



MULTIFACETED
EXQUISITE EVENTS INC



M.E.E. 1 YEAR
ANNIVERSARY ISSUE



ELAN TROTMAN

in the Jazzy Limelight

Inside MEE – Volume 2 - June 2012



The JAZZ IN MEE blends the extraordinary talent of Houston artists with incredible artists from around the world. We constantly search for unique and dynamic jazz artists. It was in the process of an intensive social networking talent search campaign that I clicked upon a smile, a sax, a hat and a star quality that radiated from my screen. The photograph included 3 saxophonists, but this particular saxophonist was paramount! I had not heard one note from this artist but his presence demanded my attention and intrigued me enough to find out more. This shimmer of light was none other than Barbados born, world renowned, Berklee College of Music educated, Billboard Smooth Jazz chart topping Saxophonist – Elan Trotman! I'm aware it's a mouthful, but he was just that astonishing.

I reached out to Elan to introduce my company and we kept in touch for months until the opportunity presented itself for him to come to Houston. I chose Elan as the featured artist to celebrate the one year Anniversary of Multifaceted Exquisite Events Inc. and the creation of The Jazz In M.E.E. Multifaceted Exquisite Events Inc. would present Love and Sax "meets" Love takes Time in Jazz on Saturday, Nov 19, 2011 to debut Elan Trotman in Houston, Texas.

Elan's music and accolades are amazing. I was impressed with his professionalism, attention to detail and work ethic. He brought a refreshing musical and analytical perspective to the table and shared priceless information in support of all involved in keeping jazz and its artist's present. He understood the impact of the independent promoter and the progression of building a brand to assist in the revitalization of live jazz music in the 4th largest city. Elan was also open to endless possibilities of collaboration for the success of jazz music.

Elan not only is successful in his craft he also has an inner star quality, I am thankful that he was able to be apart of this milestone for Multifaceted Exquisite Events Inc. and I am honored that a musical friendship has formed.

On Friday, Nov 18, 2011 Elan Trotman touched down in Houston and instantly began creating magic and memories in our wonderful city. It all started with an anxious wait in passenger pick-up, worrying that Elan had not come out of the airport. I phoned him, and found out that someone had picked up his hat collection and iPod and he was hot on their trail. My kind of guy, don't mess with my hats or music collection! Shortly after, He walked out of the airport terminal with hats and iPod in hand. I immediately noticed the photo which stopped me in my tracks online did not hold a candle to the real thing! Wow! It was Jazz's new leading man "ET Muzik" walking down the runway! He was striking in stature, smile, and personality. We were ready to jazz it up in the Lone Star State! Houston was going to love him!!!

We had a busy weekend ahead with rehearsal and making our rounds to visit a few people and jazzy spots around town. We completed our interview over a 3 day period. We chatted it up all over Houston and this is what he shared with us.

Q. Tell us about your favorite memory of growing up in Barbados?

My favorite memory of growing up in Barbados would have to be going to the beach. I lived less than a mile from the south coast of Barbados. I spent many days on the beach swimming and fishing. Just being able to hear the waves from my window and enjoying the cool coastal breezes definitely was some of my fondest memories of Barbados.

Q. How were you selected in Barbados to obtain a full scholarship to the prestigious Berklee College of Music?

The National Development Scholarship is awarded every year in various categories with Arts being one of them.

I was lucky to have known former recipients and they helped me to prepare for the application process. The criteria was based on your involvement in the community, academics and if you're performing to establish yourself as an artist in the community. They wanted individuals who stood out being an exceptional young musician, Possessing these qualities helped me obtain that scholarship.



“ I HAVE MANY GOALS AND DREAMS AS A MUSICIAN BUT I'D BE QUITE CONTENT WITH JUST BEING ABLE TO PLAY MUSIC.... ”

Q. What are your greatest musical aspirations?

I have many goals and dreams as a musician but I'd be quite content with just being able to play music, whether its in front of 2 people or 2 million people. Everyone would love to sell a million records and win a Grammy award but I try to enjoy the little things and hopefully that will take me to bigger things eventually.

