



Michael Gamble and



The Rhythm Serenaders

About the Musicians



Michael Gamble

(bass, all tracks)

Bandleader Michael Gamble chose the musicians for this record because they honor the legacy of the genre with integrity, authority, and love.

Keenan McKenzie

(clarinet and saxes, all tracks)

In addition to playing on every track, Keenan also put together some on-the-fly arrangement ideas, which added to the flavor of the record.

Jonathan Stout

(lead guitar on all except 11 & 13)

There is no better person to have on the team than Jonathan, the utmost authority in preserving what matters in this tradition among those working in today's dance world.

Paul Cosentino

(clarinet and saxes on 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, & 16)

Paul's unique melodic voice is unmistakable and undeniable, his fiery improvisations bring this record to life.

Russ Wilson

(vocals on 8 & 12, drums on 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, & 15)

Russ is a one-of-a-kind human being that possesses that rare mix of grit and talent required to climb to the top level of performance ability.

Brooks Prumo

(rhythm guitar on 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, & 15)

Brooks is a quiet and dedicated scholar of the subtle and surprisingly deep world of band-driving rhythm guitar, adding motion and nuance to every track.

Gordon Au

(trumpet on 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, & 15)

Gordon is a truly unique and tasteful player who has the gift to take an already well-crafted melody to the next level, making every performance a standalone work of art.

Craig Gildner

(piano on 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, & 15)

Craig is a truly passionate devotee of that most all encompassing of instruments, managing to squeeze the influences of its many historical giants right onto the keys, with the finesse of a well-placed nod and a wink.

Noah Locker

(trumpet on 3, 4, 7, 8, 12, 16, 17, & 18)

Noah's cutting timbre and explosive contours were the perfect fit for a certain mood we were trying to get at on these selections, and he always brings his top game.

James Posedel

(piano on 3, 4, 7, 8, 12, 16, 17, & 18)

One of the hardest working young lions in the scene, James brought a level of seriousness to this project that promises many more great things to come.

Josh Collazo

(drums on 3, 4, 7, 8, 12, 16, 17, & 18)

Josh's mastery is unchallenged, and his groove is unshakeable, we were honored to have him on the session.

Lucian Cobb

(trombone on 1, 6, 10, 13, & 15)

Lucian delivered some of the most unexpected and risk-taking melodic lines on the record, his playing always in the pocket but never robotic.

Laura Windley

(vocals on 1, 9, 11, & 15)

Laura has one of the most authentic sounds you will ever find outside of a vintage recording, a wise and knowing voice that evokes the echoes of past greats, even while shrugging that weight off and forging a new and charming path all her own.

David Wilken

(trombone on 3, 8, 12, & 16)

Dave is a heck of a musician, and an all around great guy to play jazz with, if you like that kind of thing!

About the Songs



As dancers, too often we forget about the songs themselves as we get swept up in the movement. Let's take a moment to appreciate these fantastic compositions, and what caused us to choose them for this project.

Back in Your Own Back Yard

Dave Dreyer, Al Jolson, Billy Rose
Bourne Co./ASCAP
Larry Spier Music/ASCAP

From the Billie Holiday school, though a lot of dance bands did it. Should've become a standard but didn't. Love it as an album-starter because of the message: everything you're looking for is something you likely already have.

I Never Knew

Ted Fiorito, Gus Kahn
Bourne Music/ASCAP
Etienne Marris Music/ASCAP
Gilbert Keyes Music/ASCAP
One Less Car Music/ASCAP

This is a direct homage to the Benny Goodman Sextet, and a great example of how a beautiful melody-driven song can still incorporate some great riffing.

Slidin' and Glidin'

Brian Cleven Haden
Black Vinyl Recordings/ASCAP

Oh Cootie Williams, how we love thee. This is an unabashed grindy dance tune that goes places.

Seven Come Eleven

Charles Christian, Benny Goodman
Ragbag Music Publishing/ASCAP
Regent Music Corp./BMI

Back to Benny Goodman Sextet. These are some of the best small group records in jazz history, thanks in large part to the outstanding contributions of pioneering electric guitarist Charlie Christian. The way this melody floats magically above the plodding bass riff gives it a unique texture that sticks in your head basically forever—you're welcome.

Pick-a-Rib

Benny Goodman, Lionel Hampton
Ragbag Music Publishing /ASCAP
Regent Music Group/BMI

Sticking with the BGS for a more obscure riff tune. This one wanders cleverly from Bb to Eb to Ab..."Pick a rib, more like pick a key!"

A Mellow Bit of Rhythm

Herman Walder, Mary Lou Williams
Cecilia Music Publishing/ASCAP
Universal-MCA Music Publishing/ASCAP

This was a great dance tune worked up for Andy Kirk's band, and one that seemed like it would be fun to do a combo treatment of, which turned into a sweet little groove fest.

Sweets

William Count Basie, Harry E. Edison
WB Music Corp./ASCAP

There's so much Basie we could've done, and so much still to do, but this was one tune we thought was just so catchy we had to take it for a drive.

There'll Be Some Changes Made

Benton Overstreet,
William Blackstone
Public Domain
Arrangement Michael Gamble
Asheville Music Publishing/BMI

Let's be honest, this chart was written up in a brazen effort to get Russ Wilson to sing his lungs out, and let the horn section battle it out with him for dominance.

Fine and Mellow

Billie Holiday
Edward B. Marks Music/BMI

This last minute, on-the-fly addition is, in a way, the most Serenaders thing on here because it (a) references Billie Holiday, (b) includes a ridiculously catchy riff, and (c) relies on the creative contributions of everybody in the room.

