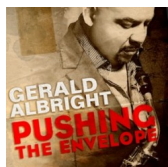


Gerald Albright – Pushing The Envelope (2010)

Written by bluesever

Tuesday, 15 June 2010 21:49 - Last Updated Thursday, 06 November 2014 21:43

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01. *What Would James Do* (5:36)
02. *Get On The Floor* (4:59)
03. *Bobo's Groove* (5:05)
04. *Capetown Strut* (4:54)
05. *Close To You* (4:59)
06. *I Found The Klugh* (5:39)
07. *Embrace The Spirit* (6:04)
08. *The Road To Peace (A Prayer F* (5:13)
09. *Highway 70* (4:55)
10. *From The Soul* (5:41)

Gerald Albright: alto, tenor and baritone saxophones (1-4, 6-10), bass guitar (1-3, 6-8, 10), keyboards (1, 4, 6, 7, 8), drum programming (1), synthesizer programming (2, 3), EWI (2-4, 6, 7, 9), soprano saxophone (5, 8), flutes (5), background vocals (5), percussion programming (6, 8); Fred Wesley: trombone (1); Ricky Watford: guitars (1-3, 5-10), acoustic guitar (4); Tracy Carter: keyboards (1-5, 7-10); Ricky Lawson: drums (2-10); Mark Cargill: string section (2, 5); Selina Albright: background vocals (2, 5); Earl Klugh: acoustic guitar (6); Luther "Mano" Hanes: keyboards (6); George Duke: acoustic piano (8).

Whether the economy, the climate or war, the world faces a multitude of crises. During times like these, music can be a valuable healing force. Saxophonist and producer Gerald Albright takes that approach with *Pushing the Envelope*.

Albright counts saxophonist Maceo Parker and Julian "Cannonball" Adderley among his influences. His career has included work as both a band leader and a sideman. Among his associations are Anita Baker, Ray Parker, Teena Marie and Maurice White. For *Pushing the Envelope*, Albright plays a variety of instruments, including bass guitar, with a trio of drummer Ricky Lawson, keyboardist Tracy Carter and guitarist Ricky Watford.

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Albright's daughter, Selina, brings vocals to a danceable cover of Michael Jackson's "Get on the Floor," from Jackson's mega-hit, *Off the Wall* (Epic, 1979). A seldom covered song, Albright turns in a pleasing rendition, capturing enough of the original that it's familiar, but adapting it as his own. Mark Cargill plugs in the string section, and with Watford and Lawson doing their thing, Albright scores, both with his saxophone lead and slick bass guitar.

Earl Klugh sits in on "I Found the Klugh," penned by Albright as a tribute to the acoustic guitarist's unique style. The alto leads, at times joined by Klugh, with Luther "Mano" Hanes taking over keyboard duties.

Albright stretches out aplenty on the balladic "Embrace the Spirit." Accompanied only by his core trio, he expresses freely, with a sound that's part Grover Washington, Jr., part Michael Brecker and all soul.

"Highway 70" is a roll-the-windows down and step on it tune. The song serves the dual purpose of recognizing Interstate Highway 70 as it passes through Colorado, and a nod towards Earth, Wind & Fire, one of Albright's all-time favorite bands.

Albright is versatile as both a composer and musician. Easily comfortable playing jazz, blues, R&B or pop, he's earned two Grammy nominations and was among 10 saxophonists chosen to play during President Clinton's inauguration. With *Pushing the Envelope*, Albright continues to show why he's one of the biggest multi-genre stars. ---Woodrow Wilkins, allaboutjazz.com

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