

THE PAUL WEITZ TRIO

Paul Weitz, who makes his recording debut as leader on this CD, is a superior bop-based guitarist with a conception of his own. "I play softly, pay close attention to dynamics, and try to make every note count. I prefer to play melodies on top of fresh harmonies rather than having a lot of lines going on." His gentle approach is quite accessible but at the same time he swings hard when the performance calls for it. Paul's harmonically advanced solos are both subtle and quite inventive.

Born and raised in Buffalo, Paul Weitz comes from a musical family. His mother played piano professionally during World War II, and his older brother is a gifted guitarist who was quite successful during the early fusion years. Paul picked up valuable experience playing in a variety of bands on the East Coast, performing both dance music and jazz as a sideman. After moving to Los Angeles, he became a leader and dedicated himself to jazz, studying with Ted Greene and Sid Jacobs.

"I feel very comfortable with my trio with bassist Matt VanBenschoten and drummer Gus Duffy, who is a successful architect. Gus, who uses brushes most of the time, is very supportive. Matt has 35 years of jazz performance and recording experience. Matt and Gus work together very well and we all felt that it was definitely time for us to record."

The trio performs 11 jazz standards with creativity, melodic development, and solid swing. A few highlights stick out. "Autumn Leaves" features the same introduction and chord melody that Paul arranged back when he was a teenager, and it still works well. "A Night in Tunisia" sounds a bit different than usual due to the guitarist's chordal approach. Originally it was planned to perform "Poinciana" in a similar way as Ahmad Jamal since the pianist recorded his definitive version, but the more the trio performed it, the more original it became.

On "Dear Old Stockholm" Paul plays the melody and chords at the same time, using a technique developed by Lenny Breau. "Beautiful Love" has the trio using a framework often utilized by Keith Jarrett. The guitarist's solo rubato melody leads to a surprise bass solo that sets the stage for the rest of the performance.

Paul Weitz, who performs in the Los Angeles area with the trio, duo and with a quartet that includes singer Rachel Sorsa Khoury, looks forward to future recordings and performances. So do his growing number of fans in the jazz world.

SCOTT YANOW,

Author of ten jazz books including *The Jazz Singers*, *Trumpet Kings* and *Jazz on Film*.

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