



**THE SCOTTISH NATIONAL  
JAZZ ORCHESTRA  
IN CELEBRATION OF**

**MICHAEL**

**BRECKER**

**24 - 28 MAY 2012**



# THE SCOTTISH NATIONAL JAZZ ORCHESTRA

WITH SPECIAL GUEST

**RANDY BRECKER**

Michael Brecker was an incredibly talented musician, a hugely influential saxophonist with a distinctive sound who inspired thousands of jazz players worldwide. As a result of his stylistic and harmonic innovations, he is the most studied contemporary jazz musician in music schools today. His career that spanned more than three decades and saw him win 13 Grammy Awards was tragically cut short when he was diagnosed with a rare form of leukaemia in 2004. Despite his illness Michael continued to play and compose and he managed to record a final album, Pilgrimage, in August 2006. Sadly, Michael did not live long enough to personally accept the 2 Grammys it received.

The Scottish National Jazz Orchestra are delighted to have this opportunity to pay tribute to Michael and are thrilled to welcome as our special guest his brother, Randy, one of the world's greatest trumpet players. Randy joins us in celebrating Michael's music with new big band arrangements spanning vital tracks from the Brecker Brothers' 1970s heyday through to the beautifully reflective atmosphere of his 2003 album, Wide Angles.

In a personal message, SNJO director, Tommy Smith, said: "My heart sank when I heard that Michael had died. I first met him when I was 15 years old, in Edinburgh. We were playing on a TV show hosted by bassist Niels-Henning Ørsted Petersen. I heard Michael practising rhythm changes, went over to him and said, "Hi! You sound amazing! Who are you?" He replied, "Michael, who are you?" He was one of the most humble human beings I'd ever met, and after that encounter I followed each note of his career with joy and amazement, as did thousands of other saxophonists.

Over 19 years, I wrote, met and talked with him on numerous occasions. We almost toured with Joe Lovano in 2003, but Michael's schedule was too busy. Now his saxophone is silent but his recordings and soul will live on. He'd been so encouraging to me and I will miss him greatly. He joins an extraordinary league of great inspirational musicians the World will never see again: Coltrane, Ayler, Getz, Dexter, Webster, Bird, Lester... His brother, Randy Brecker, is a phenomenal trumpet player and composer and we are very delighted he has accepted our invitation to join us to play this tribute to his brother."

## WOODWINDS

Martin Kershaw, Paul Towndrow,  
Tommy Smith, Konrad Wiszniewski,  
Bill Fleming

## TRUMPETS

Ryan Quigley, Tom MacNiven,  
Cameron Jay, Lorne Cowieson

## TROMBONES

Chris Greive, Phil O'Malley,  
Kevin Garrity, Michael Owers

## PIANO/KEYBOARD

Steve Hamilton

## DRUMS

Alyn Cosker

## ELECTRIC BASS

Kevin Glasgow

## GUITAR

Kevin Mackenzie

## PROGRAMME

listed in alphabetical order, a selection of these tunes will be played at each concert and announced from the stage.

AFRICAN SKIES	arr. Tony Kadleck
ITSBYNNE REEL	arr. Chuck Owen
MADAME TOULOUSE	arr. Mark Lopeman
M&B	arr. Mike Holober
NEVER ALONE	arr. Fred Stride
PEEP	arr. Fred Stride
SEA GLASS	arr. Tommy Smith
SLINGS & ARROWS	arr. Vince Mendoza
SONG FOR BARRY	arr. Rich Shemaria
STRAP-HANGIN	arr. Vince Mendoza
SUMO	arr. Dave Stamps
THE MEANTIME	arr. Gil Goldstein



There will be an interval of 20 minutes

# MICHAEL

Michael Brecker was a player of inexhaustible creativity. He was born in Philadelphia in 1949, and began playing clarinet and alto saxophone, switching to tenor in high school after hearing John Coltrane.

Following his older brother, Randy, first to Indiana University and then to New York, Michael signalled his burgeoning talent on Randy's first album, *Score*, before the brothers formed a formidable front-line in early fusion band *Dreams*, in Horace Silver's band and then as leaders of the successful jazz-funk band, *The Brecker Brothers* from 1974.

As a busy session musician throughout the 1970s and 1980s Michael worked with James Brown, Aretha Franklin, Joni Mitchell, Steely Dan and hundreds of others. At the same time he was also a crucial presence on dozens of jazz albums, recording with Chick Corea, Pat Metheny and Steve Khan, and was the distinctive 'voice' in the popular band *Steps*, later *Steps Ahead*, where he pioneered the EWI synthesiser.

