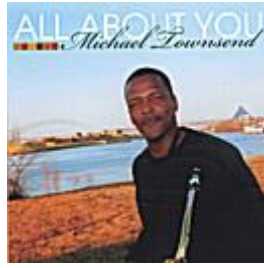


Mp3 Michael Townsend - All About You



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You'll get locked into Michael's saxophonic mixture of Smooth Jazz, R&B and Pop selections that are exceptionally soothing to the listening ear. 10 MP3 Songs JAZZ: Smooth Jazz, URBAN/R&B:

Contemporary urban Details: Smooth Jazz Saxophonist Michael Townsend

The city of Memphis has always been well known for its strong Musical heritage. Many great musicians have strong ties to Memphis and its surrounding area. Beale Street, in downtown Memphis, is world-renown for being the foundation of the majority of Memphis' early musical heritage and its hosting of a long list of legendary Blues and Jazz artist that are now a part of American music's history. Though Bourbon Street in New Orleans La. is credited for being the birth place of Jazz, early Jazz owes its improvisational approach to the vocal styles of the Blues. The New Orleans style of Jazz was primarily used as entertainment for the black working class, acting as fictional music for dances, parades and funerals and could be heard in barrel houses, juke joints, gambling spots and brothels. By the 1920's, Chicago had become the new center for Jazz due to the migration of a large black population from the south looking for new job opportunities and a better lifestyle in the north. In the center of this migration and musical renaissance is Memphis. Jazz Saxophonist Michael Townsend is a native Memphian and a product of the Overton High School Creative and Performing Arts program (CAPA). As a child growing up in Memphis, Michael didn't have to look far to find inspiration to pursue a career in music. While in high school, Michael began studying the pioneering styles of great artist like Louis Armstrong, W.C. Handy, Mamie Smith, "JellyRoll" Morton, Joe "King" Oliver, Sidney Bechet and Sarah Vaughn. In his senior year, he was "First Chair All-State Concert Bassoonist" and also played the saxophone in the "All State" Jazz Band. Continuing to further his education, Michael received a full scholarship to the University of Memphis. There he became known as an excellent woodwind doubler while playing the saxophone and bassoon in the concert band

and orchestra. After exploring the vocal styles of artist such as Billy Eckstine, Nat King Cole, Dinah Washington, Billie Holiday, Arthur Prysock, Will Downing and Al Jarreau, Michael soon began receiving numerous awards for his vocal and instrumental talents. Michael became more and more interested in the "Instrumental Pop" music that emerged in the 1970's (now labeled "Contemporary Jazz"). He was inspired by Grover Washington Jr. and David Sanborn who had a lighter, funkier, radio friendly style. His focus turned to artist such as George Benson, Chick Corea, Patti Austin, Angela Bofill, Spyra Gyra, Chuck Mangione and Earl Klugh. Michael started out playing as a freelance musician, performing locally and on Beale Street with different bands and other musicians. He remembers the first time he was given a chance to show his talents. "Guitarist Preston Shannon would allow me to sit in with him on Wednesday nights at the Blues City Caf on Beale Street." "I would wait anxiously, all night, hoping he wouldn't forget to call me up." "Preston would always give me a chance to perform." Michael soon got his own recognition and was asked to perform with Willie Mitchell's house band on Beale Street backing up national artist when performing in town. Jazz artist have been said to be more "well versed" and/or more musically inclined than artist from any other genre because Jazz musicians must often be able to present a compilation of music, vocals, writing, composing and arranging all at once. Michael Townsend, as with some of his legendary predecessors, has truly benefited from his Memphis upbringing. Constantly rehearsing and honing his skills, and educating himself on the history of his music shows the passion and dedication that he has for his craft. Some of his favorite artist are Charlie Parker, Sonny Stitt, Cannonball Aderley, The Brecker Brothers, Phil Woods, Sonny Rollins, Dexter Gordon and Grover Washington Jr. Michael Townsend is now living out a long awaited dream. Through his new band, "The Michael Townsend Project" he is able to present to his fans the best of his years of experience as a Jazz musician. His live performances have been deemed "Sensual and "Sensational". Critics say "You'll get locked into Michael's saxophonic mixture of Smooth Jazz, R&B and Pop selections that are exceptionally soothing to the listing ear. Memphis' own native son Michael Townsend and "The Michael Townsend Project"- Smooth Jazz with an R&B Flavor! Stay tuned -much more to come!

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