

Biography

Montreal-born, Vancouver-raised tenor and soprano saxophonist/composer **Michael Blake** has established himself as a leading voice in contemporary music. For the last 30 years he has made his home in New York City, where he consistently creates music that bristles with originality and vision. He has released 15 recordings as a leader or co-leader and performed on countless sessions with other musicians, has scored music for TV and film, and performed in halls, clubs and festivals worldwide. Most recently he has also lent his talents to projects led by musicians such as Henry Butler/Steven Bernstein Hot 9, Michael Bates, Erik Friedlander and Ben Allison.

In 2014 he was commissioned by the Vancouver organization Barking Sphinx to compose a suite commemorating the 100th Anniversary of Canada's 1914 Kamagata Maru Tragedy, a socio-political tragedy that eventually resulted in the deaths of 19 East Indian would-be immigrants who were on that ill-fated freighter. The premiere of Komagata Maru Blues took place at The Vancouver International Jazz Festival. In early 2015 he received a funding from The Canada Council for the Arts to record his work for Songlines Records. The ensuing album 'Fulfillment' was released in early 2016 to great critical acclaim. Along with 'Fulfillment' Blake's steadfast output his year continues with the release of Red Hook Soul (Ropeadope) and Transmissions (For Tune) by Made in China, a collaborative trio with Swiss trombonist Samuel Blaser and American drummer Michael Sarin. In 2013 Michael received Chamber Music America's New Jazz Works Grant for which he wrote the music for Tiddy Boom (Sunnyside), a hard swinging homage to tenor titans Coleman Hawkins and Lester Young that continues a legacy of rave reviews and 'Best of the Year' lists for Blake.

His tenure with John Lurie and the Lounge Lizards lasted from 1990-2000 and includes numerous record dates, TV appearances, a live concert film from Berlin, and film soundtracks such as the Grammy nominated score for Get Shorty. During this period he was also a Composer in Residence in the Jazz Composers Collective, a nonprofit, musician-run organization dedicated to presenting original works. Another important group he co-lead was the instrumental band Slow Poke. With a cunning and young rhythm section urging him on, his Copenhagen based group Blake Tartare gave Blake a huge creative boost. The band toured extensively and recorded 3 albums for Stunt Records including The World Awakes, an ambitious tribute to saxophonist Lucky Thompson. Michael has recorded and toured with other projects including the NYC power band Hellbent, a Canadian based group called The Variety Hour, his Tiddy Boom Quartet, and the Michael Blake Trio.

Michael is a respected teacher and has conducted workshops and classes in the US, Canada, Mexico, Denmark, Italy, Brazil and Thailand. He was on faculty at the Fondazione Siena Jazz (2009-2013) and substitute teaches at New York University and The New School.

Among the many artists he has recorded and performed with are Ben Allison, Hamid Drake, Oliver Lake, Nicole Mitchell, Kenny Werner, Greg Osby, Eric Harland, Steve Cardenas, Matt Wilson, Frank Kimbrough, Ted Nash, Steven Bernstein, Ben Perowsky, George Colligan, Grachon Moncour III, Medeski Martin and Wood, Ray Lamontagne, Enrico Rava, Stefano Bollani, Jeff Ballard, Larry Grenadier, Giovanni Guidi, Gianluca Patrella, Thomas Morgan, Gerald Cleaver, Mark Helias, Mario Pavone, Tommaso Cappellato, Bill Ware, Groove Collective, The Gil Evans Orchestra, Kamikaze Ground Crew, Jack McDuff, Kresten Osgood, Jacob Bro, Lonnie Smith, Ben E. King, Chubby Checker, Neil Sedaka, Dione, Natalie Cole, Martha and Rufus Wainwright, Nick Cave and Pinetop Perkins. He has worked with such luminary producers as Teo Macero, Tricky, Prince Paul, Hal Wilner and Sir Coxsonne Dodd.

Website: <http://www.michaelblake.net>

Discography: <http://www.michaelblake.net/discog.php>

Reviews: <http://www.michaelblake.net/reviews.php>

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