Bug in a Rug

Richard Larkin
Michael H. Goldsen Inc./ASCAP

It was Ellington's awesome riff chorus at the end of his arrangement, which inspired us to go learn this forgotten pop tune and do our own version of it.

He Ain't Got Rhythm

Irving Berlin

Irving Berlin Music/ASCAP

From the Billie school. This is the one and only song that tries to incite a culture clash between scientists and dancers. And if you know many lindy hoppers, you know how silly that is.

Who's Sorry Now

Bert Kalmar, Harry Ruby, Ted Snyder

BMG Firefly/ASCAP

EMI Mills Music/ASCAP

Ruby Harry Music/ASCAP

Snyder Ted Music/ASCAP

We're not sorry for again pitting Russ against a fiery vanguard horn section in this Condon-esque treatment of a hot jazz standard.

Woke Up Clipped

Ben Francis Webster

EMI Robbins Catalog/ASCAP

Ben Webster pretty much nailed it when he recorded this in 1943, so this version is more of a respectful recreation than a reimagining.

Rose Room

Art Hickman

Public Domain

Arrangement Michael Gamble

Asheville Music Publishing/BMI

This is one of the few original arrangements on the record created to feature the full band.

What a Night, What a Moon,

What a Boy

John Jacob Loeb

BMG Gold Songs/ASCAP

Loeb John Jacob Music/ASCAP

This wonderful Billie Holiday vehicle evokes everything that this band is about, hot music, great storytelling, and lifelong memories. What a night, what a song, what a band!

Crazy About Lester

Traditional/Public Domain

Arrangement Michael Gamble

Asheville Music Publishing/BMI

What happens when you can't decide between the many ad-lib blues arrangements innovated by the one-of-a-kind Lester Young? Maybe, just maybe, you try and squeeze as many of his ideas as you can into one tune, a short love letter to the greatest there ever was.

Scottie

David Roy Eldridge

Prestige Music/PRS/ASCAP

It would be a crime to record a freshman small group swing record and not give a nod to the Gramercy Five, who, along with the Benny Goodman Sextet, laid down a standard that has never been exceeded. This little dance tune is our salute.

Smoke Gets in Your Eyes

Otto A. Harbach, Jerome Kern

Universal Polygram Publishing/ASCAP

Sticking with the Gramercy Five as our influence for the final number, it seemed right to include one take that wasn't crafted purely for the dance floor, but to speak to the sentimental side of this musical tradition. This one goes out with love from Michael to all the great musicians who've given me a nod, a little tip, or a square kick in the butt along the way—I appreciate each and every one of those interactions, so please keep them coming.

Michael Gamble and The Rhythm Serenaders



As musicians who love the early styles of jazz, we get to jam together sometimes, if we're lucky we get to play for dancers, but rarely do we get to come together, en masse, and produce an ambitious project...one that satisfies our extreme musical geekery, our very real desire to destroy dance floors, while honoring our perfectionist loyalty to the giants of the idiom. This album is all those things and more: a loving celebration of dance-driven swing, created for dancers and everyone else that loves going on amazing musical adventures.

About the Recording



This very special album was recorded at the historic Isis Music Hall in Asheville, NC. We wanted a place that could replicate the ambiance of the time and this small but acoustically renovated theater built in 1937 provided the perfect setting. All recording was done live with no overdubbing. Multiple takes of each song were recorded until we "had the magic." While we did use state-of-the-art equipment and engineering techniques, this was only to faithfully capture the sound and feeling of a live band of the era. We used no additional "processing" to try and make the finished album sound like modern studio pop recordings. The result is what you might have heard and danced to in a small dance band venue of the time—as authentic as we could make it.

About the Isis Music Hall



We would like to give a very special thanks to the Isis Music Hall. Scott Woody, his family, team, and Chris Burbach, closed down their venue for us and hosted the entire process. Without their participation, hospitality, and especially their vision, this recording would not have been what it is. The Isis is a family owned and managed business. Isis was the original name of the theater that was built in 1937. There were a number of Isis Theaters built during the 30s around the country. During the 30s—many folks had a fascination with Greek and Egyptian architecture (thus the birth of the art-deco period). Learn more at: www.isisasheville.com



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Michael Gamble

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1. *Back in Your Own Back Yard* 3:10 181 BPM
 2. *I Never Knew* 3:00 199 BPM
 3. *Slidin' and Glidin'* 3:34 155 BPM
 4. *Seven Come Eleven* 3:22 228 BPM
 5. *Pick-a-Rib* 3:28 184 BPM
 6. *A Mellow Bit of Rhythm* 4:02 132 BPM
 7. *Sweets* 3:08 176 BPM
 8. *There'll Be Some Changes Made* 3:07 242 BPM
 9. *Fine and Mellow* 3:20 107 BPM
 10. *Bug in a Rug* 3:36 162 BPM
 11. *He Ain't Got Rhythm* 3:16 160 BPM
 12. *Who's Sorry Now* 4:06 197 BPM
 13. *Woke Up Clipped* 3:28 118 BPM
 14. *Rose Room* 3:33 155 BPM
 15. *What a Night, What a Moon, What a Boy* 3:14 209 BPM
 16. *Crazy About Lester* 4:19 170 BPM
 17. *Scottie* 2:37 205 BPM
 18. *Smoke Gets in Your Eyes* 3:46 93 BPM

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