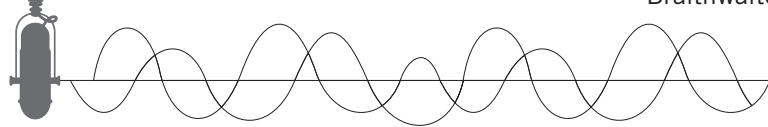


SONS OF SOUND®



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Fred Wesley
&

The Swing'N Jazz All-Stars

It Don't Mean A Thing If It Ain't Got That Swing

SONS OF SOUND RELEASES CD TO BENEFIT MUSIC EDUCATION

Fred Wesley & The Swing 'N Jazz All-Stars Record In Support of The Commission Project

New York, NY – Sons of Sound is proud to announce the June 6, 2006 release of a new recording led by trombone legend **Fred Wesley**: *It Don't Mean A Thing If It Ain't Got That Swing*, a studio jam with **Mike Holober** on piano, **Marvin Stamm** on trumpet and Flugelhorn, alto and baritone saxophonist **Carl Atkins**, bassists **Keter Betts** and **Jay Leonhart**, and drummers **Akira Tana** and **Rich Thompson**.

It Don't Mean A Thing was recorded to draw attention to the music education projects of **The Commission Project** (TCP), a nonprofit organization based in Rochester, NY, the talent-rich home of Eastman and Hochstein Schools of Music. TCP fosters creativity through music education by commissioning original music and producing workshops and composer-in-residence programs in schools nationwide. Funding for the recording was supported by New York State Senator Jim Alesi and Monroe County Executive Maggie Brooks.

TCP's composer-in-residence programs enrich existing school curricula by involving students directly in the creative process: establishing exploratory forums, which spark creativity and inventiveness. From the onset, the composer involves students in the creative journey, making artistic decisions and incorporating their input in the compositional process.

Since 1994, TCP has benefited over 23,000 students by commissioning 112 composers to write more than 357 pieces for student ensembles, over 84 are published; more than 31 are commercially recorded and released.

Currently, The Commission Project is producing 40 residencies in metropolitan areas across the United States and Canada. TCP is transforming the way youth are being educated, helping students discover the excitement and rewards of creation.

Swing ‘N Jazz (SNJ) is a golf tournament that serves as TCP’s primary annual fundraising event. Spanning three days, SNJ begins with a Friday jam session featuring a particular instrument. Saturday morning is filled with free workshops for students of all ages. Saturday night is the gala concert, tickets to which are made available at no charge to students at the workshops. Sunday is marked by the celebrity golf tournament, the proceeds of which help to finance the programs of TCP throughout the year. The early success of Swing ‘N Jazz inspired one of its participants, festival producer John Nugent, to forge ahead with the Rochester International Jazz Festival, now in its fifth year, immediately on the heels of Swing ‘N Jazz. Together, the two events make Rochester a major attraction for jazz aficionados in June of each year.

Fred Wesley (trombone) is best known for his work as music director, arranger, trombonist, and primary composer for James Brown, George Clinton, and Bootsy Collins. An alumnus of the Basie band, he has several CDs recorded with his own groups. ”

It Don’t Mean A Thing was produced by Steven M. Gates (Dave Douglas, The Chieftains, Tom Harrell, New York Voices) with liner notes written by Tom Hampson. It was recorded live in the studio immediately following the weekend of Swing ‘N Jazz XIII on June 6 and 7, 2005. Mr. Wesley served as music director for the event as well as for this recording. He ran things firmly, but with a light touch: When Jay Leonhart was in the studio practicing the over-dub by which he sang an accompanying line to his own vocal, a tribute to Ray Brown entitled “Missin’ RB Blues,” he had some trouble with a difficult, almost falsetto, portion, which he repeated several times. Finally, Wesley spoke to him from the control room via the intercom: “C’mon, Jay, let’s record it. You can practice it tomorrow.” Fred contributes his own “Wicked Walk,” taking us back to his funky days with James Brown.

Other tracks include “Just Squeeze Me” by Duke Ellington and Lee Gaines, a wonderful pairing of Keter Betts and Jay Leonhart together in the same studio. “Emily,” written by Johnny’s Mandel and Mercer, demonstrates what a fine pianist Mike Holober has become; here he’s gracefully supported by Akira Tana and Keter Betts. Johnny Green’s “Body and Soul” is played with restraint and unfailing good taste by Mike Holober and Marvin Stamm. “It Don’t Mean A Thing (If It Ain’t Got That Swing)” is another double-entendre referring to both jazz and golf, along with “Par Three,” Bob Sneider’s sprightly waltz. The set is rounded out by originals from Atkins (“Acirfa”), Thompson (“Eventually”), Tana (“Dream Catcher”), and Betts, who gave us “Head Start,” long the signature piece for the Swing ‘N Jazz weekend.

Keter Betts has been a legendary figure in jazz for six decades. Along with Stan Getz and Charlie Byrd, he was instrumental in popularizing the bossa nova. He was long associated with pianist Tommy Flanagan, with whom he accompanied Ella Fitzgerald for many years. Keter died shortly after making this recording, believed to be his last. It is therefore dedicated to our friend.

Carl Atkins has been program director for the Thelonius Monk Institute and has taught jazz

at the New England Conservatory. He recently toured with the Smithsonian Jazz Masterworks Orchestra and is currently on the faculty of the College of Liberal Arts at the Rochester Institute of Technology.

Mike Holober is professor of music at the City College of New York. A prolific composer and arranger, he has recorded several CDs of his own compositions, including the recent *Thought Trains* with the Gotham Jazz Orchestra, plus *Canyon* and the forthcoming *Wish List*, both with his quintet, and all on Sons of Sound.

Jay Leonhart is an in-demand bass player in New York City who has made many recordings under his own direction and as a sideman with countless others. He is an insightful and witty writer of songs, many of which he has recorded, singing and accompanying himself on the bass.

Bob Sneider teaches at the Eastman School of Music. He has recorded several CDs as leader of his own group, including the recent *Interconnection* and *Escapade* with pianist Paul Hofmann, and *Fallen Angel* with vibraphonist (and TCP-commissioned artist) Joe Locke, all on the Sons of Sound label.

Marvin Stamm is a veteran of the bands of Stan Kenton, Woody Herman, Duke Pearson, and the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra. For over thirty years he has been a first-call studio musician in New York and has recently begun appearing with symphony orchestras in the U.S. and abroad.

Akira Tana is a graduate of Harvard (East Asian Studies) and the New England Conservatory (percussion). He has performed and recorded with many other leading jazz musicians and, as the co-leader with bassist Rufus Reid, has released five CDs by the TanaReid Quintet, and two as leader on Sons of Sound (*Secret Agent Men* and *Moon Over The World*).

Rich Thompson teaches percussion at the Eastman School of Music. He toured and recorded with the Count Basie Orchestra. He is a member of the Eastman Jazz Quartet as well as Trio East and he has recorded with both groups (*Stop-Start* by Trio East is on Sons of Sound).

Sons of Sound is an independent jazz label founded in 1997 with the goal of bringing creative music and instrumental and vocal technique to a younger audience. The label supports music education through **The Commission Project**, a nonprofit based in Rochester, NY. Through TCP, Sons of Sound underwrites residencies at Princeton University, including Bob Mintzer in 2003-2004 and Jimmy Heath in 2004-2005. Many of the label's artists support The Commission Project by working with and/or writing for student musicians in various programs ranging from residencies to workshops and concert appearances.

For additional information see the label's web site at <http://sonsofsound.com>. For more about The Commission Project, see <http://tcp-music.org/> and <http://swingnjazz.org>.

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