

GARY PALMER

Creating powerful melodic soul-jazz.



Passionate about the saxophone since he was a kid growing up in New York City, Gary Palmer frequently turned to the horn as an outlet and stress reliever during his many years as a law enforcement official. In addition to playing it to change the trajectories of difficult workdays, he always had contemporary/smooth jazz on the radio, calming him and helping him focus even when he was on high stress stakeouts with the Lauderdale Police Department and Broward County Sheriff's Office, Fort Lauderdale, Fl. – retiring in 2010. Now, with the release of the multi-talented musician and performer's highly anticipated smooth/urban jazz debut **Love Me Again**, Palmer is the one helping others chill via his cool, catchy melodies, old school production vibe, tropical flavors and easy funk grooves.

Like many musicians who set their dreams aside for 'straight careers,' Palmer began making up for lost time after he retired from the Broward Sheriff's Office. Just as he was becoming immersed in the writing and recording of the album, he returned to the Broward Sheriff's Office – where he originally began serving in the

early 80s – to become the Colonel of the Department of Detention and Community Programs. Palmer has found exciting ways to merge his two worlds, performing events for the Florida Sheriff's Association, the Ft. Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce, the Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce and other civic functions. In addition to these gigs with his regular band (known as Gary Palmer and the GP Project), the saxophonist has created a side band comprised of colleagues of his at the Sheriff's Office. They meet every Tuesday for two hours to work on cover songs and new material, and also perform regularly throughout the community.



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Rising through the ranks of law enforcement over the years, Palmer sees many parallels to his challenges now as an emerging independent instrumental artist in a competitive smooth jazz field. His lifelong excitement for music and the saxophone in particular – combined with the enthusiasm he has felt every time he takes the stage – led him to create a diverse full-length project that stands apart from the pack in many ways. Alternating between soprano, alto and tenor to create different moods and dynamics, he varies tempos and vibes from track to track – and creates a powerful old school soul-jazz sound with the help of his longtime keyboardist

brother-in-law Kevin Foster, who plays piano, Fender Rhodes and organ.

“One of the song titles on *Love Me Again* is ‘Step in the Name of Jazz,’” Palmer says, “and that’s how I’ve taken the process of writing and recording, step by step. Now the next step is the most exciting, seeing where things go from here. I’m just enjoying the journey and it’s wonderful to have the opportunity to share my music with more people all the time. All of this is a first for me and so far the response has been overwhelmingly positive and exciting.”

ON STAGE

In addition to those civic events connected to his role as a law enforcement officer, Gary Palmer and The GP Project – which includes keyboardists Kevin Foster and Eric Overhultz, guitarist Sherman Hunter, bassist David Palmer, drummer Kevin McCullough, Saxophonist Jeremy Givens and vocalist Angela Neely have performed at many private and public events for the Miami Heat. Palmer has also gigged with other local bands and nationally known artists like Richie Supa (a one-time member of Aerosmith) at an event called Rockers in Recovery. Just as there is great variety on the *Love Me Again* album, Palmer ensures that every performance is fresh, unique and exciting. The band likes to mix things up, taking a different approach to the same material from gig to gig. Almost anything can trigger them to amp things up and take a given tune to the next, unexpected level. “We love to have that element of the unknown when we take the stage,” the saxophonist says. “We know we’re there to entertain our fans and have fun, but it’s nice to improvise and let the show take some unscripted steps and take on dimensions we couldn’t have fathomed coming in.”



NOTABLE LIVE PERFORMANCES

Miami Heat at The W Hotel - *Miami, FL*
Augusta Music Fest - *Augusta, GA*
Florida Sheriff’s Association, Marriott Harbor Beach - *Ft Lauderdale, FL*
Ft Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce - *Ft. Lauderdale, FL*
South Florida Regional Conference Narcotics Anonymous
- *Deauville Beach Resort Miami Beach, FL*
Iberostar Rose Hall - *Montego Bay, Jamaica*
Plaza Del Lago @ Heron Bay - *Parkland, FL*
Hard Rock Hotel - *Hollywood, FL*
The Tower Club - *Ft. Lauderdale, FL*
The W. Hotel - *Ft Lauderdale, FL*
CB Smith - *Rockers In Recovery All Star Band - Pembroke Pines, FL*
Miramar Cultural Center - *Miramar, FL*
Broward Center for the Performing Arts - *Ft Lauderdale, FL*
Ross Center - *Orangeburg, SC*
Andrews Place - *Augusta, GA*
Shannon’s - *Augusta, GA*



