

## **ANDY MIDDLETON**

*Saxophonist, Composer, Educator*

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Long before **Andy Middleton** won First Prize and Best Soloist Awards at the 13th Europe Jazz Contest in 1991, he was garnering attention from his elders for his phenomenal talent.

And it's not just talk. He has worked as a sideman with **Lionel Hampton, Bob Mintzer, Randy Brecker** and **Maria Schneider**, among many others, as well as recorded as a leader with jazz greats **Joey Calderazzo** (*Acid Rain*, Owl/EMI France), **Renee Rosnes** (*Terra Infirma*, Owl/EMI France), **Dave Holland** and **Ralph Towner** (*Nomad's Notebook*, *Intuition*). And now, with **Kenny Wheeler**, he has turned in his most mature work to date -- *Reinventing the World* (*Intuition*), an intelligently realized and beautiful lament to the world's threatened ecology.

Dedicated to his young daughter, Calli, the CD is a continuation of an environmental theme that has been omnipresent from his very first CD, *Acid Rain*. "But since my daughter was born I find myself even more concerned with the future of humanity," says Middleton, whose imaginative, heartfelt, and adventurous yet lyrical solos never resort to cliché or empty virtuosic display merely for the sake of it. The result is a profoundly moving and heartfelt collection of originals which mixes world influences (Middle Eastern and Spanish) with American jazz, appropriately reflecting the vibrations of the planet. *Reinventing the World* firmly establishes Middleton as a player of extraordinary sensitivity, ability and talent, both as a composer and a performer.

As a member of the band **The Fensters** Andy recorded 2 acclaimed CDs - *Jazz Music Vol. I* for Arta Records in 1991, and *Jazz Music, Vol. X* for A-Records in 1996. He

has toured Europe extensively, performing at many of the major jazz festivals and in clubs in almost every European country. Andy's improvisation book and play-along CD, "*Melody for Improvisors and Composers*" (Advance Music) offers numerous approaches to developing a strong sense of melodic invention. Andy has written a regular column for Jazz Player magazine and recorded an improvisation Masterclass CD for Saxophone Journal, published in the January/February 2002 issue.

In the words of master saxophonist, composer and educator David Liebman: "*Andy Middleton represents the best of a new generation of jazz musicians.*"

### **SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY**

#### As Leader:

Andy Middleton - "Reinventing the World", Intuition Records 3310-2, 2003, featuring Kenny Wheeler  
Andy Middleton - "Nomad's Notebook", Intuition Records 3264-2, 1999, featuring Ralph Towner and Dave Holland  
Andy Middleton - "Terra Infirmata", Owl Records/EMIFrance 080-832998-2, 1995, featuring Renee Rosnes  
Andy Middleton - "Acid Rain", Owl/Time Line 3819082, 1991, featuring Joey Calderazzo

#### As Sideman:

The Fensters - "Jazz Music Vol. X", A Records, 1996  
The Fensters - "Jazz Music Vol. 1", Arta Records, 1992  
Lionel Hampton - "Cookin' in the Kitchen", Gladhamp Records, 1990  
Ron van Stratum - "Plain View", VIA Records, 1999  
Jens Wendelboe - "Energy Band, Vol. 2", Nopa Records, 1992  
Randy Bernsen - "Mo' Wasabi", Zebra/MCA Records, 1986  
Practice Like The Pros—"Saxophone" - Music Sales Corp., 2002

### **AWARDS**

First Prize, Best Soloist, Best Arranger - 13th Europ' Jazz Contest, Belgium (1991)

Outstanding Jazz Soloist - Down Beat Magazine (1987)

### **GRANTS**

National Endowment for the Arts Performance Grant (1996)

Fund for US Artists at International Festivals (1992, 1993, 2003)

### **CD REVIEWS (excerpted)**

#### ***REINVENTING THE WORLD***

Intuition Music & Media 3310 2, 2003

One of the best things about being a record reviewer is when you come across a CD by someone you've never heard of, which turns out to be so enjoyable that it could even qualify for your year's best list. Thoroughly recommended.

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**Tony Hall**

Jazzwise, (UK) January, 2004

He has followed the path of constant surprise; he phrases the rhythm differently in every single measure and leaves acres of open space in his sound. He is constantly grooving; he is also constantly improvising. He is the real thing.

