

Jazz finalists include renowned Kiwi artists

The three finalists for the best Jazz Album of 2009 have been announced and include some of the biggest names in the genre in the global music scene.

Renowned expat Kiwi pianist-composer Alan Broadbent features on one album while Rodger Fox makes his mark as musical director of a second and the third features veteran bassist Kevin Haines.

Throw in Frank Gibson and acclaimed international recording engineer Talley Sherwood – among a number of others - and the jazz album Tui line-up is going to be a tough call for the judges.

The finalists are The New Zealand School of Music Big Band for 'Run For Cover', 'Together Again' from Broadbent, Gibson, Smith, and the Samson, Nacey, Haines Trio for 'Open To Suggestions'.

Run For Cover

Engineered by Grammy nominee Talley Sherwood, Run For Cover features the best of New Zealand's young musicians plus three international jazz recording artists - trumpeter Clay Jenkins, saxophonist Bob Sheppard and pianist Bill Cunliffe. Other guests include local jazz luminaries Nick Granville (guitar), Lance Philip (drums/percussion) and Alex Nyman (EWI).

The album was recorded in August 2009 and comprises the full range of big band jazz sounds with works composed by the likes of Horace Silver, Bill Liston, Marcus Miller, Don Menza, Clifford Brown, Pete Jackson and more.

Together Again

Together Again is an album of originals – five from Broadbent - mingled with a handful of standards and features the LA-based pianist / composer with drummer Frank Gibson and Putter Smith on bass. The trio is augmented by LA saxophonists Chuck Manning and Gary Foster and vocalist VA Smith.

Gibson hatched the project several years ago when he wanted to get together with his long-time cohorts. It was recorded in LA in January 2008. Broadbent was admitted to the New Zealand Order of Merit in 2008 for his services to jazz music.

Open To Suggestions

Jazz stalwarts Ron Samson (drums), Dixon Nacey (guitar) and bassist Kevin Haines began their collaborative musical project in mid-2008 and recorded Open To Suggestions in January 2009.

Their aim was to produce an album of fine compositions and improvisations that reflected each player's love and passion for jazz music. The resulting recording features standards, originals and contemporary compositions with each member contributing equally musically.

Music awards spokesperson Campbell Smith says the quality of the finalists reflects the high standard of work being done in the jazz genre in New Zealand.

"It's good to see the mix with a big band versus the trios so it will be tough work for the judges. But the big thing for me is the recognition our jazz musicians are getting world-wide" Smith says.

The winner of the Best Jazz Album Tui will be announced in February and the achievement will be recognized at the Vodafone New Zealand Music Awards 2010 in October.

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