

Ok Jazz & Blues Newsletter

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Toronto saxophonist **Richard Underhill** visited Kelowna with his Quintet on **Saturday February 25th** to perform for the Okanagan Jazz and Blues Society in concert at **Bunches Bistro**. Richard and his band were touring western Canada to promote the national release of his latest CD '*Moment in Time*'. Richard is originally from the Salmon Arm area. He moved to Toronto over 10 years ago.

Band members on this tour included Richard on alto sax, **Chris Gale** on tenor sax, **Adrean Ferugia** on piano, **Graig Earle** on bass, and **Sly Juhas** on drums. The group played two one hour sets of original compositions from the new album *The material* from his new album



swings in a 1960's post-bop style. We heard exciting dynamic elements reminiscent of the late great **Charles Mingus**, combined with modern harmonic elements of **Brad Mehildau** and **Joe Lavano**. The melodies were adventurous and memorable, the ensemble parts were tight, and the solos were thoughtful and well executed. The 21 year old Cuban pianist **Luis**

Guerra was a delight. His solos were punctuated with richly packed chords that danced in every register. Overall, the show was well attended and received. Everyone stayed to the very end. Not only is Richard a fine musician, composer, bandleader, entertainer; but he is well spoken, honest and likable. We will definitely ask him back.

Please tell us who you want to see perform in Kelowna

Downchild Blues
Power Blues
Tommy Castro Band
BF Burt & The Investigators
James Armstrong
Coco Montoya
Lloyd Jones & The Struggle

Rod Piazza & The Mighty Flyers
Eddie Shaw & The Wolf Gang
Studebaker John & The Hawks
Paul Reddick & The Sidemen
Campbell Ryga
Darren Sigismund
Richard Whiteman

Fathead Newman
David Braid
Hilario Duran

Help make a difference, e-mail us at: info@okanaganjazzblues.org

B.C. Interior Jazz Festival – 29 and holding



The **B.C. Interior Jazz Festival** is heading into its 29th successful season and will occur April 6, 7, and 8 at the Kelowna Community Theatre as well as the Rotary Centre for the Arts. The *Rotary Centre for the Arts* will serve, once again, as the site for instrumental combo performances (8:30am thru 9:30pm) on April 6th, with music-related workshops on April 7 and 8.

The general public is encouraged to attend these workshops free of charge as well and to bring an instrument, sit in and learn from an expert!

The Festival, though competitive in nature, has a predominantly “educational” focus, priding itself in having served as at least one major stepping stone for many young people who are in the pursuit of a music-based career; two most notable individuals who have participated as *students* on several occasions at the *B.C. Interior Jazz Festival* are well-known jazz artists: New

York-based trumpeter and band leader, Ingrid Jensen as well as Dianna Krall.

They have both participated in the festival as members of the Nanaimo Secondary Jazz Band. Brian Stovell who was the director of this same Nanaimo Secondary Music Program, will be at our festival this year serving as one of the instrumental combo adjudicators.

The Festival features adjudicated performances by both school and community-based jazz groups throughout all three days of the festival as well as Thursday evening; the intensity increases as the festival progresses toward the final, Saturday night showcase of groups which have been deemed as “most outstanding” by the panel of eight professional adjudicators. Top groups and individuals who are invited to participate in this Saturday

presentation earn various types of cash awards and bursaries including invitations to perform at *Musicfest Canada* (the national level festival).

The main highlight of the festival is always the annual, Friday evening, **Jazz Master’s Concert** at the Kelowna Community Theatre; this concert, a yearly “sellout”, has seen performances by a wide array of outstanding professional jazz artists such as Tommy Banks, Phil Nimmons, Hugh Fraser, Ian MacDougall, Louise Rose, Dee Daniels, Jennifer Scott and many more!

This year’s **Jazz Masters’ Concert**, April 7 at 7:30pm, will present the talents of Sunny Wilkinson (a most exciting jazz vocalist from Lansing, Michigan), Horace-Alexander Young (flute, alto sax and vocals), Greg Yasinitsky (tenor sax), Dean McNeill (trumpet), as well as the ever popular, **Festival Big Band** conducted by Michael Garding. The *Festival Big Band*, made up of some of the best jazz musicians in the Interior of B.C., will also showcase a variety of this year’s guest jazz artists.

