

# Eric Nemeyer's **Jazz Inside**™

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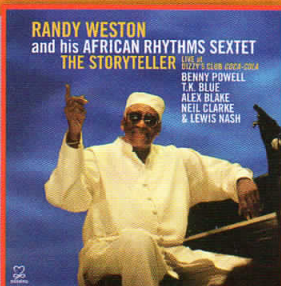
# Dave Koz

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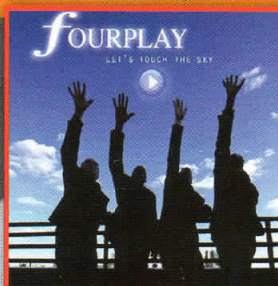
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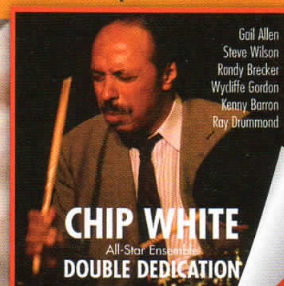
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# DRUM LOVERS' CELEBRATION

## Mauricio DeSouza

By Joe Patitucci

*"My favorite inspirational quote came from Mr. Morello ... one of his teachers, George Lawrence Stone, told him, 'Joe, the secret to failure is trying to please everybody. The secret to success is being too dumb to quit.'"*

**JJ:** What have you discovered about human nature, from your observations on or off the stage?

**MD:** Besides the great joy of doing what one loves, one of the rewarding aspects of being an artist is being in touch with people who believe in you. For the most part, people are willing to help and support artists who are sincere about their art, who are hard working and dedicated.

**JJ:** What discoveries have you made on the business side of your artistic endeavors?

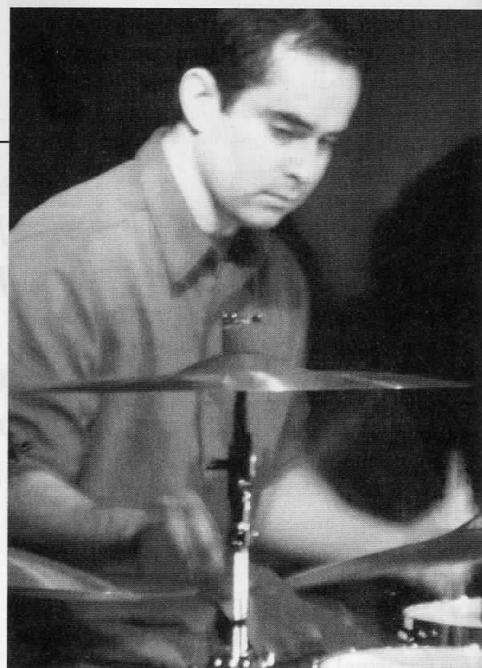
**MD:** There's another saying that clearly express some of my discoveries: "If you do something well, never do it for free." If some people could have it their way,

[www.mauriciodesouzajazz.com](http://www.mauriciodesouzajazz.com)

musicians would never get paid to play. Some people try to take advantage - and sometimes succeed - of the fact that musicians love what they do so much.

**JJ:** What inspired you to play drums and then pursue a career in jazz?

**MD:** When I was 11 years old I saw a live show on TV. The cameras focused on the drummer a few times and I thought, "I would really like to learn how to play that instrument..." My uncle had a friend whose son was a drum teacher. I began taking lessons and by the time I was 14, 15, I decided I would like to be a professional musician when I grew up. My father, who used to be a professional bass player, always played jazz and Brazilian music in the car and at home. I got interested in learning how to play jazz when I was about 16. I started out as a rock drummer.



Credit: Mirya Lobb

When I was 17 I came to the U.S. to take private lessons from Joe Morello. The complexity and freedom of artistic expression really attracted me to jazz. From then on, I decided to become a jazz drummer.

**JJ:** If you could wave a magic wand, what would be  
*Continued on Page 48*

## Butch Miles

By Robin Friedman

*"A positive outlook in all things can do wonders both professionally and personally. Keep your mind focused on positive thoughts. It's an amazing medicine for the soul."*

*Butch Miles has recorded and toured with the Count Basie Orchestra from the 1970s forward. Miles has also recorded as a leader and appears as a sideman on numerous small group recordings.*

