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CD Reviews: Bradford Hayes - The Jazz Life

● By Edward Blanco
www.ejazznews.com

Originally from Petersburg, Va., Bradford Hayes now hails from Newark, New Jersey where he has lived and taught music for the last 24 years. An accomplished musician, Mr. Hayes releases his latest offering, *The Jazz Life*, essentially a contemporary straight-ahead session of jazz in a gem of an album. Containing five originals and six standards, Hayes crafts a terrific album and proceeds to blow you away with his marvelous performance on the sax.

Hayes is joined here by excellent musicians forming one very tight sextet. The players include Duane Eubanks (trumpet), Cornell McGhee (trombone), Michael Cochrane (piano), Calvin Jones (bass) and Greg Searvance (drums). This is one supporting cast that really knows how to swing.

The music opens up with the energetic "Tunji's Blues," in which every member of the group takes a turn with a brief solo shot in a rousing swinging number. Hayes takes charge on the second track dedicated to his wife, "Carolyn," providing space for a demonstration of the leader's ample talents on the sax.

The band cooks on the Wayne Shorter tune "Black Nile," containing expressive solos from Hayes. In a real burner of a cut, "My Sons," which Hayes dedicates to two of his children, is one of the best on the album. Last but certainly not least in his dedication of music to his family, Hayes wrote the samba-shaded "Bianca's Dance," for his daughter.

He provides appreciable solos on this quick moving sweet little number.

Slowing the pace a bit, Hayes plays softly on the Hoagy Carmichael's "The Nearness of You," a beautiful slow love ballad. The album rounds out with Benny Golson's "Whisper Not," "One Little Indian," and the eight minute plus finale of "Holistic Invention."

No questions about it folks, this is one very exciting and thoroughly enjoyable set of great jazz music. Marked with impressive performances by Bradford Hayes and his cadre of players, *The Jazz Life* is destined for critical acclaim by jazz critics everywhere.

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Artist Web: www.BradfordHayes.com