



ADAM SMALE

JAZZ GUITARIST

www.AdamSmale-Jazz.com

Track by Track Press Release, Out of the Blue CD

"Standing strong in the field of "Jazz"... Adam Smale is one of the serious devotees... an exciting new voice on the scene ...take notice!"

- Pat Martino

One of the key elements of jazz mastery is the ability of the artist to tell stories through music; an art that many feel has been lost amidst too much focus on technical prowess. The remarkable guitarist Adam Smale indeed has stories to tell, as fully evidenced by his outstanding new CD, *Out of the Blue*. Like an anthology of short stories all connected by the vision of its author, *Out of the Blue* offers nine rich, perfectly plotted tales for the enjoyment and edification of its audience.

To weave his fascinating stories, Adam brings two formidable components to the table – his own virtuosic mastery of his 7-string guitar honed by the influence of a diverse array of brilliant guitarists; and a supporting cast of musicians who not only understand the nature of the narratives they've been entrusted to help depict, but also dedicate themselves to the vision of their creative source.

Unequivocally naming the legendary Lenny Breau as his most profound influence, Adam also cites a broad array of other string masters including Chet Atkins, Albert Lee, Eddie Van Halen, Flatt & Scruggs, Pat Metheny, Pat Martino, Tal Farlow, Jim Hall, John Scofield and Kurt Rosenwinkel. Add in Charlie Parker and Bill Evans.....and a most stimulating brew results. Applying all of this to his personally designed electric and acoustic 7-string guitars with his fingerstyle technique, and a most unique new talent in the jazz guitar world has emerged.

But jazz is in essence an ensemble form, requiring both a dedicated commitment and a truly sympathetic understanding to achieve the synergy the music demands. To achieve that goal Adam selected pianist Mathew Fries, bassist Phil Palombi and drummer Keith Hall – a working trio known as Tri-Fi – knowing that their 10-year history together would bring the proper depth and wisdom to his initial CD as a leader. The empathy and interplay are consistently in focus - punctuating, driving, grooving or simply swinging, the enhancement and projection of Smale's overall vision is always the driving force.

While there are solo features for everyone – and always delivered beautifully – this is the guitarist's album. His solos are perfectly constructed, drawing upon his full palette of resources in the most appropriate manner. Each solo displays this diversity, never in a contrived fashion, but rather blending the various elements into a fully cohesive statement.

Eight of the nine compositions are Smale originals, similarly displaying the range of his musical vision, but connected by his conceptual unity. The one non-Smale piece is Wayne Shorter's *Yes and No*, reharmonized and constructed in a manner that stretches the original version, changing tempos even more daringly to create an ever-shifting environment - from fiery to elegant - for the dynamic improvisational explorations of Smale and Fries.

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The quartet tracks are bookended by two pieces featuring Adam accompanied only by bass and drums. New Start opens the album with a call-and-response structure akin to a rapid-fire version of Miles' classic So What - an ideal setting for Smale's fluid fingerstyle approach with interval leaps that are almost Dolphy-esque. The album's closer Original Sin is another scorcher based on the changes of Cole Porter's What Is This Thing Called Love, displaying Smale's chord-melody mastery in a vividly exciting solo built on heavily suspended rhythms.

Two more pieces are in a similar up-tempo mode. Autumn Confirmation is a playful take on Bird's classic Confirmation over the changes to Autumn Leaves. What was initially conceived as an exercise is transformed into a foray of Bebop urgency with blistering guitar, a surging bass solo, an appropriately Bud Powell-ish turn by Fries, and a boisterous trading of fours between guitar and drums. NYC Love Affair - a tribute to the Canadian-born guitarist's adopted hometown since 2009 - is an intricately smoking swinger with two-fisted Fries and switchblade edgy articulation by the guitarist.

At the other end of the spectrum, She Knows Me is a tender ballad that allows Smale to utilize Breau's signature bell-like harmonics in a solo of filigreed delicacy. Blues to Yous is an easy looper in angular lyricism with tantalizing, slightly behind-the-beat guitar solo, smoothly swinging piano and warmly grooved bass.

Jazzenco deftly touches on Flamenco stylings, but also develops in a fugue-like construction, with fine solos by all. Smale explores the full range of his acoustic guitar while touching on the full palette of his stylistic arsenal.

But of all the tales told in this delightful album, the most viscerally visual is Night Drive. A dramatic, rhythmically insistent and tension-filled piece, it unfolds with the powerful imagery and compelling complexity of a film noir, with Fries' dynamic piano and Adam's effective use of distortion stating the narrative, edgily stoked by Palombi and Hall.

Out of the Blue is a brilliant U.S. debut album by an extraordinary guitarist/composer who is destined to take his place in the front ranks of the contemporary jazz scene.

For more information, visit adamsmale-jazz.com

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