**JJ:** What inspired you to play drums and then pursue a career in jazz?

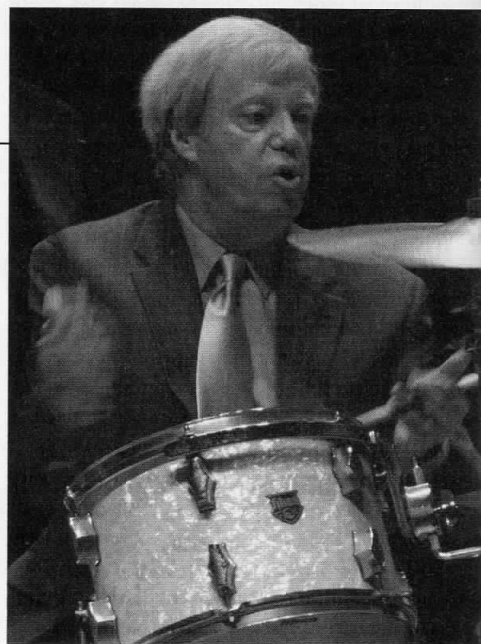
**BM:** I was always drawn to the drums at an early age so I believe I really had no choice. Why did I choose jazz? I started with Rock 'n Roll but in those years - the late 50's, early 60's - rock was boring so I was looking for something that was a challenge and also a joy. Fortunately, my set teacher, Mr. Frank Thompson, was a jazzman and steered me in that direction. Once I had a taste of jazz there was never any thought of going in another direction.

[www.butchmiles.com](http://www.butchmiles.com)

**JJ:** What advice, words, or fragments of wisdom have you received from one of your mentors or leaders for whom you've worked that made a significant impact on you?

**BM:** Frank [Foster] told me to "always remember the most important part of working with a group - be sure and let the band know where 'one' is". That's my main priority - keeping the band together musically and comfortable on stage. I've always been a big believer in the "K.I.S.S." rule - Keep It Simple Stupid". Another I got from listening to many great drummers is to never let the fire die out during a performance. Easier said than done sometimes - especially when your attitude is off or your health is down due to lack of sleep, no food, etc. You *must* overcome those obstacles and always play your very best.

**JJ:** What do you do to recharge your batteries in our stress-filled contemporary world?



**BM:** I make sure I get enough rest, exercise when I can, and eat properly. I don't smoke or drink and I try to take care of my physical health. I try to focus on soothing thoughts and calm myself internally. A positive outlook in all things can do wonders both professionally and personally. Keep your mind focused on positive thoughts. It's an amazing medicine for the soul. ■

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Hutcherson-influenced lyricism is a real treat. "The Great Trip (let)" is reminiscent of early acoustic Miles Davis where Sherman and Magnarelli work off each other nicely. Thelonius Monk's "Trinkle Tinkle" is a clever addition to the mix where Sherman's atypical vibes passages possess an almost Ruth Underwood/Frank Zappa quality.

"The Winning Life" follows with a very upbeat and cinematic essence to it. "Hope" is next in the set and continues that uplifting sentiment.

There are fantastic performances here from truly world class players. And while their talent is clearly evident one should be sure and check out the extras for insightful interviews with the musicians that comprise this outstanding band. Also of note are the stellar production values. Not only is the audio superb but you get an extensive array of camera angles to catch all the action. It's the next best thing to being there!



## MARY STALLINGS

**DREAM** – *Close Enough for Love; That Old Black Magic; Moon Ray; Never Knew; A Weaver of Dreams; Mad About the Boy; Dream Dancing; Hey Now; Watching You Watching Me; Before You Know It; A Timeless Place (The Peacocks)*

**PERSONNEL:** Mary Stallings, vocals; Eric Reed, piano & arrangements; Hamilton Price, bass; Ralph Penland, drums; Adriana Evans & Mary Stallings, vocal duet on "Never Knew."

The influence of her contemporaries, like the great Nancy Wilson, can be heard in her vocals, but on the latest effort *Dream*, Mary Stallings' voice also possesses a unique quality and richness that sets her apart from other jazz singers.

"Close Enough for Love" starts things off with a great arrangement from pianist Eric Reed. The piece opens slowly to showcase Stallings' wide vocal range. Then the band subtly picks up the tempo to a nice upswing for Stallings to play around with. She's not one for unnecessary flourishes or embellishments in her vocal improvisation. It's just the simple yet beautiful playfulness of Stallings' full-bodied voice that will linger on in the listener's mind.

### DeSouza Continued from Page 26

something you would like to see changed that would help the music, the artists and or the business?

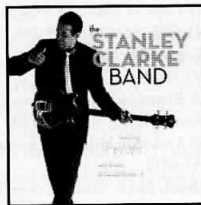
**MD:** Put jazz on prime time TV so more people could become familiar with it. A lot of people don't really know what jazz is or sounds like. Most enjoy it once they become familiar with it.

**JJ:** What advice, words, or fragments of wisdom have

"Moon Ray," a romantic ballad, once again highlights Reed's fluid piano coupled with Stallings' vocals. She brings an added level of experience when she sings "BRING BACK MY LOVE TO ME" that makes the song a much more intense and personal one.

"Mad About the Boy," a popular song written by the English playwright Sir Noël Coward, is all about unrequited love for a star on the big screen, but the theme of unrequited love is what stands out most. With her careful phrasing, Stallings again adds a certain level of intimacy to the song that will resonate with the listener.