Tickets will be available beginning March 1st from SelectYourTickets.com or by phone: 250-762-5050

Further Information: Lyn or Hugh Parsons 250-762-2049 or email: jazzfest@shaw.ca or on the web at www.jazzfestbc.ca



www.jazzfestbc.ca

The Educated Jazz Vocalist



By Ellen Churchill

The Educated Jazz Vocalist

Isn't that an oxymoron? "Educated" and "Vocalist" in the same sentence? After all, don't all musicians refer to singers (and drummers) as the guys who like to hang out with the band? Oh yes,...singer jokes. "How many singers does it take to screw in a light bulb?"..."Just one. She stands there and expects the whole world to revolve around her."

"How do you know a singer is at your door?"..."She can't find her key and she doesn't know when to come in." These attitudes represent the reputation I strive to overcome to this day.

If you don't know what key you sing a song in, if you have never written a chart or transposed it into your own key, "smarten up"! Get up off your hiney and do something about it.

Teach yourself, hire a player to teach you, take some lessons, I don't care but stop passing yourself off as a singer/leader with the band. These guys (and girls) have studied decades to make you look good, so send the love and invest some time in your own education.

Below are my top 10 suggestions for the "contemporary Jazz Vocalist".

1. Know your keys.

2. Be able to describe the feel of the tune. i.e. Shuffle, swing, bossa, 12/8, waltz, etc. (Takes years to learn so get going). Hint: listen to the bass, drums, etc. and try to sing a bit of their parts or imply the feel with the count in.

3. Write your own charts or pay someone to write them for you. (You should be able to point to a chord on a lead sheet at any time if the player gets lost or better still, call the chord out.)

4. Practice with a metronome. *Note to all players as well...practice with a metronome, practice with a metronome, practice with a metronome. I don't care if you've been playing for 50 years; it's the defining factor between a mediocre player and a true professional.

5. Practice vocal technique. Overchesting is the most common prob-

lem with singers today. Everyone hears this huge solid vocal sound on recordings and wants to recreate it. What you don't realize is that the recording artists are compressed and effected to the max. Technology is so advanced now that a raw, un-"effected" sound is very rare if not unheard of. Work on diaphragm connection. Focus on the initiation of sound coming from your pelvis and abdominal region. Forget you have a throat.

6. Pay your players. Make an agreement with them and stick to it. In my experience this often means ensuring payment for the gig through a contract and following up with the client at the end of the gig. I have stood on a gang plank refusing to allow any patrons to leave the ship before I got my money. Take care of your players and they'll take care of you.

7. Learn a wide variety of repertoire. I'm so glad I had that ZZ Top tune at my ready for the surprise "Biker Gig" my brother dragged me to at a neighbor's house out in Red Creek about ten years ago; pigs roasting on spits, bikes driving through crowds, dust and leather jackets. "This is Hell", I thought. "Oh Dear Lord, what's an Ella Fitzgerald wannabe to do?" I rocked the place! As was the case at the Estate Planning Society Meeting around Christmas. "Do

say!" Lovely evening, very distinguished crowd. Moral: You need to know your audience and be prepared to give them what they're looking for.

8. Entertain! You're the front man. It's part of your job. The players should be able to relax knowing you will work the crowd and enjoy it.

9. Mediate. You are the liaison between the client, the musicians and the audience. It's your job to make sure everyone leaves thinking this was the best time they've had in a good, long while.

10. Keep learning and pass it on. At the end of each gig, as I'm driving home alone in my "Ellenment", I think, "What did I learn tonight? What did I like? What didn't I like? What will I do differently next time?" And when my students perform with a live band or record a CD project or watch a videotape of their performance, I get them to ask the same questions. We go over it together and I pass on what I know. Most importantly, they're learning that being a 'stupid singer' is not acceptable.

Ellen is a professional vocalist/instructor/clinician living and working in Kelowna, BC. She can be reached at 712-1620 or by e-mail at webdiva@shaw.ca.

Two Standing Ovations For Biali Trio



Sly Juhas , Brandy Disterheft and Liala Biali on St.Patrick'd Day at the Black Box Performance and Rehearsal Hall.