**John Shelton Ivany**

Top 21 #173, (USA) April 10, 2004

Middleton possesses the goods and wherewithal to become a major influence within progressive jazz circles.

**Glenn Astarita**

All-about-Jazz.com, (USA) December, 2003

#### ***Nomad's Notebook***

Intuition Records 3264-2

Middleton shows signs of being more than "just any" improviser. Middleton ... writes in a broadly euphonious harmonic language, with a natural tunefulness that engages the ear with exotic airs, but never strays too far from home.

**Bill Bennett**

JazzTimes, (USA) September 2000

Middleton, like Jan Garbarek, has a talent to really emote on reeds by caressing individual notes rather than laying down a smokescreen with sheets of sound. Middleton's compositional skill is also on par with [Ralph] Towner.

[www.minor7th.com](http://www.minor7th.com)

(USA) September/October 2000

The unifying element in all of this music is the exemplary musicianship of Middleton and his core band of guitarist and pianist Ralph Towner, bassist Dave Holland, and the drums of Alan Jones. Middleton's tenor mixes strength and sensitivity...

Towner's "Raffish" evolve(s) into two bright, funky themes ... and then Middleton unleashes his most impassioned playing on the disc, racing through the changes without dominating, and leaving space for the commentary of Towner, Holland, and Jones.

**David A. Orthmann**

www.All About Jazz.com, August, 2000

Andy Middleton develops a truly personal approach, like that of Ralph Towner, freeing up modes and models, opening the work to the vibrations of the planet (easternism, traditional Afghan revisited) and igniting, along side his partners, a fertile interaction.

**Fara C.**

Jazzman (France), November 1999

***Terra Infirma***

Owl Records/EMIFrance 080-832998-2

Andy Middleton affirms himself not only as a saxophone player but as a first class composer/arranger.

**Thierry Quenum**

JAZZ Magazine (France), July-August  
1995

Middleton's music is that of the whole earth which sings its blues. He does not limit himself to an homage; he also makes his own contribution to jazz. To listen to him is to adopt him.

**ROUGE** 1650, September 7, 1995

**PERFORMANCE REVIEWS (EXCERPTED)**

The horn players, Middleton and Theberge, communicated with each other via swing and bop only to jump into their own resourceful paths both full of twists and turns and still rich in melodic flow. And should saxophone colossus Sonny Rollins ever hear the unbelievably fast and precise version of his tune "The Bridge", which "The Fensters" pulled out for an encore, it very well may take his breath away as it did the audience's that night.

**Christoph Giese**

Buersche Zeitung, (Germany) 3/30/04

The audience was enraptured with the music of the New York quartet, and the outstanding solos of the individual band members were rewarded with enthusiastic applause.

**Jürgen Overkott**

Westfälische Rundschau, (Germany) 10/4/99

The saxophonist Andy Middleton commanded a full tone on the tenor and a very lyrical expressiveness on the soprano. He intelligently built imaginative solos on fast, dynamic pieces without ever dropping off his high level of energy or losing his melodic line.

**Christoph Giese**

Dortmunder Rundschau, (Germany) 9/28/98

Middleton ... (has) perfect control of the entire spectrum of jazz improvisation, from the swing riffs of Duke Ellington's "Dancers in Love" to abstract free excursions.

**Jurgen Schwab**

Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (Germany), November 10, 1994

One could only admire the clever virtuosity of Middleton as he seized and developed his ecstatic saxophone solos.

**Reiner Ruhl**

Fulda Tagliche Zeitung, (Germany)  
4/93

QUOTES ABOUT ANDY MIDDLETON:

**JOE LOVANO**

"Andy Middleton is the kind of musician to keep your eyes and ears on. It's a pleasure for me to hear such an inspired creative young saxophonist for today."

**MICHAEL BRECKER**

"Here is the sax player with the courage to pursue his own voice. Here is improvising and writing in its best form - really pretty amazing!"

**JOHN ABERCROMBIE**

"Totally contemporary playing and writing with a real sense of the jazz tradition. Excellent!"

**RANDY BRECKER**

"Andy Middleton is one of the strongest tenor and soprano saxophonists on the scene. Check him out!"