In 1987, he recorded his first album, *Michael Brecker*, followed by a series of albums that saw him working with musicians including Pat Metheny, McCoy Tyner and Jeff 'Tain' Watts and blossoming into an accomplished, authoritative composer. He recorded with Herbie Hancock, on *The New Standards*, and McCoy Tyner, on *Infinity*, going on to tour both projects and as well as touring with Paul Simon, he co-led a Miles Davis tribute, *Directions in Music*, with Hancock and Roy Hargrove, and continued to win recognition for his outstanding musicianship. He was rewarded with many Grammys and became the first musician to win both the Best Jazz Instrumental Performance and Best Jazz Instrumental Solo Grammys two years in succession.

In 2004, Michael was diagnosed with a rare form of leukaemia and after a two-year battle he passed away on January 13, 2007. While in the midst of this debilitating illness, however, he persevered. His work in the studio for his final album, *Pilgrimage*, which was completed just before his death, includes some of the finest music he ever recorded and featured the all-star line-up of pianists Herbie Hancock and Brad Mehldau, guitarist Pat Metheny, drummer Jack DeJohnette, and bassist John Patitucci.

*Pilgrimage* chronicles Michael's final journey. The music itself served as the sustaining force for periods when the rigours of recording were so physically taxing, but it was Michael's sheer will and dedication to complete the recording that pushed him, his colleagues and the project as a whole across the finishing line. Pat Metheny described *Pilgrimage* as one of the great codas



in modern music history, adding: "What happened in the studio during those few days in August is impossible to describe. It's one of the most amazing, powerful, unbelievable things that I – and all who were there – have ever experienced or will ever see."

# RANDY

Randy Brecker has been helping to shape the sound of jazz for over forty years. Born in Philadelphia in 1945, Randy grew up listening to his father's Sonny Rollins, Art Blakey, Horace Silver and Miles Davis records and would go on to play trumpet with many of his early heroes. After

studying at Indiana University, where he featured in the university big band and played with fellow student Booker T & the MGs, Randy moved to New York in 1966, securing gigs with Clark Terry, the Thad Jones-Mel Lewis Orchestra and Dick Pearson's big band before joining jazz-rock pioneers *Blood Sweat & Tears*.

Having appeared on *BST's* debut album, Randy released his first album, *Score*, which featured his nineteen-year-old brother, Michael, on tenor saxophone, and joined Horace Silver then Art Blakey's *Jazz Messengers*. He and Michael then teamed up in fusion band *Dreams*, alongside Billy Cobham and John Abercrombie, establishing a partnership that would feature with Horace Silver and on innumerable pop, rock and jazz records and came to prominence in the highly successful *Brecker Brothers*, which enjoyed two phases (1974-1982 and 1992-2004), going on to a double-Grammy win and becoming the first international contemporary jazz group to tour China.

In a career that has included concerts and recordings with an astonishing array of musicians, including Stevie Wonder, Frank Zappa, Charles Mingus, Jaco Pastorius and Yoko Ono, Randy has consistently worked at the highest level and he remains at the forefront of jazz today. His love of Brazilian music resulted in another Grammy win (he has five in all) for his 1997 album, *Into the Sun*, and the *WDR Big Band* in Cologne's celebration of his music in 2004 retains special significance as it was the last time he and Michael shared a stage following countless triumphs as one of jazz's greatest-ever partnerships.



# BRECKER

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If you enjoyed tonight's concert, please do consider becoming a friend too – forms are available at the SNJO desk or join online at [www.snjo.co.uk](http://www.snjo.co.uk).

We look forward to welcoming you.

# FUTURE 2012 DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

28 MAY BLUE MONDAY MASTER CLASS WITH RANDY BRECKER AT THE ROYAL CONSERVATOIRE  
SEE [WWW.RCS.AC.UK](http://WWW.RCS.AC.UK)

## THE SCOTTISH NATIONAL JAZZ ORCHESTRA — SEE [WWW.SNJO.CO.UK](http://WWW.SNJO.CO.UK) FOR MORE DETAILS

9 JUNE SHETLAND JAZZ FESTIVAL — INCLUDING BOBBY WELLINS' CULLODEN MOOR SUITE

1 JULY GLASGOW JAZZ FESTIVAL — A DOUBLE BILL - THE SNJO AND TSYJO

13 JULY ST ANDREWS — WORLD SAXOPHONE CONFERENCE

24-28 OCTOBER ELLINGTON — IN THE SPIRIT OF THE DUKE FEATURING BRIAN KELLOCK

## THE TOMMY SMITH YOUTH JAZZ ORCHESTRA — SEE [WWW.TSYJO.COM](http://WWW.TSYJO.COM) FOR MORE DETAILS

1 JULY GLASGOW JAZZ FESTIVAL — A DOUBLE BILL — THE SNJO AND TSYJO

14 JULY LONDON BARBICAN — ESSENTIALLY ELLINGTON UK YOUTH BIG BAND PROGRAMME  
JAZZ AT THE LINCOLN CENTRE ORCHESTRA WITH WYNTON MARSALIS

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