

The blues is a feeling. The blues is a form.

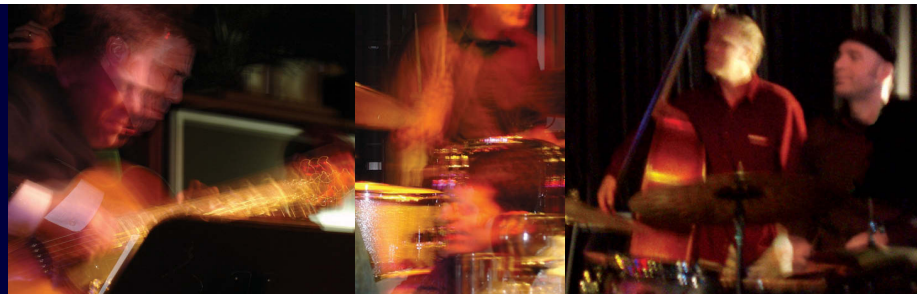
Two statements about music. You've likely heard the first one at some point, but perhaps not the second. So I'd like to explain a bit.

Music is nothing without feeling, and nowhere is this more true than in blues music. Blues greats such as Robert Johnson, Muddy Waters and B.B. King have been masters at conveying emotion, and they passed down as their legacy an emotional vocabulary

As is Charlie Parker's "Now's The Time." But none of these would be called blues music.

So when jazz musicians say, "let's play a blues," what they are proposing is not a song with a certain feeling, but a song with a certain structure.

Radiant Blue is a collection of ten blueses — which is to say, ten songs based on the blues form. To be sure, there are stylistic elements of the blues in many of the songs (check out "Sneaking Suspicion"



THE BLUES IS A FEELING

of musical riffs, stylings, phrases and techniques that form the vernacular of blues music.

But no less a part of their legacy is a contribution of a different nature: the blues *form*. In poetry, a sonnet is distinguished by its form — a particular fourteen-line structure. So, too, much of blues music conforms to a particular structure — a distinct sequence of chords twelve measures in length. That structure has come to permeate popular music far

beyond the genre of blues. "Rock Around the Clock" is, structurally, a perfect blues. So is the theme from *Batman*.

and "Blues for Now"). But most of the music is not particularly bluesy. The grooves run a wide gamut, from fast straight ahead jazz to New Orleans to Afro-Samba to feel-good South African to angular funk. *Radiant Blue* is a CD of blueses, but it is not a blues CD any more than The Who's rock opera, *Tommy*, is an opera CD.

If you're familiar with music theory, you'll notice that I've taken many liberties with the blues form throughout the CD. But my hope is that, regardless of your musical knowledge, with a few listenings of the CD you will be able to "squint your ears" and make out the shape of a blues, in the same way you might recognize an old friend at a distance by just their silhouette and their walk. For jazz musicians, the blues form is such a friend.

— Anton Schwartz, June, 2006, Oakland.

THE BLUES IS A FORM

Gratitude

I hope that you can already appreciate, listening to the music, the enormity of the talent of Tim, John, Taylor and Peter. They bring this music to life in colors more vivid and subtle than I could hope for. They also happen to be some of my favorite people, and playing with them is both an honor and, well, a blast.

Bud, Dan and Paul made this CD *sound* the way it does. The complexity of that achievement is staggering — equal parts art and science. The often stressful process of postproduction felt instead

like old friends getting together to talk about music and life. You are, indeed, great friends.

Jan Mancuso and Greg Niemeyer have each helped shape the CD in important and subtle ways during our many fun conversations. Mark Rini, Jason Byrne, Frank Brandon and Molly Cooper have been key members of the team, and a pleasure to work with.

I've played with and learned from many other wonderful musicians as this CD's music has developed. Among them I'd like to especially thank John Wiitala, Art Hirahara and Adam Shulman.

And great thanks to the teachers who have so generously shared their love and knowledge of jazz music with me over the years: Ed Byrne, Paul Cohen, Warne Marsh, Eddie Daniels, Tom Everett and Bill Bell.

I'd also like to thank Susan Muscarella, Cheryl Symister-Masterson, Lee Kramka, Dick LaPalm, Ric Mancuso, Merrilee Trost, Rick Goodwin, Mike Cogan, James Frazier and all the fine folks at Burnside, Groov, IRIS and KCSM. And of course all of my amazing family and friends — you mean the world to me!