Hats off to all of you who aren't afraid to admit that our smallness in this world doesn't preclude the greatness we've been created for. - Laila Biali

Making a pit stop between gigs in Toronto and Vancouver, the Laila Biali Trio delighted jazz fans this past St. Patrick's Day at Kelowna's Black Box Performance and Rehearsal Hall (located behind the Kelowna Community Theatre). Deftly illustrating the results of hard work, great chemistry and a large dose of talent, this is definitely a trio to watch out for. Laila Biali was added to the firmament of CBC Galaxy

Rising Star Prize winners at the National Jazz Awards in 2003, and she recently added to her accolades with Best Keyboardist and Composer of the year at the 2006 National Jazz awards. Biali is also a talented vocalist and this trio opened for Diana Krall last year at the Vancouver International Jazz Festival.

The Laila Biali Trio can be described as "tight" in more than one sense of the word. Bassist Brandy Disterheft and percussionist Sly Juhas, have been performing with Biali for more than five years, and are described as two of her closest friends. The benefits of this connection were evident throughout the show which continued well past the two hour mark. The trio began their first set with an original arrangement of the Brazilian **One Note Samba**, followed by their twist on

the more recognizable Peggy Lee signature song **Fever**, with strong, sultry vocals from Biali. They performed their own arrangements of a variety of standards, with and without vocals - changing tempos, feels and time signatures with seamless ease. They performed a number of Biali's instrumental compositions, **Joy, Flying**, and **The Good Earth**, the latter two appearing on their first CD "Introducing the Laila Biali Trio". I also enjoyed their cover of Molly Johnson's recent **I Must Have Left My Heart**. A classically trained pianist, Biali further illustrated her varied musical tastes by announcing that Radiohead was her favourite band. The trio then performed a version of the alternative/punk band's 1996 release **High and Dry**, inspired by British pianist and crooner Jamie Cullum's cover of the tune.

Disterheft gave a solid

performance on Cameron Ward's stand up bass as hers took the scenic route and ended up in Winnipeg. It did wing its way back to Kelowna eventually, but too late for the gig. Taking the advice of their more vocal fans, drummer Sly Juhas figured prominently on several arrangements. Juhas had appeared with the saxophone based Richard Underhill Quartet at the last OJBS event in February and his performance with this trio illustrated that he's got the chops to slide into a number of styles with different bands.

Ms. Biali appeared to be very comfortable and down to earth, kicking off her shoes to play barefoot, and conversing easily with the audience. Gracious in her praise of the OJBS and the St. Patrick's Day revelers the three encountered

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earlier in the day, she was very appreciative of the small but enthusiastic audience and was not afraid of “getting vulnerable” with them. The trio briefly donned their shamrock festooned hats for a tune, and also included an audience participation portion on one of her compositions, after sharing a personal account of its origins.

Ms. Biali appeared to be very comfortable and down to earth, kicking off her shoes to play barefoot, and conversing easily with the audience.

When it comes to jazz I take great pleasure in the unexpected twists of arrangements that change tempos and time signatures. As a result, I especially enjoyed the combination of **Old Country** and **Softly as in a Morning Sunrise** as well as the arrangement of **I'm old Fashioned** which began in 5/4, changing tempo and feel through the latter half of the arrangement. However, the highlight of the night for me was a very simple yet luxuriant arrangement of **My Funny Valentine**. I would imagine many performers would find it hard to resist the temptation to sing this tune, especially one with the vocal abilities of Ms. Biali. She and her band chose to perform this *senza voce*, creating a poignant, instrumental

interpretation of this well known standard. (For you non musicians out there, *senza voce* means “without voice” and not “in her underwear” as my husband first thought, referring to the lingerie store La Senza).

At the risk of appearing obsequious, (yet ironically unafraid of appearing pretentious) I have to say there wasn't one tune that I didn't enjoy and I am hoping the OJBS will present this trio again in the not too distant future. The audience seemed to agree

with me as they demanded an encore, and gave the band two standing ovations. The evening ended with the audience (and blues enthusiast Disterheft) sated by the trio's interpretation of Nat King Cole's **Baby, All the Time**.



Liala Biali performs on the Kelowna Community Theatre's concert grand piano.

2005 Canadian Maple Blues Awards Winners



Downchild Blues Band

(Back Row) Michael Fonfara - Keys, Pat Carey - Sax, Michael Fitzpatrick - Drums, Gary Kendall - Bass

(Front Row) Chuck Jackson - Vocals and Harp, Donnie Walsh - Guitar and Harp

January 17th, 2006: Blues musicians from across Canada were honoured at the 9th annual Maple Blues Awards held in Toronto on January 16.

