

Steve Wilson

The versatile talents of Steve Wilson have made him one of the most in demand sidemen, on alto and soprano saxophones, both in the studio and on the bandstand. These experiences have helped him garner the enviable position of being a regular band member of groups led by established veterans, as well as emerging artists, including Dave Holland, Chick Corea, Buster Williams, James Williams, Mulgrew Miller, Leon Parker, Ralph Peterson and Michele Rosewoman. In fact, he was the subject of a feature article in the New York Times "A Sideman's Life" in September of 1996.

In a New York Times poll, Wilson was cited by his peers as one of the most likely artist to break out [on his own] as an established leader. And break out he does with his debut Stretch Records release, Generations. His second release for Stretch is due out in May 2000, it will feature his working quartet: Bruce Barth, Ed Howard and Adam Cruz, with special guest Nicholas Payton. Wilson's first four CDs (New York Summit, Step Lively, Blues for Marcus and Four for Time) are on the Criss Cross label and have been well received by journalists and record buyers alike.

A native of Hampton, Virginia, Wilson began his formal training at age 12 and played in various R&B and funk bands through his teens. While studying music at the Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, he had opportunities to perform and/or study with Jimmy and Percy Heath, Jon Hendricks, Jaki Byard, Frank Foster and Ellis Marsalis. In 1986 Willis landed a chair in the band O.T.B. (Out of the Blue), a sextet of promising young jazz players who were sponsored by Blue Note records. In the summer of 1987 he moved to New York and continued to perform and record with O.T.B. until 1989. He also toured the US and Europe, for one year, with the Lionel Hampton Orchestra. In 1988 drummer Ralph Peterson, another O.T.B. alumnus, asked Wilson to join his quintet and subsequently his critically acclaimed Fo'tet. Wilson's career began to develop further the following year while working with Michele Rosewoman, Renee Rosnes and the American Jazz Orchestra and the Smithsonian Jazz Masterworks Orchestra. Later that year he joined the Buster Williams Quintet, Something More.

Wilson has recorded and/or toured for such diverse artists as Donald Brown, Kevin Hayes, Kevin Mahogany, Bruce Barth, Dave Liebman, Louie Bellson, Marvin "Smitty" Smith, Don Byron and Geoff Keezer. He periodically performs with some of New York's premier big bands, including the Mingus Big Band and the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra. In addition to his performance schedule, Wilson devotes time to educational activities. He was an adjunct faculty member in the jazz program at William Paterson College in Wayne, New Jersey from 1991 to 1998; and has recently led clinics at the Hartt (University of Hartford, CT) and Manhattan (NYC) Schools of Music. He was also Artistic Consultant for Harvey Keitel for the film "Lulu On The Bridge".

He is currently touring and recording with Chick Corea's Origin and the Steve Wilson Quartet. This season his Quartet made its debut at the Blue Note and Sweet Basil, both in NYC, and Blues Alley in DC. He is consistently cited in both Downbeat's and Jazz Times Critics and Readers Polls in both Soprano and Alto Saxophone categories.