

Great Guitars of Jazz

Mundell Lowe, Howard Alden and Mike Magnelli: three absolutely brilliant jazz guitarists join to form the 'Great Guitars of Jazz' - the outcome is simply divine!



Line-up

Mundell Lowe - guitar

Howard Alden - guitar

Mike Magnelli - guitar

On Stage: 3

Travel Party: 3

Biography

Mundell Lowe

Mundell Lowe is not only an excellent musician who has stayed busy in the studios for most of his career, but he has also developed a distinctive jazz guitar style defined by clearly articulated melodic lines and subtle chords voicings. Born April 1922, Mundell started playing the guitar as a young boy and before he was a teenager he was playing with local hillbilly bands in his native Mississippi. He later settled in New Orleans for a brief period playing with dance bands and small groups before entering the service in 1941. While in the army he met John Hammond who later helped him to get a job with the Ray McKinley band in 1945. Lowe played with McKinley for more than a year and then settled in New York to pursue a very active studio and recording career. He started showing up on recordings of other artists early in 1950's and by 1954 he was leading his own recording sessions. Mundell Lowe has produced a succession of successful recordings while simultaneously maintaining a busy composing, teaching and performing schedule. He has a long list of film and TV (Wild Wild Wild West) score credits and several studies for multiple guitars. Two recordings from 1953 that Lowe made with Georgie Auld already exhibited the unique Mundell Lowe sound that is so recognizable. His single string improvisation technique, heard on Hefti's Lucky Duck (1953), and his introduction and backing of Auld's saxophone on Gershwin's I've Got a Crush On You bear the unique Mundell Lowe sound so familiar today.

Howard Alden

Howard Alden is to the guitar what Scott Hamilton, Warren Vache, Dan Barrett, and Ken Peplowski are to the tenor, trumpet, trombone, and clarinet. Part of a youthful swing movement that gained momentum in the 1980s, Alden plays the earlier pre-bop styles

quite effectively but also has the ability to perform the music of Thelonious Monk and Bill Evans, and he is equally talented on electric guitar, acoustic guitar, and his rarely played banjo. Alden began playing guitar at age ten and he counts his early influences as guitarists Barney Kessel, Charlie Christian, and George Van Eps in addition to Louis Armstrong, Benny Goodman, and Count Basie. He began gigging professionally in Los Angeles as a teenager and became good friends with trombonist Dan Barrett. In 1979 Alden played with vibraphonist Red Norvo and, in 1982, followed Barrett to New York where he quickly became established as a major guitarist. He performed and recorded with the who's who of mainstream jazz (including Joe Bushkin, Ruby Braff, Joe Williams, Woody Herman, Benny Carter, Flip Phillips, Bud Freeman, Clark Terry, and Dizzy Gillespie) and by the mid-'80s was one of the most popular artists on the Concord label. A very consistent and inventive musician, Alden has since been in great demand for recording sessions, jazz parties, and festivals. His many recordings (which include a quintet co-led with Barrett, sessions on the seven-string guitar with his idol George Van Eps, and duets with Peplowski) are all enjoyable and perfect examples of modern swing.

Mike Magnelli

Archttop guitar enthusiasts are well suited to appreciate the artistry of Mike Magnelli's debut release on the String Jazz label. Onetime manager/agent for Joe Pass, Magnelli displays a talent in his own right, with contemporary styling in a collection of solo archtop tunes. Magnelli has played alongside Pass, Burt Bacharach and was guitarist and assistant director for the Broadway musical Grease. The solo work on this album is a tribute to Magnelli's many years of playing the guitar. His smooth picking and strumming make for an enjoyable listen.

Discography

Mundell Lowe

- 1954 The Mundell Lowe Quintet
- 1954 Mundell Lowe [Victor] - Victor
- 1955 Mundell Lowe Quartet - Original Jazz Classics
- 1955 This Could Lead To Love - Riverside
- 1956 Guitar Moods - Riverside
- 1956 Mundell Lowe - Riverside
- 1956 New Music of Alec Wilder - Riverside
- 1957 A Grand Night for Swinging - Riverside
- 1959 Porgy and Bess - Camden
- 1960 Low Down Guitar - Jazzland
- 1961 Satan in High Heels - Charlie Parker
- 1963 Blues for a Stripper - Charlie Parker
- 1974 California Guitar - Famous Door
- 1976 Guitar Player - Dobre
- 1977 Souvenirs - Jazz Alliance
- 1983 Transit West - Pausa
- 1995 Show Boat - Deutsche Grammophon
- 2000 Mundell's Moods - Nagel-Heyer
- 2000 This One for Charlie - Azica
- 2001 When Lights Are Low - Acoustic
- 2005 Complete TV Action Jazz - Lone Hill Jazz

Howard Alden

- 1985 No Amps Allowed - Chiaroscuro
- 1986 Swing Street - Concord Jazz
- 1988 Swinging into Prominence - Famous Door

1988 Plays the Music of Harry Reser - Stomp Off
1989 The Howard Alden Trio + Special Guest - Concord Jazz
1989 The ABQ Salutes Buck Clayton - Concord Jazz
1990 Snowy Morning Blues - Concord Jazz
1991 13 Strings - Concord Jazz
1991 Misterioso - Concord Jazz
1991 Hand-Crafted Swing - Concord Jazz
1992 Good Likeness - Concord Jazz
1994 Your Story: the Music of Bill Evans - Concord Jazz
1994 Encore! Live at Centre Concord - Concord Jazz
1995 Concord Jazz Guitar Collective - Concord Jazz
1996 Take Your Pick - Concord Jazz
2002 My Shining Hour - Concord Jazz
2003 In a Mellow Tone - Concord Jazz
2004 Live in '95 - Arbors

Mike Magnelli

2002 Imagination - String Jazz

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