The thirty-seven year veteran Downchild Blues Band can now additionally celebrate for receiving three major Maple Blues Awards - Recording of the Year for their release 'Come On In', and both Electric Act and Entertainer of the Year for 2005.

The Downchild rhythm section was also honoured - drummer Mike Fitzpatrick, as well as bassist Gary Kendall, who also directed the dynamic 8-piece Maple Blues Band at the entertaining award show which was recorded and broadcast by CIUT-FM.

Toronto's Paul Reddick took home honours in 2 categories - Songwriter of the Year, of which he has been a previous recipient, as well as Male Vocalist. Red-

dick's recording 'Villanelle' also won yet another Producer of the Year award for Juno and Grammy Award winning blues legend Colin Linden, who also hosted the gala event for wall-to wall crowd at the Phoenix Concert Theatre.

Halifax's Garrett Mason, who provided an electrifying performance as one of the special musical guests, won the New Artist of the Year Award, a companion for the Juno Award he also

received in the past year. Son of Canadian blues legend Dutch Mason, this second-generation bluesman continues to make an impression worthy of his lineage.

Canada's west coast was represented by B.C.'s Harry Manx, who was honoured for Acoustic Act of the Year, and Kenny 'Blues Boss' Wayne, for the Keyboard Player award. Both have previously been

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Paul Reddick of The Sidemen

multiply awarded in these categories.

The warm gathering of the blues community was enthusiastic for the choice of Montreal chanteuse Dawn Tyler Watson for Female Vocalist of the Year.

Other Toronto winners included veteran blues performers and previous award recipients Jack de Keyzer for Guitarist, multi-instrumentalist Chris Whiteley for Horn Player, and Carlos del Junco for Harmonica Player of the Year, his third consecutive win.

Danny Marks, a guitarist and broadcaster with a long history in Toronto, was honoured with the prestigious Blues With A Feeling award, the Toronto Blues Society's lifetime achievement award for contribution to blues music in Canada.

The Blues Booster award, a special Maple Blues Award honouring outstanding contribution to the Canadian blues music industry, was awarded to Richard Flohil, for his more than 40 years as a promoter, publicist, journalist, and music-industry fixture.

The International Artist of the Year award went to the best-known blues artist of all, the unstoppable B.B. King, still touring internationally at 80 years of age.

The Maple Blues Awards are Canada's national programme to promote and recognize outstanding achievement in blues music.

The nominees were chosen by a distinguished panel of blues experts from across Canada, and the winners were selected by the on-line

votes of over 2,000 Canadian blues fans.

The Maple Blues Awards are generously supported by FACTOR and the Government of Canada through the Canadian Music Fund, the SOCAN Foundation, the Ontario Arts Council, the Ontario Ministry of Culture, the City of Toronto through the Toronto Arts Council, Cordova Bay Entertainment Group, SOCAN, Galaxie - CBC's Continuous Music Network, Long & McQuade, Universal Music Canada/Sam the Record Man, Stony Plain Records, Steve's Music Store, Pearl Drums, Lee Oskar Harmonicas, Fusion 3 Distribution / Justin Time Records, CBC Radio & Saturday Night Blues, St. John's Music, Yamaha Music Canada, Live Tour Artists, and KMP Designs Inc.

2005 Maple Blues Award Winners

Recording of the Year:
Downchild Blues Band:
Come On In
(Downchild Music)

Producer of the Year:
Colin Linden, for Paul Reddick: Villanelle
(NorthernBlues)

Entertainer of the Year:
Downchild Blues Band

Electric Act of the Year:
Downchild Blues Band

Acoustic Act of the Year:
Harry Manx

New Artist/Group of the Year:
Garrett Mason

Songwriter of the Year:
Paul Reddick

Male Vocalist of the Year:
Paul Reddick

Female Vocalist of the Year:
Dawn Tyler Watson

Guitarist of the Year:
Jack de Keyzer

Harmonica Player of the Year:
Carlos del Junco

Keyboard/Piano Player of the Year:
Kenny 'Blues Boss' Wayne

Horn Player of the Year:
Chris Whiteley

Drummer of the Year:
Mike Fitzpatrick

Bass Player of the Year:
Gary Kendall

Blues Booster of the Year:
Richard Flohil

Blues with a Feeling Award:
Danny Marks

International Artist of the Year:
B.B. King



2005 Jazz and Blues Juno Award Winners

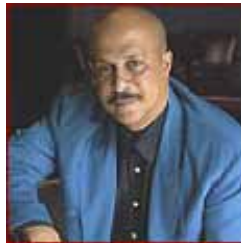
Held in Halifax, Nova Scotia Sunday April 2, 2006



