

BENITO GONZALEZ



Photo: Fernando Sandoval

BIO

The fusion of world rhythms and straight-ahead jazz make this passionate performer an audience favorite all over the world. Benito Gonzalez is being recognized as an exciting pianist and composer for his well-received debut album, "Starting Point" (Christian McBride, Antonio Sanchez, Rene McLean, Ron Blake) and as winner of the 2005 Great American Jazz Piano Competition.

Presently, Benito is creating a very personal body of work for his sophomore album as a leader that will feature him as an improviser. After two years touring with jazz master, Kenny Garrett, he added numerous festivals and international jazz club dates to his credit. Benito has shared the stage with Curtis Fuller, Pharaoh Sanders, Bobby Hutcherson, Christian McBride, Ignacio Berroa, Roy Hargrove, Rene McLean, Steve Turre, Hamiet Bluiett, Antonio Sanchez, T.K. Blue, Nicholas Payton and Jackie Mclean.

His multi-cultural talents have led to frequent recording dates; from American jazz masters to West African musicians to Latin bands. He has also served as musical director for several Venezuelan recording artists.

The Benito Gonzalez Trio has appeared at The Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center at the University of Maryland and the Jacksonville Jazz Festival in addition to many other noted jazz venues.

LINKS

Website: www.benitogonzalez.com

Electronic Press Kit: www.sonicbids.com/benitogonzalezmusic

Myspace: www.myspace.com/benitogonzalez

YouTube: www.youtube.com/benitoenrique

BENITO GONZALEZ

CLUB DATES

Blues Alley Jazz Supper Club
Bohemian Caverns
New Haven Lounge
Orlieb's Jazz Haus
Sweet Rhythm
Twin's Jazz

CONCERTS

Artist's Collective
Hartford, CT
Clarice Smith Center for the Performing Arts
University of Maryland
Duke Ellington Jazz Festival
Washington, DC
Jacksonville Jazz Festival
Jacksonville, FL
Smithsonian Jazz Festival: Latino Culture
National Museum of American History

AWARDS

Great American Jazz Piano Competition: Grand Prize Winner, 2005
D.C. Commission on the Arts & Humanities: Emerging Artist Grant, 2003

PRESS

"the pianist's arrangements allow the listener to get lost in [the] suite-like structure of his works, the crescendos of ensemble fireworks, and the often bluesy musings he intersperses throughout. If this represents Gonzalez's *Starting Point*, I can't wait to hear what follows."

- **Mark Holston, Jazziz**

"The standout track here is a graceful "I'll Remember April," which features fiery soloing from pianist Benito Gonzalez."

- **Lucy Tauss, JazzTimes**

"Gonzalez played with a vibrant and exciting style. Often during his aggressive solos he raised off the bench to get better leverage to pound out the notes...He showed his versatility by slowing the pace for the ballad."

- **Dan MacDonald, Florida Times-Union**

"...[Kenny] Garrett began by pouring his unflagging melodic inventiveness into a 15-minute monologue, while his fiery young band thrashed around him. Impressive Venezuelan piano newcomer Benito Gonzalez (a Tyner devotee) took over for a similar flame-throwing exercise...he and Gonzalez then played a meditative medley of...folk songs that held the club in complete silence."

- **John Fordham, The Guardian**

"His own piece, "Starting Point," was a bold, dramatic means of introduction to a robust, sharply incisive style...he brought the audience into the action, making them feel invested in the execution of his vision. His solo take on "Polka Dots and Moonbeams" evoked the memory of Art Tatum, in that it was "more" than a ballad."

- **Minority Report by Shelton Hull, Ink19**