

Saxophonist **Elan Trotman**, quickly becoming one of jazz's most thrilling and emotive performers, continues to stand out and push boundaries as a composer, performer, teacher and recording artist. Trotman's playing, though inspired by Grover Washington, Jr. and **Kirk Whalum**, among others, displays his own fresh ideas and distinctive tone. So much so that the **New England Urban Music Awards** named him best male jazz performer, and he's been nominated for Boston Music Awards in the jazz category. Born and raised in **Barbados**, the native island of pop star **Rihanna**, and educated at the world-renowned **Berklee College Of Music** in Boston, Trotman approaches jazz in his own way. Blending Caribbean rhythms from his roots with skillful horn textures, his playing is full of surprises. "I like to stretch out, take chances on my solos." Inspiring and eminently listenable, Trotman's music is never predictable.

MUSIC

Elan Trotman's music has that unique edge where its vibe is instantly seductive and familiar but also offers explosive playing and compelling compositions. For his new CD, *Love and Sax*, Trotman slows things down for a ballads project where he wrote or co-wrote 12 of the 13 tracks (including the bonus "Can I Play 4 U?" featuring the late, great bassist Webster Roach), for a set full of sensual and seductive melodies, full-bodied rhythms and plenty of hooks. The title track and first smooth jazz radio single, "Love and Sax," is an irresistible ballad with enchanting wah-wah synth effects and a layered sound that translates to a definite mood enhancer. Trotman's forte is on the tenor and soprano saxes but he also plays the flute and piano.

The multi-instrumentalist has released music with elements of gospel, jazz, R&B, funk and reggae, now steps onto the R & B scene with "Midnight Serenade", a soulful collaboration with R&B vocalist **Tony Terry**, whose hits "With You" and "Everlasting Love" have become Urban AC radio mainstays. The two have remained friends since performing together in the Roberta Flack band. "Midnight Serenade" is a sexy slow-burner written and produced by Trotman and co-written by Boston-based Neil Letendre of Sure Fire Music and co-produced by Atlanta-based Herman "P-Nut" Johnson of Big Bully, Inc. The combination of Trotman's lush horn and Terry's unforgettable vocals create the perfect atmosphere for romance, released just in time for the most romantic holiday of the year. Also joining Trotman on his new CD are two smooth jazz stars, pianist Brian Simpson on "Heaven in Your Eyes" and American Smooth Jazz award-winning trumpeter Cindy Bradley on "Oasis." Also joining Trotman on his new CD are two smooth jazz stars, pianist Brian Simpson and American Smooth Jazz award-winning trumpeter Cindy Bradley.

The single "Heaven In Your Eyes" feat. **Brian Simpson** climbed all the way to #12 on the Billboard Smooth Jazz Songs Chart. *Love and Sax* is Trotman's 5th CD, and to date is his most successful work, having entered the Billboard Contemporary Jazz Albums Top 20 in June of 2011. Prior to "Love and Sax" his 2009 release "This Time Around" gained significant airplay for the funky remake of Bill Withers hit "Lovely Day" by reaching #6 on the radio charts, and the self-penned, feel good summer track "100 Degrees".

ON STAGE

Trotman has recorded and performed with a number of world-class musicians, including Roberta Flack, Kirk Whalum, Brian McKnight, Johnny Gill, Tony Terry, Nathan East, Najee, Walter Beasley and Don Grusin. A huge sports fan, Trotman has performed the National Anthem on numerous occasions for such teams as the Boston Celtics, Boston Red Sox, Cincinnati Reds and Los Angeles Dodgers.

He put together the band that performed for NBA star Ray Allen's wedding and performs annually for Theo Epstein's charity event "Hot Stove Cool Music," jamming with pro pitcher Bronson Arroyo and former ESPN analyst Peter Gammons. Says Trotman: "I hope that everyone, including people of all ages who might listen to straight-ahead jazz, smooth jazz, rock or gospel, enjoys the music and the performance. It's for them."

FROM THE BEGINNING

Trotman grew up in tropical island paradise of Barbados, (home of Pop Icon Rihanna) where he grooved to calypsos, reggae and local music. He started piano lessons at 7, picking up the saxophone five years later. Well-known local saxophonist Arturo Tappin became his mentor in high school. Tappin attended Berklee in the late 1980s and returned to the island with valuable insights into jazz, which he fused with calypso and reggae rhythms. "He helped expose me to other genres outside of our native music," Trotman says.

While in high school, Trotman led his own band, worked with a couple of gospel groups and eventually formed his own combo, Inspiration. The combo found plenty of work at local shows and festivals. During this formative period, Trotman became inspired by Grover Washington Jr. and other contemporary jazz musicians who performed at the prestigious Barbados Jazz Festival. Elan asserts, "Now with this second smooth jazz release, I take great pride in bringing more success to my little island just as Rihanna has done."

Trotman's talents were recognized when the Barbados government awarded him a full scholarship to Berklee, where he earned a bachelor's degree in music education. "The most beneficial thing about Berklee for me was the environment, since it is such a melting pot of talents," he says. "We all learned from each other, taking solos, sitting in with people and interacting with each other. I learned to be a more well-rounded musician." Because of his passion for education, Trotman – in addition to expanding his busy music career – Elan has served as a teacher in the Boston public school system for over 10 years.