

Mp3 Kelly Shepherd - The Beauty Of Simplicity



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organic jazz. With the stylings of John Coltrane and Pharoah Sanders played in a fresh new light THE BEAUTY OF SIMPLICITY is a complete joy for the jazz and non jazz listener to experience. It's no wonder that Shepherd's debut disc, The Beauty of Simplicity 13 MP3 Songs JAZZ: Traditional Jazz Combo, NEW AGE: Environmental Details: It's no wonder that Shepherd's debut disc, The Beauty of Simplicity (Somerset Records), is dedicated to his mother's memory. Full of imagination, intensity, pathos, and joy--with a bit of tricksterism and cross-cultural collision in the mix--it exudes a joie de vivre that's rare in jazz these days. Like the old-school saxophonists he admires, Shepherd expresses a great deal of emotion with his horn. From the tumultuous "Freedom Call" and the soulful "Talib's Quest" to the hopeful "Prayer for Africa" and the sultry "L.I. Blues," he plays with real feeling. "I really appreciate the vulnerability in the sound," he says of the disc. "It's not perfect, but I want people to hear that there was a baby's cry underneath all of it, a strong cry that wasn't hampered by perfection. I wanted people to hear the rawness and get a real glimpse of who I am." John Lewis (Baltimore City Paper) Born in South Korea "the Morning Calm" and raised in Hawaii and Maryland, Kelly's sound and music reflect the earthy, organic and eclectic folk characteristics found in his multifaceted African American, American Indian, and Asian roots. Since infancy, Kelly heard the folk sounds of his mother's native Korea and through his father he heard the sounds of traditional jazz and American music (Horace Silver, John Coltrane, Jackie Wilson, and others). Kelly's first interest in music began while playing recorder in the 5th grade at Aiea Elementary School in Hawaii. After the unexpected death of his mother, Kelly and his sister moved to Baltimore, Maryland to live with his paternal grandparents. There he began his formal musical study at the Peabody Conservatory of Music while gaining his first musical experience playing gospel music at Bethel A.M.E. church where his grandmother was baptized. Music became a source of inner healing

during a difficult time in his life. "Music became my solitude." Kelly's grandmother provided a safe and loving home where she cared for many of her grandchildren . "She raised all of us, her children and most of her grandchildren. She taught me about jazz and brought the bands alive for me by telling me about the many times she heard Billie Holliday, Count Basie, Duke Ellington and many others at the historic Royal Theatre. I could hear Billie in my mind. She gave me a book about Lady Day. She had books around the house, all kinds of books, books by everybody and about everything from Richard Wright, to James Baldwin, Jane Austen, Shakespeare, Einstein and even Ghandi. She taught me that you can travel in your mind. She nurtured us and my grandfather taught us how to work hard. We didn't have much, but we didn't know it. We'd play outside. My family is full of musicians, artists, writers and that type and people with feeling. She raised us that way. We were born with it. She nurtured us and we had alot of support and we didn't even realize it. As a boy I was in love with my grandmother. She's the best". In 1982 Kelly gained acceptance to the Baltimore School for the Arts. He studied classical saxophone and music with Dr. Chris Ford. "Mr. Ford taught me that alot of those classical styles come from dances from different regions of Europe and the world. He knew exactly where the styles came from and showed me that in it's simplest form it was folk music. He gave me a sensitivity about phrasing the music and bringing it to life. He was a very good teacher." At the age of 14 Kelly met a mentor for life in Jamal Wilson." He didn't just show me music, he taught me painting, carpentry, he had a vegetable garden. He taught me that there was nothing wrong with being a good person which seemed to never work for me. He showed me how it could work. He showed me about trying to be a good person. Mr. Wilson would let me come over at 9:30 or 10 at night , anytime; he would close all the shades and put a microphone on my sax and let me play all night. He had a wife and children, young children. He wanted me to hear how I sounded. He taught me the secrets of the saxophone ombochure (how to shape your mouth and ultimately your sound). My father always told me tone was important , Mr. Wilson taught me the technique for that. I still think the other things were maybe more important because they come before you ever touch the horn". For a jazz fix, Kelly would often go down to the Jazz Closet to hear Gary Bartz. "I used to have a dishwashing job after school and I'd go there after work and sneak in or stand outside and listen. They'd chase me off, until the owner Henry Baker told me that if I brought my horn he'd let me in. So I did that and although I was scared to death Gary was very nice to me. He was one of the best in the whole world, right there for me to hear and be around. During breaks from school I would often visit my father, who

