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Jeff Healey and the Jazz Wizards: Beautiful Noise

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Jeff Healey and the Jazz Wizards

Beautiful Noise

(MVD)

Jeff Healey first came into the national music scene in 1988 with the release of his debut *See the Light*. Healey was a passionate blues rock guitar player, which was a bit out of synch of the metal shredding guitar players of the day. But what made Healey really unique is his playing style where he laid the guitar on his lap and played his instrument so well he was getting compared to Clapton and Hendrix. What's more, Healey was a blind white boy from Canada playing some sweet blues.

In the middle of being a blues rock guitarist, Healey taught himself to play the trumpet and started to study traditional jazz from the 1920s and 30s. In 2002 Healey released his first jazz album *Among Friends* and followed that up two years later with *Adventures in Jazzland*.

With his flawless jazz playing his main focus, Healey formed his backing jazz band – the Jazz Wizards - Ross Wollridge (clarinet); Christopher Plock (saxophones); Drew Jurecka (violin, saxophone); Colin Bray (bass); Gary Scriven (drums); Jessie Barksdale (guitar); Reide Kaiser (piano).

Beautiful Noise was originally recorded for the Canadian TV show "A Beautiful Noise" in January of 2006 and filmed at The Berkeley Church in Toronto.

The hour-long show opens with the rousing "I Would Do Anything For You" and flows effortlessly into "Bugle Call Rag" and the smokey sensual "If I Had You." Each song hovers around the five or six minute mark with each musician getting their solo times, which adds such a beauty and respect to the jazz music. Not only does Healey get his time in on vocals, but he can play some serious jazz trumpet. He also has mastered the jazz guitar and on several songs he switches back and forth from trumpet to guitar not missing a note.

Christopher Plock takes over on the microphone for the bluesy "Darktown Strutter's Ball" and the highlight of the show comes midway through when Healey introduces Terra Hazelton to sing "I'm Gonna Lock My Heart And Throw Away The Key" and "Sugar Blues." Hazelton is so good with her vocals it makes you feel like you are sipping suds in a Chicago speakeasy circa 1920.

Healey and the Jazz Wizards close the show with the 1925 jazz standard "Sweet Georgia Brown." At nearly 10 minutes, the song is the perfect selection to cap off a wonderful jazz show.

I'll be the first to admit, I don't know a whole lot about jazz, but I know what I like when I hear it...and I love Jeff Healey and the Jazz Wizards "Beautiful Noise." I didn't know what to expect going into this DVD, but I quickly had an eye opening jazz experience. Sadly we lost Jeff Healey in 2008, but he has left us with some beautiful noise. R.I.P. Jeff.

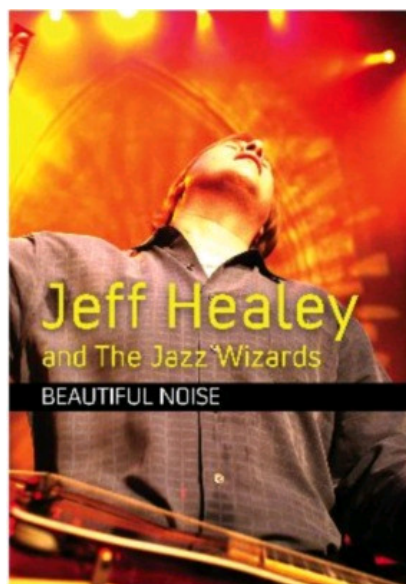
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