

## Mp3 John Rich And Friends - Jazzin' It Up



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Mellow Original Jazz, Uplifting and fun 11 MP3 Songs JAZZ: Smooth Jazz, BLUES: Jazzy Blues Details: This is John's first CD offered in the Jazz genre. Over the years that John has produced relaxing CDs, he has also created some jazzier cuts. A few of these songs were sprinkled into the earlier CDs for fun and contrast, but now John feels it is time to collect and publish the songs separately in this new CD, "Jazzin' It Up." Five of the 11 songs are either newly composed or previously unpublished. Cut number four, "I'm on Fire," features Jennifer Jill Rockwell, a folk singer well known in the Boise area. Musical biography: John Rich has been playing piano and keyboards for over 50 years. He began with a few years of lessons in the 1940s. Improvisation started very early, as he happily rearranged the sheet music he was asked to play. His piano teacher retired suddenly, and John continued improvising on his own. Classical songs played previously from sheet music became jazzier Dixieland songs. Later, he went to a boarding school where he has access to both the piano and upright bass. The school had a small Dixieland band which allowed him to sit in on rehearsals, but not play as a regular. By the time he went to college, he had a small repertoire of original tunes which he played largely for his own amusement. At Middlebury College in Vermont, he joined a small band which entertained at fraternity houses and area pubs with standards from the era and a few original jazz tunes. He played bass on the standards and piano on his originals. In the 1960s he was able to buy his first acoustic piano. He was influenced by Ramsey Lewis, Jimmy Smith, and other jazz artists. About the time that Michael Olding came out with "Tubular Bells," the theme for The Exorcist, John began to develop his own gentler music, still building on the jazz harmonies. In the late 70s he moved to the Pacific Northwest, where he frequently visited the Oregon Coast. He was inspired not only to take photographs but also to try and capture the scenery in music as well. In 1984, shortly after his father died, he bought his first keyboard and began recording some more relaxing

improvisations. The term "New Age" was beginning to be used and seemed to fit his style. A local meditation group asked him to play for their meetings, and some in the audience asked for tapes. Thus, his first tape, "Reaching for the Sky," was published in 1990. As better-sounding keyboards became available, he began creating more relaxing and healing musical themes. MIDI equipment allowed him to compose and layer several themes and instruments together. A friend with connections to a health-products company in Japan made arrangements for John's music to be packaged with the company's products. As a result, John was able in 1994 to release his first CD, "Morning's Promise." In 1995 he was fortunate to find a very mellow sounding Yamaha grand piano. The deep resonance of this piano helped inspire new compositions. The theme of capturing a sense of place in music was continued with the next two albums, "Piano with an Ocean View" and "Piano Images." In John's bread-and-butter role as a human resource trainer, he began using the music as backdrops for discussion groups and training sessions. He willingly lent his music to nonprofit groups for the same purpose. Later he was contacted by Paul Kreider, who had attended one of the sessions and noticed the music. Paul was an accomplished, classically trained flutist and wanted an opportunity to improvise melody lines with John's music. The combination worked with remarkable ease, and John and Paul were invited to play at many social events. During one of these, the majority of the highly spontaneous songs on "In the Moment" were recorded live. John continues to play in churches, coffee houses, and weddings. He enjoys creating a reflective and joyful space for himself and others.

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