was singing in New York. He was singing with great musicians like Curtis Fuller, Junior Cook, Bill Hardman, Hilton Ruiz, Steve Turre. I got a chance to study with Junior Cook, one of my heroes. I learned how jazz sounded from being around and hearing the people who lived and played it. I couldn't get that in school. School taught me some of the basic tools that you need, but it didn't teach me how jazz sounds. That's a feeling thing". After graduating from the Baltimore School for the Arts in 1987, Kelly moved on to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and started working with the OTIN jazz band. Kelly attended the Settlement School of Music as a flute major for a semester while playing in and around the Philadelphia area. Next came a European tour from 1990-1991. "I didn't really know what I was doing, but we had a cohesive sound as a group and we experienced traveling to Europe and playing well. It was a valuable experience." In 1992, Kelly returned to Baltimore and began saxophone studies with mentor and jazz great Gary Bartz. "Studying with Gary gave me the opportunity to learn from someone who was doing something that I wanted to do. I liked his sound and style the first time that I heard him. At this point he was the closest living saxophonist that I wanted to emulate. Of course, I realized very quickly that I could never sound like him, but I still tried. A meticulous practicer himself, he taught me the things to practice and how to practice, how hard you have to practice to become a professional. I still work on those things. He was very good to me." During this time period, Kelly played in various big bands and combos, such as playing lead alto in the Eubie Blake Big Band and the Kenny Wright Experience. "Kenny made me play all these difficult original melodies by myself and he wanted me to solo alot. He'd say" Kelly the longer you play, the harder you play, and the crazier you play the more I like it. Go ahead and stretch out". I was so shy in my playing. He gave me the chance to fail and learn from my mistakes and he paid me for it. He beleived in me. It was really important in my developing some confidence onstage." All the while Kelly was heading the music department at Grove Park Elementary School. He also began playing with his father who had moved back to Baltimore. "It was a great time for me, I was learning from everybody. We used to play at the Lafayette Square Market with my father. My closest friend Eric Kennedy was playing drums on those gigs. We came back from Europe together. We had been best friends since the first day of school when we both entered the School for the Arts, we were 14 then; now we were 25. The concerts were free to the public and everybody from young to old were there. I guess some people would call it the ghetto but it was home to me. It was right in the Pennsylvania Avenue area, which is historical because all the greats played there when they came to Baltimore. I missed out on all that because it was before

my time but all the old timers and hustlers would come down and tell me about it. I felt like I was right there. The people brought it alive for me. My father showed me how to play with a lot of feeling and how to play really hard and how to announce to the people. He just made me do it. The old timers would tell me how we were taking them back to the old times. One guy was hollering "Coltrane, Coltrane!!! You sound like Trane." People were dancing to the music. They made me feel great. The place was always packed. This was a time for a lot of practicing and learning." Kelly now resides in New England and has played at numerous major festivals including Nestle Jazz Festival at Melkweg and the Open Tropen Museum Series in Amsterdam, Holland, the Fete de la Musique Festival in Lille, France, the Black Swamp Music Festival in Bowling Green, Ohio, the Mellon Jazz Festival in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the Artscape and Afram Festivals in Baltimore, Maryland and the Greater Hartford Jazz Series at Bushnell Park in Hartford, Connecticut. Kelly has opened up for performers Gladys Knight, The Temptations, Buckwheat Zydeco, George Coleman and many more. Kelly Shepherd's primary influences are Charlie Parker, Sidney Bechet, John Coltrane, Louis Armstrong, Junior Cook, Pharoah Sanders, Gary Bartz, John Gilmore, Sonny Rollins, Billie Holiday, Dinah Washington, Stevie Wonder and Karen Carpenter, to name a few. Kelly has performed with Curtis Fuller, Grady Tate, Gary Bartz, Winard Harper, Lyle Atkinson, Carl Grubbs, Dave Hubbard, Tardol Hammer, Yusef Salim and many more. Kelly has recorded and performed with Curtis Fuller, Richard Wyands, Paul Brown, Virgil Jones, LeRoy Williams, Charles Davis and Kenny Wright. The healing aspect of music that Kelly found in his early years is what motivates and inspires him today. He would like to share this with people from all over. "Music expresses our deepest sensations and feelings which cannot be conveyed through words or even thoughts." Kelly exemplifies this thought and feeling on his debut cd THE BEAUTY OF SIMPLICITY (Somerset 2-0017). With his second effort DREAMWORLD featuring special guest Curtis Fuller(also available on cdbaby.com/cd/dworldcf) (Somerset 2-0019/20), Kelly explores areas new to him musically while playing with some of the best musicians in jazz today. In 2000, Kelly realized the longtime dream of recording with his father on the cd FAMILY, FRIENDS AND MUSIC (Somerset 2-0018). All three cds have received great reviews and airplay. With over 15 years of performing and teaching experience, Kelly is always looking for new musical vistas to explore. Kelly is available for concerts, bookings, clubs, workshops and private lessons. Look for Kelly's next cd featuring his new group NoMad Stories.

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