

Peter Hand Sets Sail on a Timeless Jazz Odyssey with "Blue Topaz"

Acclaimed guitarist and composer Peter Hand embarks on a captivating musical voyage with his latest masterpiece

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Acclaimed guitarist and composer Peter Hand embarks on a captivating musical voyage with his latest masterpiece, *Blue Topaz*, set to grace the airwaves in January 2024. This album marks a seamless evolution for Hand, venturing from his roots in blues and R&B to the alluring depths of jazz.

Blue Topaz is a vibrant tapestry of original compositions, reimagined jazz standards, and pulsating Latin and Brazilian jazz pieces. Hand's virtuosity is on full display, alongside a stellar lineup of artists including trumpeter Eddie Allen, saxophonist Don Braden, pianists James Weidman and David Janeway, bassist Harvie S, drummer Steve Johns, and the legendary tenor saxophonist Houston Person.

A Deep Dive into Musical Gems

The album opens with the infectious groove of "Hand-Me-Down Blues," showcasing Hand's love for Grant Green, Jim Hall, and Pat Martino. Hand, Braden, and Allen take sparkling solos, while Weidman comps assuredly and Harvie S walks the bass with force. Johns' insistent ride cymbal pulse keeps the energy high throughout this ebullient opener. "Cash or Change" takes a bluesier turn, with Braden's soulful tenor leading the way. Hand's solo shines with Wes Montgomery-inspired octaves, followed by Braden's swaggering statement and a playful quote from Sonny Rollins' "Alfie's Theme." Weidman's piano solo adds a touch of brilliance to this dynamic track. Hand's ballad "Bittersweet Morning" is a masterclass in restraint and emotional depth. His unhurried guitar solo and Braden's soaring soprano sax work create a truly moving soundscape.

Genre: Jazz



Consider this your invitation to dive headfirst into Peter Hand's *Blue Topaz*, set to arrive in January of 2024. Hand, a versatile guitarist and composer hailing from the vibrant landscape of New York City, takes listeners on an enchanting voyage through his musical evolution from blues and R&B to the world of jazz.

Blue Topaz stands as a testament to Hand's prowess, featuring a myriad of original compositions, reimagined jazz standards and vibrant Latin and Brazilian jazz pieces. Collaborating with an array of acclaimed artists, including trumpeter Eddie Allen, the soulful saxophonist Don Braden and masterful pianists James Weidman and David Janeway, the ensemble crafts a symphony of heartfelt melodies.

Underpinning this musical tapestry is bassist Harvie S and drummer Steve Johns, providing the rhythmic foundation for this lineup of jazz luminaries, including a special appearance by legendary tenor saxophonist Houston Person. His contribution adds an extra layer of depth and soul to an already stellar ensemble.

Blue Topaz promises listeners a voyage without boundaries, offering a genuine and passionate jazz experience. Embark on this captivating musical journey marked by timeless elegance and a steadfast commitment to the artistry of jazz.

PETER HAND
guitar

EDDIE ALLEN
trumpet, Flughorn

DON BRADEN
saxophone, flut

JAMES WEIDMAN
piano

DAVID JANEWAY
piano

HARVIE S
bass

STEVE JOHNS
drums

with special guest:
HOUSTON PERSON
saxophone (Tracks 8, 9)

Executive Producer:
Neal Weiss

Produced by Peter Hand

Recorded at Tetrack Sound,
Torrance, NJ on January 2 & 3, 2023

Additional recording on February 18, 2023

Engineered by David Kowalski

Mixed by David Kowalski and Harvie S

Mastered on August 16, 2023
by David Kowalski

1 Hand-Me-Down Blues 6:44

2 Cash Or Change 5:23

3 Bittersweet Morning 8:17

4 Pedro's Samba 5:32

5 One For My Baby
(And One More For The Road) 6:51

6 Little Sunflower 7:40

7 Rosalyn 8:25

8 Blue Topaz 7:04

9 Lately 5:43

10 Curioso 9:04

All compositions by
Peter Hand, Hothouse Music, BMI

arranged:
Track 5, by Hand, Allen and Johnny Mercer,
Harvie Music Corp, ASCAP

Track 6, by Freddie Hubbard, Hothouse Music, BMI

Track 8, by Steve Wonder, Black Bull Music, ASCAP

All Arrangements by Peter Hand

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Legendary Collaboration and Latin Licks

The album welcomes the legendary Houston Person on two tracks. His soulful reading of Harold Arlen's "One for My Baby (And One More for the Road)" adds a profound layer of authority, while his take on Stevie Wonder's "Lately" is pure sonic joy. Hand's respect for Person shines through in his quote: "Houston is a modernist but he loves the Great American Songbook and all of the jazz material that has gone before...he loves to play so much and is still playing as beautifully as I've ever heard him." "Pedro's Samba" injects a shot of infectious energy with Braden's superb flute playing and Hand and Allen's sparkling solos. This track is a testament to Hand's love of Brazilian music, a passion ignited during his time at Berklee College of Music, which blossomed while he lived in St. Thomas.

A Fitting Close and Enduring Love of Swing

The album closes with the briskly swinging "Curioso," inspired by the likes of Thelonious Monk. Hand describes it as "basically rhythm changes," and the Monk influence is evident in the interval choices and playful trading of fours. It's a fitting end to a journey that celebrates the enduring power of swing, a love that permeates Blue Topaz from start to finish. Peter Hand's Blue Topaz is more than just an album; it's an invitation to a transformative musical experience. Get swept away by the soulful melodies, virtuosic solos, and timeless spirit of jazz when Blue Topaz sets sail in January 2024.

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