

DANN ZINN

“Dann Zinn is a game changer, who is taking jazz in new directions.” As a world-class saxophonist/flutist, Dann Zinn is renowned for being a passionate soloist and composer/arranger. Hailed over the years as “inventive,” “distinctive,” and for “creating a stunning and emotional listening experience,” Dann has developed a unique style distinguishing him as a one of a kind artist with a tone unlike any other horn player on the jazz scene today.

Zinn’s resume includes working with Joe Henderson, Taylor Eigsti, Terri Lyne Carrington Jeff Tain Watts, Freddie Hubbard, Chuck Findley, Mary Wells, Martha and the Vandellas, Barry Finnerty, Frank Martin, among many others. In addition to his five CDs, *Ten Songs*, *Wish*, *Grace’s Song*, *Shangri La*, and the newest, *Day Of Reckoning*, his impressive discography includes over 100 appearances as a featured soloist and sideman on albums with prominent musicians. Dann’s performances have spanned international stages including being featured at the San Francisco Jazz Festival, the Monterey Jazz Festival, and the world famous Yoshi’s, where he has played to sold-out crowds. He has garnered critical acclaim from prestigious publications such as *DownBeat Magazine*, *Jazz Times*, *Jazziz*, and local media such as the *Oakland Magazine*. Dann’s other performance history includes television, radio, and multimedia videos, games, and even children’s specials.

Dann entered the Bay Area music scene as a teenager and after studying and working in L.A. and Aspen, found himself in New York. In his early years, he mentored with Lenny Pickett, Eddie Daniels, and Ernie Watts. Zinn spent time gigging and touring New England only to return to California where he has become one of the most sought after sax players around.

Zinn’s first two original releases, *Ten Songs* and *Wish* received immediate praise and widespread recognition. Zinn’s music is revered as “deeply idiosyncratic and shaped by his synthesis of seemingly polar influences.” The expertise of the late great drummer Paul VanWageningen, and the late brilliant bassist John Shifflett, and guitarist Tim Volpicella create a feel that is sophisticated and sincere, ethnic and classical, and leaves the listener craving more. Musicians comment on Zinn’s “beautiful ethereal folk melodies,” with complex chords underneath. The additions of electric bass of Paul’s brother Mark Van Wageningen, and the percussion of Brian Rice made for a rich and full-bodied musical experience noted as “auspicious,” “truly impressive,” and “brilliant!” “Zinn’s music is said to combine Garbarek’s crystalline sound with a handful of East Bay grease.”

Later, Zinn began to experiment with adding piano to his band, which lead him to *Grace’s Song* featuring Taylor Eigsti on piano, John Shifflett on bass and Alan Hall on drums. This release again features Zinn’s original compositions and magnificent arrangements of the timeless standard *Stardust* by Hoagy Carmichael and the classic Police tune, *King of Pain*. Zinn’s compositions are uniquely his. Critics called it “...a blend of beautiful melodies, intense solos: turns out it’s a journey well worth taking...” and “jazz that feels like you have come home.” The musicians are guided by their own interpretations of Zinn’s imagination. They work together

seamlessly and have developed a creative atmosphere that compliments Zinn's style, but one that also taps into their individual personalities. "Zinn's compositions and arrangements are so potent...it demands and deserves our attention."

Zinn's next recording was Shangri La, which started to percolate almost immediately after Grace's Song. Zinn became interested in the idea of a bass-less trio and was inspired again by the haunting melodies in his head and the passion for creating a pure and accessible sound. He is joined on this project by the world renowned, great drummer Peter Erskine and the phenomenally talented Chris Robinson on guitar. Erskine hailed it as one of his favorite recordings ever. The three blend their talents into a beautiful, playful sound, "it's a game raiser all the way around. A stretching out, off the clock kind of date, this is not so easy jazz that is easy to take. A high water mark for sitting down jazz fans that like to have some swinging elements in the mix, it's just plain fun by some real pros." "Atmospherics and solid-state jams exist simultaneously, peace and war work in the same space, empty canvases can turn busy at a moment's notice, and the line between the scripted and the spontaneous is often hard to read."

For his fifth recording Day of Reckoning, Zinn presents his stellar quartet in a performance of nine new original compositions along with a moving version of the classic ballad, "Blame It On My Youth." Zinn created this project specifically for longtime collaborator, and brilliant Taylor Eigsti on piano, the young phenom bassist Zach Ostroff and world class drummer, Mark Ferber. Zinn's playing, as always, is energetic, virtuosic, and passionate. Day Of Reckoning was recorded in the final weeks of the legendary Fantasy Studios in Berkeley, CA. The band captured the sounds and clarity of the studio along with the excitement the group brings to a live gig. creating a listening experience that "exemplifies Zinn's gift for marrying eminently memorable themes to entrancing rhythms."

When he is not recording and gigging, Zinn is teaching the best and the brightest jazz musicians in the country. He was the Director of Jazz Studies at the California State University East Bay, is currently the Director of the San Francisco Jazz Festival High School All Star Combo, is on the faculty of the University of California at Berkeley, The California Jazz Conservatory, and taught at the Brubeck Institute. Zinn's private studio is home to a list of multiple winners of full scholarships to schools such as the Boston Berklee School of Music, winners of the Jimmy Lyons Award, winners of the Downbeat best high school and college musician awards, winners of Thelonious Monk Institute scholarships, Grammy Band participants, and countless all star band members for famous jazz festivals. Some of his students include Dayna Stephens, Mark Zelesky, Chad Lefkowitz-Brown, Albert Baliwas, Jill Ryan, Natalie Cressman, Remy LeBoef, Pat Carroll, Hitomi Oba, Jesse Scheinen, Ben Flocks, and Kenny Shanker. He has directed Ambrose Akinmusire, Justin Brown, and Elena Pinderhughes in student ensembles.

Zinn and the Art of Saxophone, a much coveted and sought after series of six books instructing students and professionals on how to expand their playing abilities and concepts, is in its third printing. When Zinn tells his students they will be first chair in the All State Band by next year, he means it. He instills a work ethic in his students, which enables them to get the most out of their talent. He gives true meaning to the old adage, "How do you get to Carnegie Hall?"

Zinn is currently enjoying the balance of his personal creative endeavors, being a bandleader, as well as a sideman, and teacher. He lives in Alameda, CA with his wife and two children.