

Bassist Phil Palombi

Bio

Grammy award winning bassist Phil Palombi is "one of the most sought after young bass players", according to Steely Dan tenor saxophonist and renowned jazz musician Walt Weiskopf. His performance and recording credits include such players as, Michael Brecker, Billy Hart, Joe Lovano, Dave Liebman, Etta Jones, Maynard Ferguson, Chris Potter, Rich Perry, Curtis Stigers, Toshiko Akiyoshi, Lew Tabackin, Chucho Valdes, Mark Turner, Eliot Zigmund, Don Friedman, and The Village Vanguard Orchestra to name a few. Upon moving to New York City in 1997, he immediately began working full time performing at many of the city's jazz venues. Jazz wasn't the only music he was interested in however. Phil is also an accomplished electric bassist and performs regularly around the city in various funk, R & B, and Brazilian pop bands.

2011 marked the 50th anniversary of the death of bass legend Scott LaFaro, who Phil honors in his latest recording *RE:Person I Knew - A Tribute to Scott LaFaro*. The recording features the working trio of piano great Don Friedman and Eliot Zigmund. The special guest on the recording is LaFaro's 1925 Abraham Prescott bass- the bass that he used exclusively for the last four years of his life. Barrie Kolstein, the owner of the treasure, with the blessing of the LaFaro estate, granted Phil the honor of using the instrument for the recording as well as the weekend CD release concerts months later. This was a first for the instrument, having not been played professionally since LaFaro's last gig with Stan Getz in Newport a week before his tragic accident.

When Phil isn't busy working as one of NYC's first call bassists or booking his trio with Friedman and Zigmund, he is actively pursuing music with his co-lead trio Tri-Fi.

For five years prior, Palombi was the bassist for Concord recording artist Curtis Stigers. Backing Curtis took Phil to nearly every continent, performing over 100 dates a year. Playing that many gigs a year with the same band is a rarity these days- a fact that is not lost on Curtis's backing trio. In 2005, they formed the group Tri-Fi, released four CD's, and have garnished rave reviews by such publications as Playlist Magazine, All About Jazz, and The London Times.

In August of 2008, Phil stepped in to the late bassist Dennis Irwin's position with the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra to help the band get through a difficult time. At the end of a

week run in February of 2009 at the legendary Village Vanguard, the group recorded two nights, which produced the Grammy award winning double CD "Monday Night Live At The Village Vanguard".

In addition to touring and recording as a sideman, Phil has found the time to record a CD as a leader as well as write a book. The book, entitled *Scott LaFaro • 15 Solo Transcriptions*, is the first book of LaFaro solos ever published. Scott LaFaro was one of the pioneers of jazz bass soloing and this book contains 15 of his solos taken from the Bill Evans recordings Waltz for Debby and Sunday at the Village Vanguard.

Completing the popular LaFaro book opened up a new avenue of expression for the bassist. After attending a master class Phil was presenting at the International Society of Bassists convention in 2005, the editor of Double Bassist magazine hired him to write a five page article for the publication. The article (on Scott LaFaro, of course) was so well received that Phil was asked to write for the magazine on a regular basis, expanding his method of jazz analysis beyond the great LaFaro to other bassists. In addition, a whole new career as clinician began to emerge, with a return appearance at the 2007 ISB conference, as well as master classes at many colleges, with Eastman School of music being the most notable.

In 1999 Palombi recorded his first CD as a leader entitled 80 EAST that features the all-star line up of Joe Labarbera on drums, Harold Danko on piano, and Walt Weiskopf on tenor saxophone. The 12 track disc contains 10 original compositions, five of which are his own. Legendary jazz bassist Richard Davis best sums it up in the liner notes when he says "I have played to this recording many times and not tired of it's performance wizardry".

Phil's studies began at Dana School of Music at Youngstown State University, where he pursued a dual major in Jazz and Classical Performance and Music Education. He studied jazz and classical acoustic bass with Tony Leonardi while keeping up with a heavy load of ensemble rehearsals and concerts. For five years Phil was the bassist for the Down Beat award winning Jazz Ensemble I of Youngstown State, where he played with jazz greats Nick Brignola, Donald Byrd, Terry Clark, Eddie Daniels, Benny Golsen, Duffy Jackson, Chuck Mangione, Bob Mintzer, Marvin Stamm, Lew Tabackin, Bill Watrous, and Jiggs Wigham. Because of this superb jazz program, Phil was selected for the Ohio All-Star College Jazz Ensemble lead by drummer John Von Olen and trombonist John Fedchock in 1993. In addition to his studies, Phil was also a very busy working bassist in the Youngstown, Pittsburgh, and Cleveland music communities. Although he enjoyed his work subbing with the Warren Chamber Orchestra for a few seasons, performing with the Greenville Symphony for two seasons, and becoming a regular member of the Youngstown Symphony Orchestra for four years, jazz was becoming his main focus.

By his senior year in 1994, Phil was heavily involved in the Cleveland jazz scene, playing nightly with artists such as Greg Bandy, Ernie Krivda, Chip Stephens, and Dan Wall. As the president of the school's jazz society, Phil was able to obtain funding to

bring the legendary jazz bassist Ray Brown to Youngstown for a master class. During Mr. Brown's brief stay, Phil managed to take a private lesson with the master, which ultimately sealed the door to Phil's classical career and set him on the path to becoming a full time jazz bassist.

By the fall of 1995, Phil had caught the ear of trumpet virtuoso Maynard Ferguson, and was offered a job with his new nine piece group Big Bop Nouveau. During his two year tenure with Maynard, he recorded the CD One More Trip to Birdland (for Concord Records), a track for a Concord Christmas CD, and performed on the television shows of Pat Boullard, Crook and Chase, Good Morning Texas and Jazz Central on the B.E.T. Network. After performing with the King of Thailand in Bangkok, Palombi left Maynard to move to New York City, where he currently resides.