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MUSIC

The CD cover of *Love Me Again* shows Palmer cutting a dashing figure in an elegant suit and tie – but don't let that formality tell the whole story. The versatile saxophonist is all about steppin' out and having some sweet, soulful urban jazz fun. Alternating between alto, soprano and tenor, he stirs up the sultry romance on breezy, easy grooving in the pocket gems like the title track and "Stay With Me", whose balmy, tropical vibe provides a lush backdrop for his deep, emotional tenor melody. A quintessential driving tune, the opening track "Island Breeze" also has a playful tropicality, with Palmer's soulful, lighthearted soprano dancing dreamily over the Kevin Foster's old school keys and synthesized island touches. One of Palmer's personal favorites is "Give Me Your Heart", whose crunchy funk groove, punchy alto melody and classic R&B flavored guitar and Fender Rhodes are complemented with some spoken word romantic expressions. Another ultra-romantic highlight is the sultry, Earth, Wind & Fire influenced ballad "Yes I". Two tracks that perfectly embody the album's mix of soft candlelight and funk are "Step In the Name of Jazz", driven by Palmer's percussive soprano melody and spoken dance step commands, and the sweet and graceful "Once Upon a Time".



REVIEWS

"While the human-interest story behind Gary Palmer's emergence as an instrumental urban jazz artist – pursuing his lifelong passion and dream after years in law enforcement - is powerful, it would be just that, a cool inspirational tale, if his debut album wasn't the diverse powerhouse it is. While most indie artist debuts play it safe, sticking to one core sound on a single instrument, Palmer is from the Grover Washington, Jr. "no cookie cutter" school, mixing up vibes, tempos and horns to convey a wide range of emotions. Palmer takes the listener on a romantic journey with some island pleasures for sure, but that's just the start of the fun-filled, heartfelt magic. The album's called *Love Me Again*, but he won't have to ask urban jazz fans twice. They'll be loving Gary Palmer's music from the get-go". – Jonathan Widran

Love Me Again may be Gary Palmer's recording debut but he is a veteran saxophonist with a sound of his own on each of his instruments. On *Love Me Again*, Palmer, like one of his inspirations Grover Washington Jr, displays appealing styles on alto, soprano and tenor. He performs ten originals with his group The GP Project which includes Kevin Foster and Eric Overhultz on keyboards, guitarist Sherman Hunter, bassist David Palmer, drummer Kevin McCullough and occasional singers. While the music is always danceable, the ten songs have plenty of variety in tempos, rhythms and moods. Gary Palmer, like Grover Washington, knows how to ride over grooves and stretch himself within the context of the music while adding soulful ideas to the melodies. His music and his mature yet youthful and enthusiastic playing is a joy to hear. Fans of urban and funky jazz will enjoy discovering Gary Palmer.

– Scott Yanow, author of 11 books including *The Great Jazz Guitarists* and *The Jazz Singers*



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FROM THE BEGINNING

Born and raised in NYC, Palmer began playing the sax at age 12 and, as he grew up, performed as an instrumentalist and singer with his four musical siblings (three brothers, one sister) and dad Harvey Palmer throughout the city. At one point, a group featuring him and the other boys was known as The Palmer Brothers – and the family performed in other groups with their cousins. He was a music major at his performing arts high school (Andrew Jackson High), where he participated in the band, orchestra and jazz band. Later during college, he played in the jazz band and performed at numerous events. While he had the opportunity to play both classical and jazz in these school ensembles, his deeper jazz education came from the music of the legends his dad would play in the house: Wes Montgomery, John Coltrane, Jack McDuff, Johnny “Hammond” Smith, Jimmy Smith, etc. His passion for the format that became smooth jazz started with Grover Washington, Jr. and David Sanborn and caught fire when he saw the early music videos of Dave Koz.



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