

# MESSAGE FOR THE WEEK

## **STANLEY JORDAN TRIO**

The Paris Concert  
Inakustik/MVD, 2008  
Review by Joe Milliken

Stanley Jordan is one-of-a-kind. A truly unique guitar player and master of a two-handed tapping technique that immediately turned heads within the jazz world upon the release of his debut album, *Magic Touch*, in 1985, which also earned Jordan a Grammy nomination. Appearing here at the infamous Paris Morning Star in July of 2007 with David Haynes on drums and Charnett Moffett on bass, Jordan's technique is both pristine and spellbinding, displaying his uncanny ability to play both rhythm and melody simultaneously. You close your eyes, and you swear it is two guitarists playing.

However unlike hand-hammering rockers such as Eddie Van Halen, Randy Rhodes and Steve Vai, Jordan creates a much richer sound with much more vibrato than these other guitar heroes, using a specially made Vigier Arpege guitar, a French company. Stanley's educational background in music theory, including a degree from Princeton and current masters degree studies at Arizona State University, very much comes into play, especially with his original compositions.

Accompanied by long-time band mates Haynes and Moffett, (the chemistry is obvious) Jordan performs a 12-song, 105-minute set full of few original compositions, but also several cover songs including Miles Davis, John Coltrane, Mozart and The Beatles. In fact, along with his unique style of playing of course, Jordan may be best known for his unique renditions of Beatles classics such as "Elinor Rigby" and "Yesterday", which opened up this set.

The trio's cover of Horace Silver's "Song For My Father" however, might be the highlight of the entire show, as Jordan sits before a piano and proceeds to (somehow) play a melody with his left hand on the piano, while also soloing on the guitar with his right hand. It is truly remarkable and one needs to see it with their own eyes to believe it! Stanley's display of not only uncanny dexterity, but also his ability to seamlessly blend with his band mates is nothing short of remarkable. We're talking, mouth-agape amazement!

Throughout the set Jordan and company are as diverse as they are unique, ranging from Mozart's "Piano Concerto #21," to the Miles Davis standard "All

Blues" and John Coltrane's "Naimi," to The Beatles "Because", Jordan and his trio successfully put their stamp on each track, while pulling each song into their own jazzy formula. The closing "Return Expedition" from the aforementioned Magic Touch album, is a roller-coaster ride through exotic themes, powerful fusion, fuzz-tone effects and some more of Jordan's incredible playing of the guitar and piano simultaneously. Add in an informative 12-minute bonus interview with Stanley himself, and the Paris Concert is a well-rounded representation of a live Stanley Jordan experience. And if you have never experienced Mr. Jordan play guitar, sit back and prepare to be drop-your-mouth-open amazed!