

KENNY G
Rhythm and Romance

Kenny G, the world's most renowned saxophonist, will release his first Latin Jazz album, *Rhythm and Romance*, backed by some of the world's finest Latin musicians. The result is a rich, one-of-a-kind tapestry of samba and salsa, ballads and bossa nova, all of which are held together by beautiful melodies of Kenny G's signature sound. The album is a collection of new songs and beloved classics that are rhythmically rooted in two disparate sounds resulting in a completely original and moving work. Set for release just in time for Valentine's Day 2008, the album marks Kenny's first album for Starbucks Entertainment and Concord Records.

"Musically, this is nothing like I have ever done before," says Kenny.

This is remarkable considering for the past two decades Kenny has established himself as the biggest-selling instrumental musician of the modern era, with global sales totaling more than 75 million albums, with 45 million albums sold in the U.S. alone. Yet, for *Rhythm and Romance*, Kenny ventures into uncharted creative territory and is having the time of his life crafting a lively album, one that speaks to exactly why a young Kenny Gorelick of Seattle, Washington, who discovered the saxophone one evening while watching the Ed Sullivan show, was inspired to pick up the instrument in the first place.

"Everyone loves the rhythm of Latin music," says Kenny. "It makes you feel good; it makes you want to dance. At the same time, it is very intimate and personal."

Enamored with the rhythm of Latin music, Kenny and longtime collaborator and producer Walter Afanasieff (Mariah Carey, Barbara Streisand, Celine Dion) set out to find the right instrumentation and arrangements for the romantic Latin melodies that have been swirling around saxophonist's head for months. Together they have assembled an all-star line-up of Latin musicians including guitarist Ramon Stagnaro, percussionists Michito Sanchez, Paulino Da Costa, Ron Powell and legendary drummer Alex Acuña (Weather Report). The album also features guest vocals by rising Chilean star Barbara Munoz and Spanish-speaking pop/rock sensation, Camila.

"It's really about two different music styles coming together to create something completely new," says Kenny. "The sound of my music is very distinct and so is the sound of these extraordinary musicians. They bring the rhythm and I'm the romance," the saxophonist jokes.

Romance is something Kenny G knows very well. For a man who has made a career out of playing soft notes, he is about to play his softest. For the first few bars into the classic love song "Besame Mucho," the beloved saxophonist stands exactly a quarter of an inch away from the microphone, as a distinct sound

breathes beautifully through the instrument and echoes across the lush gardens of Los Angeles' famed Conway Recording Studios. The accompanying musicians gracefully join in behind him for the first of many highlights on the album.

Every song for *Rhythm and Romance* is recorded live as the sessions brim with energy and inspiration. Here we not only get a glimpse of Kenny G the artist, but Kenny G the collaborator, working out each note with the greatest attention to detail, while still allowing the improvisational skills of he and the other musicians to shine through. Each recording is a unique mix of precision and invention that conjures up the sounds of Brazil, Havana and everything in between.

"This is very exciting to watch," says Afanasieff. "You have this extraordinary musician in Kenny who is brought together with a group of musicians from a totally different background, all renowned players in their own right. But together they all speak the same language musically."

Although he was still fine-tuning the songs on the record, Kenny decided to try out some of the new material on a recent tour to South America in front of what he called the "ultimate audience for Latin music." The risk paid off; the crowd warmly embraced the new material and sang along to the classic ballad "Sabor a mi."

A longtime aviator, Kenny is no stranger to risk-taking. After years of playing professionally with groups like Barry White's Love Unlimited Orchestra and Jeff Lorber Fusion, Kenny signed with Arista Records in 1982 and three critically-acclaimed jazz albums later, (*Kenny G*, *G-Force* and *Gravity*) he was poised to hit the stratosphere.

Kenny G's big moment came in 1988 on *The Tonight Show with Johnny Carson*. One of the producers insisted that for such a big appearance the artist should perform a track accompanied by a vocalist. Kenny felt it was important in this moment to establish himself with an instrumental. The debate continued up until minutes before show time when Kenny launched into "Songbird," the landmark recording from his fourth album, *Duotones*. That night he played his heart out and a star was born.

From there Kenny went on to become a multi-platinum sensation soon collaborating with the likes of Aretha Franklin, Whitney Houston, Natalie Cole and Frank Sinatra. His next studio albums, *Silhouette* and *Breathless* were enormously successful, the latter becoming the biggest selling instrumental record in U.S. history with more than 12 million records sold in the U.S. alone. The album featured the Grammy® award winning single, "Forever in Love." Kenny soon attracted an impressive array of collaborators. In 1996, Kenny teamed with renowned artist/producer Babyface for "The Moment" which featured two vocal collaborations including "Everytime I Close My Eyes," and "That Somebody Was You" with Toni Braxton.

In 1994, Kenny broke another record with his holiday compilation, *Miracles*, which, in addition to being Kenny's first album to hit number #1 on the Billboard Top 200 chart, became the best-selling holiday album of all-time. Thirteen years later, it still stands as the best-selling holiday album. His second and third albums of holiday standards 1999's *Faith* (which featured the millennium inspired version Auld Lang Syne) and 2002's *Wishes*, were also remarkably successful.

In 2002, Kenny took his audience to the islands with the soulful album *Paradise*, which featured the hit, adult-contemporary track "All the Way" with Brian McKnight. In 2004, Kenny delivered an all-guest-star album entitled *At Last... The Duets Album*. The album featured performances by Barbara Streisand, Burt Bacharach, LeAnn Rimes as well as a remake of OutKast's "The Way You Move" with Earth, Wind and Fire.

Other notable works include: 1999's album of Jazz standards entitled *Classics in the Key of G*, (which featured "What a Wonderful World," the virtual duet with Louis Armstrong and "The Girl From Ipanema" duet with Bebel Gilberto) and 2006's *I'm in the Mood for Love: The Most Romantic Melodies of All Time*, the saxophonist's unique take on some of the greatest love songs ever written including standards such as Dorothy Fields' "The Way You Look Tonight," right up through modern hits such as Alicia Keys' "I Ain't Got You," and James Blunt's "You're Beautiful."

That same year, Kenny won a huge honor for his other passion: golf. In December 2006, Kenny claimed the #1 ranking in Golf Digest's "Top 100 in Music" list, with an impressive +0.6 handicap.

But music remains the artist's first love. With each new recording, Kenny begins from a personal place—the sounds that move him. It brings him great joy to introduce new material to a live audience. For the past twenty years he has been a fixture in arenas, amphitheatres and concert halls and has performed for millions of people all over the world.

When pressed about his theory as to why he has been so successful, Kenny offers, "I think my music gives people the opportunity to listen to their own thoughts. Tap into their imaginations. Create their own stories to songs without the limitation of words... plus it's a really beautiful instrument."