

## **JOHN ABERCROMBIE ORGAN RIO 2010**

### **John Abercrombie**

Born 1944 in Port Chester, NY, John Abercrombie grew up in Greenwich, Connecticut, and began playing the guitar at the age of fourteen. By the time he was out of high school, he was ready to veer away from imitative Chuck Berry licks in favor of learning to play the instrument more seriously. While enrolled at Boston's Berklee College of Music, Abercrombie worked with other students and played local clubs and bars. "it was pretty much your standard guitar-organ-drums set up."

An offer to tour with organist Johnny Hammond led to his going on the road for weeks at a time, playing such spots as Count Basie's Lounge and the Club Baron in Harlem. During that same period, Abercrombie met the Brecker Brothers who were in the process of forming Dreams. They invited Abercrombie to play with them, and he was heard on Dreams' debut album on Columbia.

In 1969, following graduation from Berklee, Abercrombie decided to head south in hopes of breaking into the New York music scene. In the next few years he developed into one of New York's most in-demand session musicians. He recorded with Gil Evans, Gato Barbieri, Barry Miles and many other artists, and also became a regular with Chico Hamilton's group.

It was as the guitarist in Billy Cobham's band that Abercrombie first began attracting widespread attention among the general public. This ensemble was something of a Dreams reunion since it also featured the Brecker Brothers. Abercrombie is heard on Cobham's Crosswinds, Total Eclipse and Shabazz albums. He found himself playing large concert halls and arenas, on bills with such top rock attractions as the Doobie Brothers. "One night we appeared at the Spectrum in Philadelphia and I thought, what am I doing here?"

A short time later, at the Montreux Festival, Abercrombie ran into Manfred Eicher who invited him to record an album for ECM, The result was Timeless, on which he was joined by Jan Hammer and Jack DeJohnette. It received virtually unanimous critical acclaim. Gateway was released in November 1975; it marked the first collaborative effort of Abercrombie with DeJohnette and bassist Dave Holland. A second Gateway recording was released in June 1978. In 1979, Abercrombie formed his own

quartet, which included pianist Richie Beirach, bassist George Mraz and drummer Peter Donald. The group has made three recordings: *Arcade*, *Abercrombie Quartet*, and *M*.

Abercrombie has also recorded with many other ECM artists; the most significant collaborations must surely be with drummer Jack DeJohnette (Abercrombie appears on all of DeJohnette's *Directions* and *Now Directions* albums) and with fellow guitarist Ralph Towner. *Abercrombie and Towner's Sargasso Sea* was released in 1976 and *Five Years Later* in 1982.

Abercrombie's touring trio with Mark Johnson and Peter Erskine is heard on *Current Events*, *Getting There* (with frequent guest Michael Brecker) and *John Abercrombie/Marc Johnson/Peter Erskine*. Critic, Chuck Berg has described the group as "solidified ... to the point where its sixth-sense interactions create a singleness of vision associated only with Olympian ensembles such as the trios of pianists Bill Evans and Oscar Peterson". On *Current Events*, released in 1988, John used guitar synthesizer for the first time on record. *John Abercrombie/Marc Johnson/Peter Erskine*, released in 1989, was recorded in Boston on April 21, 1988 and documents this innovative trio, live. Repertoire from their four-year association is presented, and standards often linked with Bill Evans are given resplendent treatment. On the 1990 release *Animato*, John collaborates with composer/synthesist, Vince Mendoza and drummer John Christensen, and presents eight original compositions.

John's affinity for jazz standards complements his role as an active clinician and teacher. While preparing for a Harvard lecture, where John surveyed the history of jazz guitar, he explained 'When I'm playing tunes like *Autumn Leaves* or *Stella By Starlight*, as much as I've played those tunes over the years, I still enjoy playing them. And because I know them so well, I'm very free with them. I'm just as free with them as when I'm playing no chords at all. That, to me, is free jazz,"

John Abercrombie possesses a unique voice as a jazz guitarist combining evolving technologies with a tradition well represented by jazz standards. Further insight from a 1988 *Jazziz* interview:

## Jared Gold

Carrying on the tradition of jazz guitar from Charlie Christian and Django Reinhardt to the present day is a very important aspect of my music... I'd like people to perceive me as having a direct connection to the history of jazz guitar, while expanding some musical boundaries which may not always involve the guitar itself.'

