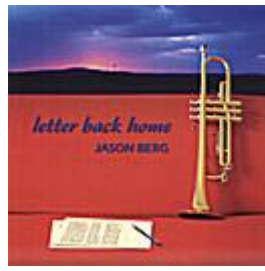


Mp3 Jason Waltony Berg - Letter Back Home



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Featuring eight originals in the jazz tradition, "Letter Back Home" is a musical scrapbook bringing together songs that trace the development of a young artist across time and space. 8 MP3 Songs JAZZ: Bebop, JAZZ: Traditional Jazz Combo Details: "Letter Back Home" is a set of 8 originals by trumpet player, composer and educator Jason Waltony Berg. These tunes trace his development musically, emotionally and spiritually. Informed by the jazz tradition, the music covers a wide variety of styles and moods from hard-bop swing to jazz waltz and from moody ballad to latin-influenced groove. From the artist: "Letter Back Home is a sort of musical scrapbook. It puts together music that was written over a fourteen year period in my development. The most recent pieces (On The Fringe, DPR and Da Banks) I wrote shortly before the recording session and the oldest (The Night's Delight) I wrote while still in high school. Each piece reflects some aspect of my life over this time period which has struck me as being important and thus, important enough to write some music about. On The Fringe: I have lived out in Oklahoma for two and a half years now. When I was first stationed out here to play with the 77th Army Band my wife and I thought it was a joke. Having lived on the East Coast our whole lives we had no idea what to expect. However, Oklahoma has been good to us. We have made many friends and currently both teach at Oklahoma Panhandle State University. This tune is loosely based on a tune from a very famous musical from which Oklahoma takes its state song. DPR: DPR stands for Dread Pirate Roberts (a character from a favorite movie of mine when growing up). I wrote this in dedication to a very dear friend of mine, Andrew Roberts. Sandra: Having put up with me for going on eight years, my wife Sandra Lee is one of those special folks that you only meet every so often. How I convinced her to hang out with me I will never know but I am grateful for the opportunity. This song is dedicated to her. Mentor and Disciple: To have a teacher is a good thing and to have a great teacher is even better. I have been fortunate to encounter

many great teachers and owe them each a great debt of gratitude. This piece acknowledges that the relationship of teacher and student is first and foremost, a joyful thing.

4th Prayer: The title of the tune refers to the fourth prayer of the morning and evening practice of Nichiren Buddhism as practiced by the Soka Gakkai. It is during this prayer that one offers prayers for the deceased. Although totally inadequate, this melody is dedicated to all those who have passed away recently including the victims of the Iraq war on all sides (everyone is somebody's baby boy or girl, regardless of race, creed or political affiliation), the victims of the natural disasters that afflicted us last year and especially to my dear friend Ellen Schick who recently died due to cancer.

My Reflection: To me, our outer life is always and in a very strict way, the reflection of our inner life. Sometimes this can be a painful realization but ultimately I believe it is a source of tremendous empowerment. After all, if you don't like what you see around you, all you have to do to start is change within. Sounds easy? Not really, but I believe it is the only true solution to life's struggles.

The Night's Delight: This is the oldest song on the CD, written when I was still in high school. It refers to the cool evening air of the early summer evenings in Connecticut where I grew up. It truly is a beautiful experience to walk in the night air when the heat of the day is gone.

Da Banks: My Alma Mater, Rutgers University, in New Brunswick, New Jersey, sits nestled on the banks of the Raritan River. Over the years, many great jazz musicians have been born, grown up, worked, studied and performed here. While I hardly measure among the finest of these artists, I am happy to just be numbered as one of them and proud of the time I spent on da banks."

Jason had the fortune early on to hear great jazz music both live and on record. His interest in music first sparked when he picked up the trumpet in fourth grade and was set ablaze after hearing a very young group of talented jazz musicians including the pianist Brad Meldau (who was then in high school). He soon began to investigate his mother's record collection which included recordings by Billie Holiday with Buck Clayton and Harry Sweets Edison on trumpet. His desire to hear more great music led him to the local library which was well stocked with recordings by great musicians like Dizzy Gillespie, Miles Davis and Charlie Parker. This early love of the music, coupled with the direction and guidance of his high school band director, Haig Shahverdian, kindled in Berg the passionate flame for musical excellence and personal integrity which has continued to burn within him until today.

Growing up in the Greater Hartford area gave Jason access to some very fine musicians including the late great Jackie McClean. Berg was a student at McClean's Artists Collective for three years while in high school and while there he studied and performed with many of the most exciting musicians on the jazz

scene today including trombonist Steve Davis and saxophonist Jimmy Greene. It was at the Collective where Jason also met pianist Noah Baerman who was to become a good friend and musical collaborator. Berg went to Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey where he studied classical trumpet with Peter Bond of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, jazz theory with saxophonist Ralph Bowen, improvisation with guitarist Ted Dunbar and composition with pianist Kenny Barron. While there, Jason also assisted jazz organist and educator Radam Schwartz with the Jazz Institute of New Brunswick and played with the cooperative jazz quartet, Positive Rhythmic Force (PRF), which he co-founded and co-led. As the fruit of his labors, Berg received a Bachelors of Music degree from Rutgers in 1998 and a Masters of Music degree in 2000. He also recorded two independent CDs with PRF (the eponymous PRF and The Question Is) and wrote a large amount of original music including a piece based on choreography by Maia Claire Garrison and another to accompany a Rutgers University production of Anna Devere Smiths Fires in the Mirror. After graduation, Jason freelanced around the New York Metropolitan area and taught jazz improvisation, theory, and instrumental music at the William Brown Academy in Newark, NJ and as part of the Montclair State University Preparatory Division. Looking for a change of pace, he joined the U.S. Army Band and spent time playing music in Hampton Roads, Virginia and eventually, Lawton, Oklahoma. While with the 77th Army Band based out of Ft. Sill, Oklahoma, Berg played over four hundred services in various locations including Arkansas, New Jersey, Texas, Oklahoma and Colorado. Having served his time in the active duty military, Jason took the job as Director of Bands at Oklahoma Panhandle State University where he is currently still employed. At the end of 2005, Berg went in to the studio and recorded his latest record, Letter Back Home. The CD is a musical scrapbook bringing together tunes that were written over a fourteen year period. They reflect the different experiences that Jason has had as he continues to pursue musical excellence and personal integrity.

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