

AL HENDERSON SEPTET

BIOGRAPHY

AL HENDERSON

Bassist, composer, arranger, leader, jazz educator AL HENDERSON, (MFA Musicology, 1983) is well known as a leader of his groups the Al Henderson Septet/Quintet/Quartet and co-leader of the influential group Time Warp. Since moving to Toronto in the 1970s, he has performed as a sideman for jazz artists such as Jane Bunnett, Arnett Cobb, Hank Crawford, Sonny Fortune, Slim Gaillard, Jimmy Knepper, Diana Krall, Flip Phillips, John Tchai, and Eddie 'Cleanhead' Vinson.

As a composer, he has created a large and distinctive body of original compositions - pieces which form the bulk of the repertoire of the bands he leads. Stuart Broomer has written "... bassist Al Henderson is the real thing, a composer in the tradition of Duke Ellington and Charles Mingus, whose works have distinctive energy and melodic and harmonic character..." (Toronto Life, January 2009). In 1995 he was recognized both as the Jazz Report Composer of the Year and winner of the prestigious SOCAN Award for Original Jazz Composition for the large work "Ellingtonia". His compositions have appeared on recordings by the Al Henderson Septet/Quintet/Quartet, Time Warp, Barry Romberg's Random Access, Richard Whiteman, Alex Dean, Don Pullen & Jane Bunnett, and Shox Johnson & the Jive Bombers.

The Al Henderson Quartet was formed in 1993 featuring Alex Dean (saxes, oboe, bass clarinet), pianist Richard Whiteman and drummer Barry Romberg. The band's first recording - *Dinosaur Dig* (CRST CD103) - was named one of the top three jazz recordings of 1995 by CBC Morningside.

In 1998, the band became a quintet with the addition of the internationally renowned saxophonist Pat LaBarbera (saxes, flute) to create the uniquely versatile and powerful front line featured on the recording *Urban Landscape* (CRST CD108). Geoff Chapman described the band's live performances as "...consistently stimulating...a healthy mix of drive and fascinating adventures..." (Toronto Star) while Mark Miller has called the band ..."a thinking fan's quintet" (Globe & Mail).

In October of 2004 Al Henderson released a new quintet recording of live performances from the Montreal Bistro in Toronto - *Fathers and Sons* (CRST CD124). Ted O'Reilly writes "Al Henderson works without a net, but you're never in danger of not having a good time..." (Whole Note) while Richard Bourcier states: "this session has it all." (JazzReview.com)

For his most recent recording, *Regeneration* (CRST CD132), the quintet has been expanded to a septet with the addition of noted cellists Matt Brubeck and Mark Chambers.

THE MUSICIANS

PAT LaBARBERA (saxes, flute) is one of Canada's most respected jazz musicians. He is internationally renowned both for his own recordings as a leader and his work with Elvin Jones, Buddy Rich and many others. He was the recipient of the 2000 Juno Award for his recording *Deep in a Dream*.

ALEX DEAN (saxes, oboe, flute, bass clarinet) is one of Canada's best-known tenor saxophonists and leaders. He is featured on numerous recordings by artists such as Rob McConnell, Kieran Overs and D.E.W. East. Alex received the 1994 Jazz Report Award for Album of the Year for his recording *Kaitlyn's Waltz*.

MATT BRUBECK (cello) is a composer/performer specializing in improvisation on the cello. Matt is at ease in multiple genres and has taken his cello improvisation skills into diverse musical territories. He performs with a wide range of jazz and improvising artists. Current projects include the JUNO-nominated duo Brubeck/Braid.

MARK CHAMBERS (cello) is a conductor, cellist and early music specialist. He has performed extensively in the United States and Canada as both a chamber musician and orchestral player. He currently performs in a piano trio with Christina Petrowska Quilico, and his wife Heather Chambers.

RICHARD WHITEMAN is a versatile pianist who works as a sideman with Toronto groups as diverse as Hemispheres and John Alcorn. He is also a recording artist in his own right, his latest release being *Live in Vancouver* on the Cornerstone label.

BARRY ROMBERG is a distinctive stylist who has worked as a sideman for artists such as Kenny Wheeler, Sam Rivers, Gil Evans and Don Pullen. He currently leads the well-known group Random Access. His latest release is *was, shall, why, because* (romhog 118).