VOCAL JAZZ ALBUM OF THE YEAR

The Girl In
The Other Room
Diana Krall

Nanaimo's Diana Krall has become the best-selling female jazz artist in the world, thanks to an irresistible combination of sultry vocals, eloquent piano playing, and superbly chosen and produced repertoire. Her 2001 smash hit album, *The Look Of Love*, earned her three JUNO Awards the following year. Her own impressive progression as a songwriter is demonstrated on *The Girl In The Other Room*, which features material co-written with husband Elvis Costello.



CONTEMPORARY JAZZ ALBUM OF THE YEAR

New Danzon
Hilario Duran Trio

Masterful Cuban-born, Toronto-based pianist and composer Hilario Duran is a previous JUNO Award nominee, and his playing has graced much of Jane Bunnett's acclaimed work. *New Danzon* is a fresh, vibrant, Latin trio recording, blending milieus and motifs of classic Cuban musical form. Duran is joined by bassist Roberto Occhipinti and percussionist Horacio 'El Negro' Hernandez.



TRADITIONAL JAZZ ALBUM OF THE YEAR

David Braid Sextet
Live - David Braid

CBC's Katie Malloch calls David Braid "one of the most gifted young players and composers in the country." His talent-heavy Sextet has performed his original work across Canada for the last five years. A fluent pianist, he earned four nominations at the 2004 National Jazz Awards. In April, Braid will debut a piece for orchestra and jazz piano with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra.



BLUES ALBUM OF THE YEAR

I'm Just a Man
Garrett Mason

Credit great genes for at least some of Nova Scotian Garrett Mason's considerable talent. He's the son of Maritimes blues legend Dutch Mason, and, at 22, he's already a highly proficient guitarist, singer and songwriter. His debut album, *I'm Just A Man*, was launched in fine style at last year's Harvest Jazz and Blues Festival in Fredericton. The two Alberts (Collins and King) are key influences.



Monk Meets the Beatles

Thelonious Monk | Sole Mountain Jazz

By Ken Dryden

For years it was rumored that Thelonious Monk was asked to do an album of Beatles tunes, but now we finally have proof that it was actually made. In the summer of 1971, the pianist was approached by an English businessman to make a record of Beatles tunes as a surprise birthday gift for his wife. Monk was hesitant to record adaptations of rock music, but was finally persuaded by the considerable fee offered to him, with the stipulation that only a single copy was to be pressed.

Monk played approximately twenty songs at home over a two-week period, then selected twelve he felt he could adapt. During a day off while in Great Britain as a part of the Giants of Jazz tour, he completed the recording in a single session.

Over thirty years after the recording was made, the Monk estate was asked about the possibility of commercially releasing

this long-lost album. The master tapes, still in the hands of the session engineer, were found to be in excellent shape. After some lengthy negotiations, it was agreed that a limited edition of 5000 would be sold, though it would be issued by a European label.

Unlike many warmed-over jazz treatments of rock songs recorded during the 1960s, Thelonious Monk obviously took his rehearsals of these unfamiliar songs seriously. Monk's choice of "Birthday" is an appropriate opener, played as a brisk stride arrangement with a dissonant countermelody. The pianist has a bit of fun with "Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da" by initially starting off with an angular chorus of Mary Lou Williams' "In the Land of Oo-Blah-Dee."

One of the most unlikely choices would seem to be "I Want to Hold Your Hand," but Monk interprets it as a slow ballad, incorporating some humorous tremolos and revealing its hidden possi-

bilities. "Yesterday" has long since become a jazz standard, though Monk's version is both bitter-sweet and hilarious, partly because of his closing glissando cascading down the keyboard. The CD concludes with a whimsical take of "When I'm Sixty-Four," followed by a single chorus of Monk's theme song, "Epistrophy."

The only US source for Monk Meets the Beatles, expected to become a collector's item, is AllAboutJazz.com.

