

## Mp3 Eric Leonard - Breakin' The Rules



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The trombone takes the lead for a change in this jazz fusion project. Melodic, listenable, accurate, and downright funky. Harmonically complex, yet enjoyable for people other than musicians as well. 10 MP3 Songs JAZZ: Jazz Fusion, JAZZ: Smooth Jazz Details: ERIC LEONARD, TROMBONE; Mike Turner, keyboards; Mike Myers, bass; Steve Pruitt, drums; Lee Rucker, trumpet; Mitch Bell, guitar. Earlybird Jazz ericleonardjazz Eric Leonard: Mr. Syllas, Beautiful Ones, Another Time Perhaps, Nature, Forever Untitled, Blue Tune, Smooth J, Without a Klew, Fidget, Through Your Eyes. Just when this reviewer had decided to give up on the premise of a new and qualified pop/crossover trombone recording, along comes Eric Leonard to dispel all previous notions. With Breakin the Rules this crafty young Oklahoman (and self avowed Steve Wiest admirer) takes his place next to trumpeter Rick Braun and others of his predisposition, as a possible trombone counterpart in the smooth jazz classification. Granted, this may not seem like such a big deal to some ITA Journal readers, but it really should be. One need only remember the big band era, when the trombone ruled supreme as the pop instrument of choice. Tommy Dorsey, Glenn Miller and Jack Jenney were no "fly by nights." They were national heroes. The whole world knew who they were, and because of them, everybody wanted to play the trombone. Public based adulation (to say nothing of respect) for the trombone has been hard to come by in recent years. Therefore, it would not kill the trombone community to embrace a least a handful of pop influenced concepts. In Leonard's case, he not only dabbles in these concepts, he has embraced them to create a memorable juxtaposition of infectious melodies, combined with some really fine trombone playing. Leonard's recording partners are part of an actual working band that plays in and around the Oklahoma City area, and it shows. Unlike the studio musicians who shake hands with the artist ten minutes before the session, this is a tight knit group. Bassist Mike Myers especially stands out in such a way as to remind

one of the manner in which bassist Andy West once complimented The Dixie Dregs. All of the sidemen are great at evoking that "Crusaders" feeling; a mostly successful concept that once prompted musicians to listen to Wayne Henderson. There is a lot of the old Crusaders dynamic in Leonard's compositions. In fact, his intentions appear to follow the tact of allowing his tunes to set up an appropriate environment for group members to demonstrate their solid technical ranges, and just in general be funky. On the subject of chops, Leonard has them in abundance. Yet, he is mature enough to hold back just enough to let the music breathe, and achieve the potential for airplay....and again, there is nothing wrong with that. Eric Leonard demonstrates with Breakin the Rules that a crossover trombone recording of class and distinction is more than a remote possibility. It can and has become a reality. A virtual unknown just got with his Oklahoma buddies to perform, manufacture and distribute the very album you should have done a long time ago. Well done Mr. Leonard...very well done! Tom Smith Pfeiffer University ITA Journal (Used with permission) Eric Leonard is a freelance trombonist/composer/arranger in the Oklahoma City area with over 13 years experience performing jazz, big band and symphonic styles. Currently, Eric serves as adjunct faculty member at the University of Central Oklahoma (since 1997) teaching both symphonic repertoire and jazz improvisation. Growing up in Oklahoma City, Eric attended the University of Central Oklahoma in Edmond graduating with a Bachelor of Music Performance in December of 1993. Eric released his 2nd CD and first solo project in April 2002. Entitled Breakin' the Rules on Earlybird Jazz label, this CD features The Eric Leonard Band playing 10 all-original jazz fusion compositions by Leonard and features solos and playing by very talented band members. Eric hopes this recording and additional live performances will peak a newfound interest in the trombone with the general public along with motivating young trombonists to excel into a genre of music that today has been clearly dominated by the saxophone.

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