On *Dream*, the album takes the "less is more" approach very seriously – one that isn't heard too often in music today. It's an approach that seems to work particularly well for this effort because Stallings' truly understands her role as a jazz vocalist. She works in conjunction with the band members rather than separate from them. These musicians not only shine as a collective group, but thanks to Reed's ample arrangements, it gives Mary Stallings the spotlight she truly deserves.



## THE STANLEY CLARKE BAND

**THE STANLEY CLARKE BAND** – Heads Up HUCD3161. [www.headsup.com](http://www.headsup.com). *Soldier; Fulani; Here's Why Tears Dry; I Wanna Play for You Too; Bass Folk Song No. 10; No Mystery; How Is the Weather Up There?; Larry Has Traveled 11 Miles and Waited a Lifetime for the Return of Vishnu's Report; Labyrinth; Sonny Rollins; Bass Folk Song No. 6 (Mo Anam Cara)*.

**PERSONNEL:** Stanley Clarke, electric and acoustic basses, Alembic bass guitar, talk box, vocals; Ruslan Sirota, acoustic and electric piano, synthesizer, vocals; Ronald Bruner Jr., drums; Rob Bacon, guitar; Hiromi, piano; Charles Aluna, electric guitar; Armand Sabal-Lecco, electric bass guitar; Chris Clarke, drum programming; Jon Hakakian, programming, drum programming; Felton Pilate, keyboards; Bob Sheppard, tenor and soprano saxophone; Cheryl Bentley, vocals; Doug Webb, saxophone; Andrew Lippman, trombone; John Papenbrook, trumpet;

you received from one of your mentors or leaders for whom you've worked that made a significant impact on you?

**MD:** My favorite inspirational quote came from Mr. Morello. He said that one of his teachers, George Lawrence Stone, told him, "Joe, the secret to failure is trying to please everybody. The secret to success is being too dumb to quit." Recently, Mike Stern, with whom I had the great pleasure of working on two tunes for my new album – *Here. There* – told me,

Lorenzo Dunn, bass synthesizer; Natasha Agrama, vocals; Ilsey Juber, vocals.

By Matt Marshall

Perhaps a Modern Man back in 1978, bassist Stanley Clarke seems rather mired in the past on his latest effort, *The Stanley Clarke Band*. The funk is thick and heavy and snapping, and, for a while, has the listener's body grooving. But it all soon stretches into a sameness, a strain not helped by the lack of pauses between most of the album's tracks. Nor does it help that the opening track, "Soldier," is the album's strongest and most varied. Subsequent tracks "No Mystery" and "Labyrinth" light new sparks, but the magic is never sustained.

But that opening track may be worth the price of admission on its own. Within it swims all the voices of Clarke's muse, perfectly choreographed. Moving from a somewhat ethereal, melodic beginning, Clarke swats fat solo lines that resonate off his electric bass, leading into a surging electric guitar chorus that will resurface throughout the piece, driving it with a Radiohead-esque propulsion. Some warped, tangling bass statements follow, capped by the renewed guitar surge that in turn gives way to the modal piano stylings of Ruslan Sirota. (Sirota's piano work, coupled with that of guest pianist Hiromi, who played on Clarke's 2009 trio effort *Jazz in the Garden* and contributes to three tracks here, make for some of the album's most interesting moments.) Clarke weaves a solo of rapid-fire lines and individual notes of bluesy burden that is quite effectively resolved by the return of the guitar kick. Voices of new-age swoon then enter, adding yet another dimension to the piece and leading it to a ruminative, solo piano finish that ends mid-thought.

"No Mystery," a rather perky, modernistic number, actually carries something of a mysterious air at its beginning, with Hiromi adopting a repeated figure like that from theme to the movie *Halloween*. But her wonderful duet with Clarke a few minutes into the piece sets the whole a-blazing and the band never looks back. "Labyrinth" likewise features Hiromi and, like all the tracks up to the closing ballad, "Bass Folk Song No. 6," is a quick, driving piece. But, in Hiromi's hands, it is also the album's most emotive, touching dark, lonesome spaces of the spirit.

There are nice surprises elsewhere and some oddities as well, such as the curiously ambivalent global-warming piece, "How's the Weather Up There?," constructed from conflicting environmental messages supposedly left in Clarke's voicemail. But at 63 minutes, the swirl of this funky, electronic stew, spins a little too long. It's perhaps best enjoyed in courses. ■

"Keep playing your heart out." Coming from Mr. Stern, that really means a lot to me. It seems to me that the main message is to keep going, persevere.

**JJ:** What do you do to recharge your batteries?

**MD:** I'm a constant reader, Dean Koontz and Stephen King are my favorite writers. I really like comedy - movies, stand up comedians. I enjoy playing chess and my favorite sports are mountain biking and paintball. ■