

BENITO GONZALEZ



www.benitogonzalez.com

PIANIST – COMPOSER – ARRANGER -- PRODUCER

BENITO GONZALEZ



BIOGRAPHY

Born into a family of Venezuelan folk musicians, jazz pianist Benito Gonzalez has always had a deep-rooted appreciation for pastimes and traditions. Today, as a rising star of one of America's finest musical traditions, Gonzalez has come to his current status by following in the footsteps of jazz's ancestral forebears. The fusion of world rhythms and straight-ahead jazz makes 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) in addition to taking home first prize at the Great American Jazz Piano Competition.

Benito's acclaimed sophomore album, 'Circles' (Ron Blake, Myron Walden, Azar Lawrence, Christian McBride, Jeff "Tain" Watts), reveals a very personal body of work as he emerges as a leader and an accomplished improviser. Recently, Benito received more critical attention for his work on Garrett's Grammy-Nominated album 'Seeds from the Underground'.

After almost seven years of touring with Kenny Garrett, Benito has added numerous festivals and international jazz club dates to his credit. He has also 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, Azar Lawrence, and Jackie McLean.

His multi-cultural talents have led to frequent recording dates, from American jazz masters such as Kenny Garrett and Azar Lawrence, to West African musicians and Latin bands. Benito has also served as musical director for several Venezuelan Recording Artists.

Presently, Benito is touring the world with numerous jazz clubs and international festivals to his credit, including several extensive tours of Europe as leader of his own *Benito Gonzalez Trio*.

DISCOGRAPHY

- Benito Gonzalez: *Starting Point*, 2005
- Kenny Garrett: *Sketches of MD*, Mack Avenue Records, 2008
- Azar Lawrence: *Mystic Journey*, Furthermore Recordings, 2009
- Benito Gonzalez: *Circles*, Furthermore Recordings, 2010
- Kenny Garrett: *Seeds from the Underground*, 2012
- Kenny Garrett: *Pushing the World Away*, 2013

CLUB DATES

- Blue Note, NYC, Japan, Italy
- Birdland, NYC, Germany
- Iridium Jazz Club, NYC
- Blues Alley Jazz Supper Club, Washington, DC
- Bohemian Caverns, Washington, DC
- New Haven Lounge, Baltimore, MD
- Orlieb's Jazz Haus, Philadelphia, PA
- Sweet Rhythm, NYC
- Catalina's Jazz Club, Los Angeles, CA
- Yoshi's, Oakland, CA

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
- **East Coast Jazz Festival**, MD
- **North Sea Jazz Festival**, Holland

AWARDS

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

LINKS

WEBSITE: www.benitogonzalez.com

MYSFACE: www.myspace.com/benitogonzalez

YOUTUBE: www.youtube.com/benitoenrique

PRESS

“One of the best new jazz artists of the year 2010”

-JazzTimes

“...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 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] Garret 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.”

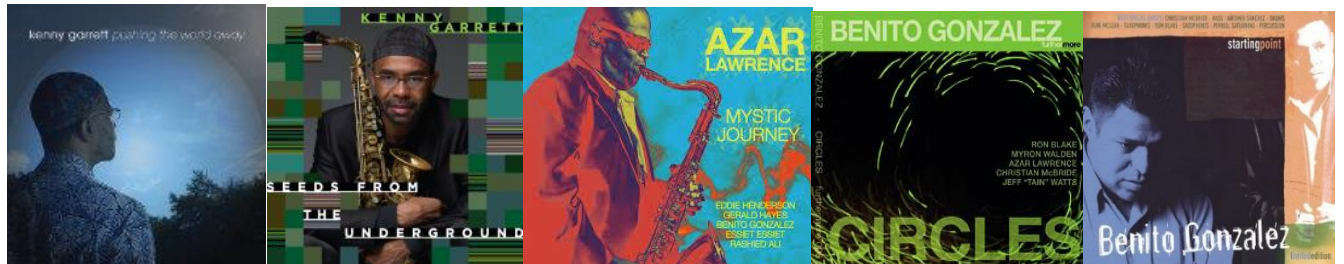
-Minority Report by Shelton Hull, *Ink19*

"Circles is a straightahead hard-bop affair that shows how far Gonzalez has come since releasing his debut CD as a leader, Starting Point, in 2005"

- Ed Enright, *DownBeat Magazine*

“...the cat who impressed me the most was the piano player. I mean, he had the most rhythmic variety and feel and a kind of strength. If I made a guess, I would say Kenny Kirkland.”

-Steve Coleman, *Jazz Times 2013*



BENITO GONZALEZ TRIO



Listen to the
Benito Gonzalez Trio:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=fAMN6tG4mRY

www.youtube.com/watch?v=CreZ0hiNSPY

www.youtube.com/watch?v=H29sjZanw-U

www.facebook.com/benitogonzaleztrio

