

## **Mel Martin and Bebop and Beyond Biography**

Bebop and Beyond is an acclaimed classical repertory jazz ensemble committed to working with some of the foremost performers and composers in jazz. Formed in the San Francisco Bay Area in 1983 by reed player, composer/arranger Mel Martin, the group has garnered international attention for their dynamic and innovative presentations and finely produced recordings of new arrangements of classic bop compositions by Thelonious Monk, Dizzy Gillespie, Charlie Parker, Tadd Dameron, Charles Mingus and others as well as forward looking originals by members of the group. Bebop and Beyond strives to bring an authentic interpretation to the classic repertoire and to invigorate the music with a broad and entertaining approach, drawing the audience into a musical environment that brings together the musical lineage of modern jazz including many of the later innovations of the music. The collective musical experiences of members of the band reads like a Who's Who of jazz. Ranging from Bud Powell and John Coltrane to McCoy Tyner and Freddie Hubbard, the list also includes Benny Carter, Dizzy Gillespie, Joe Henderson, Bobby Hutcherson, Jimmy Smith, Milt Jackson and many more. In 2002, Bebop and Beyond released Friends and Mentors - Bebop and Beyond Plays the Music of Mel Martin on the Quixotic label. It features Mel Martin -saxophones, Bobby Watson - alto saxophone, Jack Walrath - trumpet, Mike Longo or George Cables - piano, Ray Drummond - bass and Billy Hart or Winard Harper - drums. Bebop and Beyond's previous recording was a collaboration with bop innovator Dizzy Gillespie which was his final studio date. The results of this can be heard on their recording BEBOP AND BEYOND PLAYS DIZZY GILLESPIE (Bluemoon R2 79170). They were also presented in performance with him in Jazz In The City's Jazz Master's Series as well as the Monterey Jazz Festival. Their previous recording BEBOP AND BEYOND PLAYS THELONIOUS MONK (Bluemoon R2 79154) was produced by Monk's original producer Orrin Keepnews and featured special guests Joe Henderson on tenor saxophone and Howard Johnson on tuba and baritone sax as well as faithful arrangements of many of Monk's more obscure works. Both of these recordings as well as the concert were funded in part for being of the highest artistic caliber by the National Endowment for the Arts and have been highly acclaimed. They recorded their first album BEBOP AND BEYOND (Concord CJ244) in 1984. Bebop and Beyond is currently working on developing their own original compositions for their next recording project. Bebop and Beyond is a 501(c)3 Not-for Profit Corporation Board of Directors Mel Martin John Rogers Evelyn Dean Board of Advisors Jimmy Heath Orrin Keepnews

### **Quotes**

"Bebop and Beyond remains solidly committed to mining a deep vein of modern American music for nothing more than the joy of the art. It's about time for the band's recognition to catch up with it's accomplishments." Derk Richardson - Bay Guardian

"This is some of Dizzy's best recorded work in years, a case of mutual inspiration. Mel Martin has cooked up personalized charts that retain the essence of Gillespiana. The honored guest can't go wrong with these cats who have done their homework." Owen Cordle - Downbeat \*\*\*\*

"This inspiring project of the music of Thelonious Monk will stand as an important contribution to the legacy of bebop." Dave Liebman- Saxophone Journal

"It is fascinating to witness the creation of a repertory approach to Monk's music." CD Review

"This is one of the 'big thinker' recordings of the year." Linda Gruno - Jazz Link

"This is very exciting, tricky, complex, unusual music beautifully played by an out-of-the-ordinary group of musicians." Mike Ferro - Victory Review

"Mel Martin has done a beautiful job with the material which is most significant. It is an outstanding tribute to the memory of Monk. The performance was excellent as well. I am most impressed with Mel 's musicianship." Benny Carter

"Bebop and Beyond are very serious musicians.....and I think they did a wonderful job with my material." Dizzy Gillespie