Track Listing: Birthday; In My Life; Norwegian Wood; Octopus's Garden; Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da; Yesterday; I Should Have Known Better; I Want to Hold Your Hand; And I Love Her; Penny Lane; Things We Said Today; When I'm Sixty Four/Epistrophy.

Personnel: Thelonious Monk: piano.

Review Courtesy AllAboutJazz.com

Over thirty years after the recording was made, the Monk estate was asked about the possibility of commercially releasing this long-lost album



Mike Allen Quartet May 5th, 2006

Black Box (Kelowna Community Theatre)

Mike Allen, 40, is profiled in Mark Miller's "Miller Companion to Jazz in Canada" and has a Master's in Jazz from New York University. He has performed and recorded with Cedar Walton, Kenny Wheeler, Gary Bartz, Don Friedman, Don Thompson and is a member of Canadian guitar legend Sonny Greenwich's quintet - "Standard Idioms" (Kleo) and "Fragments Of A Memory" (Cornerstone). Allen has been performing primarily on the West Coast, with several Canada-wide tours and regular features on nationally aired CBC radio broadcasts. His CD *Fearless* was chosen by Public Radio International jazz host Jim Wilke, as one of the "Best Pacific Northwest Jazz CDs of 2004", while his 2003 trio disc *Dialectic* won "Outstanding Jazz Recording 2003" at the Western Canadian Music Awards.

The Mike Allen Trio opened for Brad Meldau at the **2002 DuMaurier Vancouver International Jazz Festival** and has worked with many luminary guests including **Cedar Walton** at Vancouver's Birch Theatre in 2002, **Julian Priester** and **Gary Bartz** at the Jazz Cellar in Vancouver in 2003 and 2000, Jon Ballantyne at the Montreal Int. Jazz Festival in 1993, **Branford Marsalis** at Cafe Central in Montreal in 1990, and **Kenny Garrett** at the 1989 Warsaw Jazz Festival. Allen has performed in New York City (Visiones), San Francisco (Brian Melvin Quartet at



From left to write: Sean Cronin - bass, Mike Allen - tenor sax, and Julian MacDonough - drums
Bruno Hubert - piano missing

Rose Pistola) and in Seattle (Chuck Israels Quintet at Seattle's Jazz Alley, John Fetchok's all-star Big Band at Tula's).

Mike has been awarded prestigious Arts Council grants over the years to study with tenor giants **Joe Henderson, Joe Lovano** and **David Liebman**, and with pianist Jim McNeely.

As a leader, Mike's saxophone trio performs original material, and standard repertoire with influences ranging from groups led by Sonny Rollins to Ornette Coleman to Joe Henderson. His quartet performs

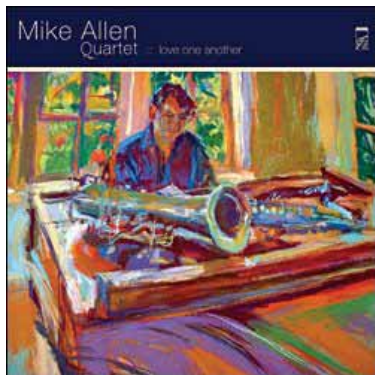
original repertoire featuring lyrical tunes and swinging blues, and he has recently formed a piano trio which finally gives a voice to a unique, swinging and soulful piano style he has been cultivating for years. Mike is active performing his with own groups and on occasion as a sideman with the **Dave Robbins Sextet, Denzal Sinclair, Mike Rud**, and others.

Friday May 5th brings Mike Allen and his Quar-

tet to the **Black Box**, located behind the Kelowna Community Theatre. The Quartet will feature tunes from their recently released CD **Love One Another**.

Tickets on sale at: New Wave Hydromassage, Good Guys Total Home Entertainment, Kelowna Guitarworks, Beadful Arts, Wentworth Music, World Of Music, The Fixx Café, Altronics Sales & Service, or online easily and securely fthrough our web site at :

www.okanaganjazzblues.org



Mike Allen Quartet

Love One Another

Almus Jazz/Warner Music Canada ALM14062

Release date: November, 2005

Mike Allen

- tenor sax

Bruno Hubert

- piano

Sean Cronin

- bass

Julian MacDonough - drums

CD Tracks

1. Her Ascendancy
2. The Power Of Observation
3. Luna Crescente
4. In A World Of Their Own
5. The Best For Me
6. Same Old Feeling
7. Something For Tony
8. Love One Another

Recorded July 25-27, 2005 at Birch Theatre, Capilano College, North Vancouver, BC. Recorded by Brad Turner. Mixed by Chris Gestrin. Mastered by Suite Sound Labs

Winner of the 2003 Western Canadian Music Awards "Jazz Album Of The Year", tenor saxophonist Mike Allen has embraced the jazz tradition to create his own singular sound. As a leader for over a decade on a handful of critically acclaimed CDs, Allen has emerged as one of the most distinctive voices in jazz.

