



October 16, 2008

The DCist

Preview: Steve Wilson @ the KC Jazz Club

Over the past two decades, saxophonist [Steve Wilson](#) has earned himself a solid reputation within the jazz community, both as a sideman and a band leader. He is probably best known for his mid-90s work with Chick Corea's Origins ensemble, but he has also made notable appearances with legendary saxophonist [Joe Henderson](#), bassist [Avishai Cohen](#), and clarinetist [Don Byron](#), in addition to a host of others.

Over the past several years, the Virginia native has made some waves with the Steve Wilson Quartet. While that group records and tours regularly, Wilson's performance tomorrow at the [Kennedy Center](#) will feature something different from the respected altoist. For this show, he assembled a stellar group of musicians to revisit some of the original material he recorded during his early years.

"Some of the tunes never really had a life past putting pencil to paper, so I was looking for the right voices to dust off and find new possibilities in older music," Wilson said. "Now we'll hopefully find out what the true meaning of these compositions are."

With that goal in mind, Wilson called on old friends that were sure to take the music to new heights. The ensemble, which is performing under the moniker, Wilsonian's Grain, includes pianist [Orrin Evans](#) and bassist [Ugonna Okegwo](#). Laying it down for the group will be drummer [Bill Stewart](#), whose playing will be a treat for those unaware of his abilities.

Friday's audience can expect a sound that is highly interactive, yet structured. As Wilson put it, "It's not going to be avante garde, but it's going to be more than a horn player with a rhythm section. It's more like group improvisation."

For those who miss the show, they will get another chance to see Wilson next spring, when he and his usual group set up as artists-in-residence at the University of Maryland. As for Friday's show, in addition to his own compositions, Wilson invited his colleagues to submit some of their own tunes. The group will perform them, as well as some tried-and-true jazz standards, making for a varied concert that will have something for everyone.

Wilson said of Friday's show, "It really is a grand experiment, but these musicians are so quick on their feet and they really know how to listen, so it'll take me in a different direction."



Steve Wilson