Q. How do you define success in the jazz industry?

Well jazz is just a small genre in the whole spectrum of the music industry and the music business and you don't sell as many records as you do in Pop music, R&B or Hip-Hop. You don't get as much exposure, but in the whole sphere of the things I think success should be defined in terms of how people respond to your music, your following, if your selling CD's

or playing larger venues like a Chris Botti or a Trombone Shorty. If you're able to push the envelope and surpass jazz, I think that in my opinion that is a part of what would define success in jazz. My goal is to push the audience beyond jazz and to reach fans in other genres of music, etc. I try and reach fans that don't normally go out and buy a jazz CD, but maybe they heard that you are doing something cool and different and that you're pushing the envelope for that genre. To me that would define success!

Q. What is on your musical bucket list?

It's funny that you asked because one thing on my bucket list was to perform with Gerald Albright and I got to do that a couple days ago down in Pennsylvania. There were a couple of my mentors that I really wanted to meet and I have met most of them Kirk Whalum, Gerald Albright, Mike Phillips and Najee are all guys that are mentors to me and I can pick up the phone and call any time and they are there for me.



Q. How do you want to be defined as an artist?

I like to be different, I like to stand out, I like to have my own sound and I don't prefer to be compared to anyone else. I have so many different influences that I believe I can have a unique style, unique sound and a unique image based on my experiences, based on my childhood and based on where I come from. I like to be remembered as a person with lots of energy and someone that is always smiling and brings a fun experience to any performance. When an audience leaves my show, I want them to say that they had a wonderful time, and feel I gave them 150%. I want them to be all smiles.

Q. What is your opinion of the future of jazz and its artists?

There are different forms of jazz—contemporary or smooth jazz, traditional or straight-ahead jazz. Guys like Miles Davis and John Coltrane paved the way for the more modern day traditional jazz players like Branford Marsalis, Nicholas Payton, and Roy Hargrove. Artists like Grover Washington Jr. and George Howard paved the way for present day smooth jazz players like myself.

Jazz should always continue to evolve, when John Coltrane started playing giant steps in songs people were not use to that new style of improvisation and shunned away from it and rejected it at first. The same thing was encountered

with Miles Davis and the electronic music, but they stuck to it because they believed in it. I believe that there are still some artists out there, myself included that are trying to push boundaries and experiment and write new material with new grooves and continue to experiment and grow. It's our responsibility to keep the jazz listeners interested and to attract new people into the world of jazz. That's what music is all about.

I believe that as long as people continue to do that, there will be a future for smooth jazz. The same concept applies to the veterans that have been playing for a long time, they have shaped the sound of a smooth jazz and they're not going to be around forever. I hope the new generation of smooth jazz musicians and contemporary jazz musicians understand that if this art form is to continue, we need to step up to the plate and start to take pride in it, continue to develop it, bring aboard different experiences and different sounds to it.

Q. What inspired you to leave your tenured teaching career to start your musical journey.

I had been teaching for almost 10 years in Boston public schools and it got to a point where I was very unhappy because I would see other young musicians touring and playing and I was stuck in my 9-5. It was not like I didn't



enjoy teaching, obviously I wouldn't do it if I didn't love it, but it got to point where my passion for playing and wanting to be on stage was bigger than my passion for teaching and educating and I had to make a decision. You always have to be true to yourself and true to the things that you love. An opportunity presented itself to go out of the country for an extended period of time and it was during the school year, so I had to make the decision to leave. I truly believe that this was my sign and I had to take a chance and a take a leap of faith. The next gig or paycheck is not guaranteed but I took a huge chance and my family supported me. It has not been a year yet and I have now been traveling and playing more than I could ever wish for and I think it will get better from here.

Q. What has been your experience being the New Kid in Jazz?

I compare it to sports! Similar to a rookie that just got drafted out of college or high school and your trying to make it up to the big leagues. You grew up watching these guys on television and watching music videos and you just dream of being there one day. Its a process for me, I know that I will not get booked on every festival or get to play in every jazz club that the veterans are playing in, but if I can get one here or there and gradually work my way up that's progress. My goal is to get the attention of promoters etc. and show them what I'm capable of doing and it will be a matter time before I can graduate to the big leagues. I try to be patient and seize the opportunity whenever it arises, so that I can show people what I do.

