

Jay Soto - Mesmerized [2009]

Written by bluesever

Sunday, 18 October 2009 14:03 - Last Updated Wednesday, 03 December 2014 09:37

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JAY SOTO MESMERIZED



01. Fascination 02. Love Like Mine, A 03. Oasis 04. Groovalicious 05. Together At Last
06. Diggin' It 07. Sunday Smile 08. Mesmerized 09. Dreamsville 10. Bayou Blues 11. Cocophony
Dominic Amato - Sax (Alto) Scott Breadman - Percussion Mike Broening -
Keyboards, Mixing, Organ Mel Brown - Bass Tony Contreras - Bass Steve Culp - Fender
Rhodes Mark Dolin - Sax (Alto), Sax (Soprano) Freddie Fox - Guitar (Rhythm) Jodi Light -
Vocal Ad-Libs, Vocals (Background) Sean McCurley - Drums Tony Morra - Drums, Percussion
Ricky Peterson - Organ (Hammond) Darren Rahn - Fender Rhodes, Horn Arrangements,
Keyboards, Loop, Saxophone Jason Rahn - Flugelhorn, Trumpet Frank Selman - Guitar
(Rhythm) Jay Soto - Guitar, Keyboards, Mixing, Piano, Vocals (Background)

When I raved in 2005 about Jay Soto's debut album, "Long Time Coming is his pavestone of virtuosity for a hopefully not so long way to musical celebrity", I didn't expect such a rapid rise of this striving guitarist.

Well, two years later Jay Soto had himself established on the charts and signed a contract with NuGroove Records releasing his sophomore album Stay Awhile. And his career continues with his new album Mesmerized (2009).

The title sums up the effect of Jay's guitar performance. Like on his previous album Jay is supported by great producers. Michael Broening, Darren Rahn and Mark Riddick signed as responsible. But Jay produced this time a great part of his album himself at his own SotoPop Studio in Glendale, Arizona. Jay is joined by such veritable artists as Freddie Fox (rhythm guitar), Mel Brown (bass), Michael White (drums), Michael Broening (keyboards and programming) and some more guest musicians.

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With huge confidence Jay uses great titles for his songs. Take for example the starting Fascination. And indeed captivating riffs set us in motion. No wonder, Jay is backed by the cats of L.A., which we already admired on other NuGroove recordings.

A Love Like Mine is featuring Bryne Donaldson on alto saxophone. Bryne can play in a wide range of genre but his true heart beat is in smooth jazz. His tone is excellent and his technical skills are outstanding!! Yes, I trust the comment on Bryne's website.

On Groovalicious showcases Darren Rahn his creativity as multi-instrumentalist. From the funky horns to the propulsive programmed percussion and keyboard chords, he has done it all. Sean McCurley on drums and Ricky Peterson on Hammond B3 emphasize this impression of hot funk.

Jay shines on some West Coast smooth jazz with Oasis. This is the uplifting we-drive-along-the-coast-song. Let the Californian sun into your heart. The new recording technology opens a wide range of possibilities. Jay lays down smooth chords on keys while he performs on guitar the melody of Together At Last perfectly accompanied by Mark Dolin on sax.

Listen to Diggin' It. There is some Marvin Gaye in the air. Jay Soto has a blessed talent for infectious compositions. Moments like a Sunday Smile lighten our life. Jay's music is like a canned food of happiness we can open at every time.

The stomping Mesmerized is a fantastic platform for Jay's brilliant guitar play and when Jodi Light breaths her ahs and oohs, we all go goose-pimplly and crazy. Dreamsville is a song I would await by Philippe Saisse or Alex Bugnon, but no it's Jay on piano. Bravissimo!

While Jay jams on Bayou Blues in the style of Eric Clapton, he tries a more funky and experimental way on Cacophony. Dominic Amato is the featured sax player between smooth and edgy. Steve Culp adds a maniac Rhodes solo overshadowed by Jay breathtaking guitar excess.

Mesmerized is guitar ecstasy. Jay Soto has reached his aim of one of the leading guitarists.

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Now the audience has to recognize this. ---HBH, smooth-jazz.de

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