"one of a half dozen interesting Canadians to watch."

The Globe and Mail calls Allen "one of a half dozen interesting Canadians to watch." His recently released seventh CD as a leader, *Love One Another* (Almus Jazz), proves Allen is even better than that.

Recorded by Brad Turner at North Vancouver's Birch Theatre in three days at the end of July 2005, mixed by Chris Gestrin, and mastered by Jamie Sitar, Mike Allen's beautiful production is as strong as his band's playing.

Throughout the recording's eight tracks, the rhythm section's propulsive blowing provides ample support for Allen's soulful abstractions. This is a beautiful quartet of masterful musicians cooking on all cylinders on a set of eight well-crafted originals.

Allen has absorbed the post-bop advancements of John Coltrane and Sonny Rollins. After studying with Joe Henderson in San Francisco, Allen has mastered his teacher's synthesis of the two tenor sax titans and carved out his own distinctive sound and vision. Lester Young and Ben Webster's big, rich tenor sounds haunt many of Allen's solos.

The bark and controlled wildness that Coleman Hawkins added to the jazz idiom are here too. *Love One Another* teems with ancient echoes blown through the instrument's majestic history. More significantly, Allen's tenor sax sings a breathtakingly singular and original song.

With *Love One Another*, Mike Allen has produced music of uncommon beauty and power. The stately title track sounds like an instant classic, and it caps a series of exciting performances of in-the-moment improvisational magic. It's the essence of jazz. It's great! - Joseph Blake, Victoria Times Colonist

www.mikeallenjazz.com

"Life is a lot like jazz. . . it's best when you improvise. . ." George Gershwin.



Jazz Notes

By
Cherie
Hanson

April is a much anticipated after we have been shut up in the gray box of winter with low skies, cold winds and not enough snow to justify complaining. Locals look forward

to seeing some colour... and hearing some bright jazz sound.

On April 1st the Vernon Jazz Society brings trombone player *Bob Rogers* down from Revelstoke to play with his trio. *Cameron Ward*, Kelowna bass player, will round the group up to a Quartet.

Bob started trombone at the age of ten and studied at Humber College, UBC and Northwestern University in Chicago. After a number of years in Vancouver playing with people such as *Natalie Cole* and *the Temp-*

tations and recording with *the West Coast Jazz Orchestra*, *Aerosmith* and *the Payolas*, in 1993 he moved to Revelstoke for a steady gig as a music teacher and playing for the *Okanagan*, *Kamloops* and *Cranbrook Symphony Orchestras*.

Also, on Friday nights in April the Coast Capri is hosting live music organized by local jazz musician *Trevor Salloum*, once a week. It is a great place to sit and watch the winter fade and the tourists frolic in the pool as the weather improves.

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(Continued from page 11)

On April 7th at 7:30 pm one of the most inspiring jazz performances of the year will be a part of the B.C. Interior Jazz Festival. Go to www.selectyourtickets.com or phone 250-762-5050 to reserve today or you will be too late. This concert sells out every year. For \$18 a person the concert includes: *Sunny Wilkinson, Greg Yazinitzky, Horace Alexander-Young, Dean McNeill, Hugh Parsons and Cameron Ward. The Michael Garding Festival Big Band* gets a chance to really pull the stops out and play big.

Sunny Wilkinson has lived and performed in Los Angeles and in Okemos, Michigan. She has impressive credits with *The Count Basie Band, the Boss Brass, Bill Mays and Edgar Winter*, among others. She teaches vocal jazz at Michigan State University and Western Michigan University. While she and the other guest musicians are in Kelowna, they adjudicate and instruct high school students during the week and on Friday they get up and inspire by their talented performances. Last month the Okanagan Musician featured an interview with *Horace Alexander-Young*, the vocal and instrumental adjudicator. It is not often one hears a woodwind, keyboard, percussion, vocal musician and composer all in one person.

