



Mel Martin and the Tenor Conclave

The Tenor Conclave is a project that Bay Area reedman Mel Martin has dreamed of for a long time. He has become an acknowledged icon of saxophone through his fine work with great saxophonists such as Benny Carter and Joe Henderson and others as well as his many writings for *Saxophone Journal* and *JazzImprov* magazines and his fine web site Mel Martin's Jazz And Saxophone Web Site. He is also a national clinician for Yanagisawa Saxophones and has performed clinics and concerts throughout the United States.

In the conclave band he has gathered some of the foremost tenor saxophonists of the day to focus on the repertoire of the great saxophonists of the past. The idea of such a band is not new having been done before by artists such as John Coltrane, Sonny Rollins, Gene Ammons, Sonny Stitt, Red Holloway, Dexter Gordon, Wardell Gray, Hank Mobley, Johnny Griffin, Eddie Lockjaw Davis, Zoot Sims, Al Cohn and others. The combination of forceful jazz saxophonists is an exciting and irresistible combination of talents that are, at once, competitive and yet exudes a high level of camaraderie. The first project is **The Music of Joe Henderson** who Mel Martin played and recorded with extensively.

Mel Martin has proven to be one of the most versatile and creative musicians to emerge from the San Francisco Bay Area. His virtuosic abilities on woodwinds combined with his vast range of experience have brought him to a position of pre-eminence as one of the most inventive and innovative of performers. His unique abilities as an improviser, arranger and composer have made him a favorite of such greats as Benny Carter, Dizzy Gillespie, McCoy Tyner, Freddie Hubbard, and many others.

His work as a leader has been documented on several brilliant recordings with the groups Listen, featuring Mel Martin and his current band Bebop and Beyond as well as his solo recording *Other Side Up* where he displayed his fascinating abilities as a multi-instrumentalist, arranger/producer, composer and jazz soloist and his popular recording *Mel Martin Plays Benny Carter* featuring Benny Carter as special guest on the Enja label. He has applied these talents to a wide variety of performing and recording

situations including Santana, Azteca, Mongo Santamaria, Boz Scaggs, Cal Tjader, Vince Guaraldi, Denny Zeitlin, Hubert Laws, Ella Fitzgerald, Frank Sinatra, James Brown, B.B. King, Billy Cobham, Freddy Cole, and the Afro Blue Band as well as a multitude of independent studio projects. In performance Mel displays a rare combination of fiery soloing abilities and telepathic communication and projects a joyously spirited vibrancy to his audiences.

Craig Handy - From the time he arrived in New York at age 23 in 1986, saxophonist Craig Handy was acknowledged as a musician with big, burly tenor sound, sharp wit, and above all, individuality. After participating in the renowned Berkeley High School jazz program – which also produced David Murray, Peter Apfelbaum, Benny Green, Dave Ellis and Joshua Redman – Handy earned the highly competitive Charlie Parker Scholarship award, which allowed him to study at North Texas State University. He attended North Texas for two and a half years, majoring in psychology and playing in the school's prestigious One O'clock Lab Band.

Over the next few years he would breath life into those accolades through a number of important associations: holding his own on the front line of legendary bebop drummer Roy Haynes' band, working with South African pianist Abdullah Ibrahim, and weaving sensuous obbligati behind Betty Carter on the kind of tunes most young artist are presumed not to understand. Handy would also go on to score, produce and perform the music for the 1994-95 season of "The Cosby Mysteries". He has toured with Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers, Herbie Hancock, The Mingus Dynasty and Big Band and he played the role of Coleman Hawkins in the Robert Altman film "Kansas City."

Tim Armacost - Since he landed in New York in 1993, Armacost has quickly developed a powerful presence on the scene. Armacost's debut CD, **Fire**, on Concord Records, and his follow up Live at Smalls on Double Time Records, marked his emergence as a leader with a clear voice in the resurgent jazz of the 1990's. His current release, The Wishing Well, displays the breadth of his current working unit, featuring Bruce Barth, Ray Drummond, and Billy Hart.

Armacost's career is already distinguished by performance and recording credits alongside the likes of Kenny Barron, Billy Hart, Tom Harrell, Ray Drummond, Roy Hargrove, Paquito D'Rivera, Claudio Roditi, Dave Kikoski, Lonnie Plaxico, Robin Eubanks, Pete Christlieb, Jesse Davis, Randy Brecker, Akira Tana, Valery Ponomarev, Hendrik Meurkens, the Maria Schneider Orchestra, and the David Murray Big Band. He has toured throughout East and West Europe, Japan, India, and the United States.

Dave Ellis - has long been a key figure in the fertile Northern California jazz scene. His story is a tapestry woven from myriad musical adventures. It begins with his days as a ten-year-old musical prodigy and opens on a new chapter with *State of Mind*, his debut recording for Milestone, featuring a sterling jazz veteran cast of pianist Mulgrew Miller, bassists Peter Washington and Christian McBride, drummers Carl Allen and Lewis Nash, and alto saxophonist Vincent Herring.

He attended the renowned Berkeley schools music programs. He was already a precocious player by the time he got to high school and came under the tutelage of jazz ensemble director Phil Hardymon and his successor, Charles Hamilton. Among the players to come out of that milieu have been saxophonists Craig Handy and Peter Apfelbaum, trumpeter Steven Bernstein, and pianist Benny Green. Graduating in 1985, one year ahead of future star Joshua Redman, Ellis moved on to the Berklee College of Music, where he focused on his composing and arranging skills on all sorts of instruments, in all sorts of styles, and graduated with a degree in music production and engineering. At school and in the rich performing scene around the Boston/Cambridge area, his peers included such leading lights of new generation jazz as Roy Hargrove, Antonio Hart, Mark Turner, Kenny Brooks, Donny Mcaslin, Seamus Blake, and Chris Cheek. He has toured and recorded with the Charlie Hunter Trio, Dimitri Matheny and Bob Weir and Ratdog. He scooped up two 1999 California Music Awards -- for Outstanding Jazz Album and Outstanding Jazz Artist in Northern California and won again for Outstanding Jazz album in 2004.

The All-Star Rhythm section is comprised of Mark Levine – piano, Akira Tana – drums and Rob Fisher – bass.

For updates on upcoming events, please check out
http://www.melmartin.com/html_pages/events.html

JOE HENDERSON TUNE LIST

Beatrice
 Black Narcissus
 Granted
 Homestretch
 If
 In 'n Out
 Inner Urge
 Isotope
 Jinirikisha
 Mamacita
 Mo'Joe
 Punjab
 Recordame
 Serenity
 Shade of Jade

Step Lightly
 The Kicker

Kenny Dorham

Blue Bossa
 Brown's Town
 Escapade
 La Mesha
 Short Story

McCoy Tyner

Passion Dance

Ballads

Ask Me Now
 Chelsea Bridge
 Round Midnight
 Search for Peace
 You Know I Care

Standards

Invitation
 Night and Day
 Once I Loved
 Without a Song