assembling the 21-piece Tapestry Orchestra, eight of whose members had survived the Centipede maelstrom.

It is unmistakable that

the same mind lies behind *First Weaving*, the single composition that sprawls across these two live CDs. Tippett has a feel for

contrast in deploying a large number of players.

The thrilling and eerie use of voices is another trademark, immediately expanding the textures far beyond that sadly stultified beast called a big band, with Julie Tippetts, Maggie Nicols and Vivien Ellis deployed here. Among the brilliant players are cornetist Marc Charig, trombonist Paul Rutherford, tenor saxophonist Larry Stabbins, the late alto saxophonist Elton Dean and drummer Louis Moholo. Magnificent.

**John Shand**