Jared Gold's recent emergence as one of New York's most in demand organists comes from years of dedication and respect to the Hammond B-3. With such influences as Larry Young, Jack McDuff, and Don Patterson, a unique philosophy based on extending harmony and solidifying groove has taken precedence. Versatility has provided Jared the opportunity to work with such established veterans as Dave Stryker, John Abercrombie, Ed Cherry, Jon Gordon, Oliver Lake, Bill Goodwin, Adam Nussbaum, Jimmy Ponder, Ralph Bowen, Bruce Williams, Cecil Brooks III, Don Braden, Ralph Peterson, William Ash, John Swana, and Tony Reedus. In 2004 Dave Stryker included Jared in his newly formed organ trio with drummer Tony Reedus. With a mixture of adventurous original music and new takes on some old standards this group has been performing often, including a live WBGO broadcast from J and R music in NYC. Jared's writing and arranging skills are featured in his collaboration with guitarist Randy Napoleon and drummer Quincy Davis. They have produced two CD's of which "Enjoy the Moment" (pko records) has received high acclaim and radio play throughout the country. Jared's discography also includes "The Chaser" with the Dave Stryker Trio, "Going Somewhere" with the Avi Rothbard Trio, "Broadway Alley" with the William Ash Trio, and "Springloaded" with the Dan Pratt Organ Quartet.

### Press Quotes

"The presence of organist Jared Gold ramps up the energy considerably. His sound competes with each other instrument for space, forcing that macho bebop favored by trombonist Curtis Fuller, drummer Elvin Jones and trumpeter Lee Morgan."

# Adam Nussbaum

Adam Nussbaum grew up in Norwalk Connecticut and started to play drums at age 12 after studying piano for 5 years, also playing bass and saxophone as a teenager. He moved to New York City in 1975 to attend The Davis Center for Performing Arts at City College. While there he began working with Albert Dailey, Monty Waters, Joe Lee Wilson, Sheila Jordan and he played with Sonny Rollins in 1977 in Milwaukee. In 1978 he joined Dave Liebman's quintet and did his first European tour with John Scofield. During the early eighties he continued working with John Scofield in a celebrated trio with Steve Swallow. In 1983 he became a member of Gil Evans Orchestra and played with Stan Getz as well. He later joined Eliane Elias/Randy Brecker Quartet, Gary Burton, and Toots Thielemans. In 1987 he began touring with the Michael Brecker Quintet. In 1988 they recorded the Grammy winning "Don't Try This At Home" During 1992 he was part of the Carla Bley Big Band and that same year John Abercrombie hired him to complete his organ trio with Dan Wall.

Since then he's keeping active with Abercrombie, James Moody Quartet, 'We Three' w/ Dave Liebman & Steve Swallow and also busy maintaining an active freelance schedule. Adam has taught as an Adjunct professor at New York University, the New School and State University of New York at Purchase. He's also done clinics and master classes around the world.

## All Music Guide Biography

A very versatile drummer who generally plays in advanced settings, Adam Nussbaum is considered a major asset no matter where he appears and one of the finest jazz drummers of the 1990s. Although he started on piano, bass and alto, he eventually settled on drums.

Nussbaum studied at the Davis Center and City College of New York, and by 1978 was making a strong impression in the jazz world, playing regularly with both Dave Liebman and John Scofield (1978-83). Other important associations through the years include Stan Getz (1982-83), Gil Evans, the George Gruntz Concert Jazz Band, Gary Burton, Steve Swallow, Michael Brecker, Don Grolnick, James Moody, Sonny Rollins, Art Pepper, Joe Henderson, John Abercrombie, Sheila Jordan, Kenny Wheeler, Lee Konitz, NHØP and Charles Lloyd, along with countless others.