Another vocal instructor is *Arlie Langager* from the University of Calgary where she received her M.A. in music and now teaches. Her group *Inner Voices* won first place in the Cultural Traditions of the CBC Choral Competitions just last April.

Gregory Yasinitzky has been a presence at the Interior Jazz Festival for many years. He is a Professor of Music at Washington State University and has written music for *Clark Terry, David Liebman* and over 100 of his compositions have been published by *Kendor Music, Warner Brothers, Walrus Music* and many other companies. *Greg* is a regenerating dynamo. He has played with *Sarah Vaughan, Ella Fitzgerald, Lionel Hampton, Manhattan Transfer, Mel Torme, Stan Getz, and Clark Terry*.

Dean McNeill, who is an instrumental adjudicator and performer, teaches at the University of Saskatchewan and performs with *the Saskatoon Symphony Orchestra*. He has performed with *Tommy Banks, P.J. Perry* and others. His M.A. in jazz is from the University of North Texas.

Local jazz stars can stand up with the best of them. *Hugh Parsons*, keyboard player and vocal jazz teacher, is part of the team that organizes the Interior Jazz Festival year after year. His credentials are amazing as he has played shoulder to shoulder with all of the great, talented musicians appearing at the Jazz Master's concerts. His students have come away from national competitions with gold year after year.



Larry Crawford, multi-talented musician on the saxophone, clarinet and flute, also is a noted arranger and composer. He was on *Sesame Street* for 12 years.... no not in green shaggy fur. He was in the studio production band. *Larry* has played with *Rich Little, Sammy Davis Jr., Phil Nimmons, Doc Severnson* and he has actually played at the Carnegie Hall.

Cameron Ward, who moves easily from four string to six string to double bass, has played with *Tommy Banks, Campbell Ryga, Dee Daniels, P.J. Perry, in the Robin Skeleton Orchestra*, with Juno nominated *Bob De Angelis, the Okanagan Symphony, the Symphony of the Kootneys, the Kamloops Symphony, The Rankin Sisters* (oh yes, back to Jazz) and the local group *Just In Time*.

Michael Garding's' Big Band includes many talented, local music teachers and retired music teachers who get a chance to really make a full, impressive sound. The group plays a combination of standards and some of Michael's original arrangements and

compositions. Because a band of this size is very expensive to hire, it is a great opportunity for Kelowna residents to get out and experience how thrilling a big band can be.

On April 8th, get to Vernon to hear the Juno Award winner and one of the most versatile, in-demand Canadian Jazz musicians. *Brad Turner* is in the house. Who knows if he will be playing keyboard, drums, brass.....the list is probably being extended right now. Naturally, *Brad* is the type of person who would father twins. It is just fitting. Make sure you buy tickets in advance, or have a friend pick them up for you at the Vernon Bean Scene on main street. This show and all shows at the Vernon Jazz Club above Nolan's Drug Store are sold out in advance.

One quick way to check out jazz gigs in the valley is put in search words: Okanagan Jazz and Blues Society and then check out events in Kelowna. Next is the links page and you can "go" directly to Kamloops or Vernon to see details about those venues. The inimitable *James Butler*, President of the Okanagan Jazz and Blues Society keeps us up to date and designs all of the society's posters. The executive in the group bring big name artists into our mid-sized town and put Kelowna on the jazz map. With his work, and the work of the board of the Interior Jazz Festival Society with members such as *Lyn and Hugh Parsons and Brian Street*, Kelowna has become very well know. In a good way.

The newly elected board for the OJBS is: President, *James Butler*; Vice-President, *Will Manning*; Treasurer, *Andrée Dupré*; Secretary, *Karen Abramsen*; Directors, *Bob Bachold, Cheryl Stone, Sue Keast, Suzan Wood-Young* (who is taking on the newsletter), *Rolly Rycroft and Janis Thompson*.

On April 22, which is Earth Day, *Larry Crawford* and friends will be playing at Penticton's Dream Cafe

The group is *Neville Bowman*, keyboards; *Scott Gamble*, drums; *Cameron Ward*, bass. The evening of fine jazz and food begins at 8 pm. Call the Dream Cafe to get more details and to reserve tickets. It is the first time in many months that a local group is playing. Artists from around the world have appeared at this venue.

Come out: it is time. Keep the jazz live. If you have a gig in the valley, contact me. creative@hansonward.com