Q. If there was one thing that you could change to make the road easier for a new artist what would it be?

Well, as artists we try to be as positive as possible and try not complain but I think it's a process. We have the internet and different resources now which makes it a little easier for us to be more visible and we don't have to compete with record labels as much as we did before. Radio is a little tough because many stations don't want to take a chance of playing new music. They prefer to play the music that they are accustom to playing. Promoters are also a little hesitant to take a chance on new artists and new talent because they have to make money and they don't want to lose money. Things are starting to change because of this new movement of young artists that are coming up that are eager to get on stage and also the economy is improving. I think all is going to come full circle and it will be easier for a new artist in the future to make their way.

Q. What inspired you to write Love and Sax ?

I worked with several different producers, a lot of guys that I met at Berklee and one of those guys was Herman Peanut Johnson. He sent me a track that I started writing to and it eventually became the song Rain. I also received another track from another producer friend of mine, guitarist Tyrone Chase whose been a long time





member of Brian McKnight's band. Tyrone sent me the actual track for the song Love and Sax and I begin writing to that. Between those two songs I realized that the album would have a sexy vibe to it. The songs were slow, romantic and sensual and I just continued in that vein until I had a full project of songs that matched that feel.

Q. Who were your musical influences?

Definitely Grover Washington Jr. and Najee. When I was at Berklee and into bebop I listened to Sonny Rollins, Sunny Stint, John Coltrane and Miles Davis. I have many influences including the younger and older saxophone players, but it does not stop there. I also have musician and vocal influences. I love to listen to vocalists because I like to sound vocal in my playing. My mentor was Arturo Tappin. He was a Barbadian as well, and attended Berklee in the 80's and currently tours with Roberta Flack. He was the one who turned me on to Grover Washington Jr. the one who introduced me to improvisation.

Our 3 days with Elan Trotman blazed by and we were sad to see him return to Boston, but he left Houston with quite a few musical memories. He did an amazing job during the Love and Sax "meets" Love Takes Time performance. We were blown away by Mr. Love and Sax! Elan's debut in Houston was divine. Elan Trotman was pure entertainment at its finest. He brought an interactive and high energy show that had the crowd buzzing. He impressed the crowd with his intimate and personal approach. Elan introduced himself to Houston and the jazz lovers in song and we accepted it with open arms. He musically seduced us with songs from his Love and Sax CD and we enjoyed every note. Elan brought his AAA game and hit a grand slam in Houston. His gracious personality, talented swag, musical gift and his warm smile won us over.

ELAN TROTMAN—is quickly becoming one of jazz's most thrilling and emotive performers, continues to stand out and push boundaries as a composer, performer, teacher and recording artist. Trotman approaches jazz in his own way. Blending Caribbean rhythms from his roots with skillful horn textures, his playing is full of surprises. The single "Heaven In Your Eyes" feat. Brian Simpson climbed all the way to #11 on the Billboard Smooth Jazz Songs Chart. The single "As" feat. Lin Rountree climbed all the way to #16 on the Billboard Smooth Jazz Song Chart.

Love and Sax is Trotman's 5th CD, and to date is his most successful work, having entered the Billboard Contemporary Jazz Albums Top 20 in June of 2011. Elan is in the studio working on his new CD collaborating with Paul Brown, Grammy Winner Terri Lyne Carrington, Jeff Lorber and Peter White. Elan tells us to get ready for a CD with a tropical flavor!

We had a few musical surprises for Elan during the show! The powerhouse Dean James reinforced what we already know here in the Lone Star state, that he is a very passionate and phenomenal sax player and put on a dynamic performance. Alex Han and Jordan Donald came by and got in on the action as well. The band—Cory James, Kendrick Thomas, Savar Martin and Don Lott gave us 200% and left their passion on the stage! I want to personally thank everyone for making the 1yr Anniversary of Multifaceted Exquisite Events Inc. memorable.

The Jazz In MEE is honored to support Elan Trotman and his musical journey: www.elantrotman.com

[View videos from our 1year Anniversary](#)

*Interviewed and written by
—Melody Warren, Founder of The Jazz in MEE*



“Love and Sax”
by Elan Trotman

9.99 [Buy from iTunes](#)

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