

## Kevin Kizer Biography

Saxophonist and composer Kevin Kizer first attained international visibility as a member of Ted Sirota's Rebel Souls. Having taken some time to regroup and compose, Kevin has resurfaced with his own release on BluJazz, "Aspects". For this CD he has brought together guitarist Dave Miller and bassist Jake Vinsel along with his wife, violinist Katherine Hughes, and drummer Neal Wehman.

While still in high school, Kevin played with the top jazz bands at the University of Illinois in Champaign/Urbana. He toured Europe with the Jazz Abroad program led by Richard Dunscomb, a professor at Purdue University at the time. Mr. Dunscomb is a past president of the International Association of Jazz Educators, and currently Chicago's Columbia College Music Department Chairman.

Kevin toured internationally with the University of Illinois Jazz Band in Russia that was led by John Garvey and featured bassist/composer Chuck Israels, known for his work with the Bill Evans Trio. His first professional jobs were with Ray McKinley, former Glen Miller drummer, and with the Jimmy Dorsey Orchestra led by trumpeter Lee Castle and featuring drummer John Von Ohlen of Stan Kenton fame. He has backed up many international artists, including Ray Charles, Ray Manzarek, and Johnny Mathis. While in the Tony Barron Orchestra, he played with accordionist Myron Floren of Lawrence Welk fame.

In Urbana, Kevin was a member of the John Scott quintet. Scott is a fine trumpeter/composer that collaborated with Tony Williams and Herbie Hancock—some of his compositions are featured in Kevin's new quintet. Kevin led many groups, among them a band featuring Chicago drummer Tim Mulvenna and world-renowned bassist Donald Rafael Garrett. Garrett's associates included John Coltrane, Archie Shepp, and Dexter Gordon. With drummer Mulvenna, he also led trios with Chicago bassists Matt Ferguson and Noel Kupersmith.

All of this history brought Kevin next to Chicago in November 1995, where he connected with drummer and leader Ted Sirota, guitarist Jeff Parker, and bassist Jeff Hill to form the Rebel Souls. Kevin wrote the compositions "Voids" and "Ornettish" for the Rebel Souls' first CD on the Naim label, "Rebel Roots". Bassist Noel Kupersmith replaced Jeff Hill and cornetist Rob Mazurek joined the group for the release of the second CD, "Propaganda". That CD includes Kevin's composition "Carolynn's Blues". For the release of the third CD, "Ted Sirota's Rebel Souls vs. the Forces of Evil", Kevin added clarinet to his recording resume. Among Chicago based big bands, Kizer has performed with Rob Parton's Jazztech Big Band, Jeff Lindberg's Chicago Jazz Orchestra, Bill Russo's Chicago Jazz Ensemble, and the Chicago Jazz Ensemble led by Jon Faddis.

Kevin Kizer has experience with classic big band orchestras, straight-ahead bebop groups, jump swing bands, and rhythm and blues bands. Added to this familiarity with classic styles, his command of modern free jazz and his own quintet leadership demonstrate his ability to play in a multitude of musical settings. Kevin is proficient on the tenor, alto, baritone, and soprano saxophones, and on the clarinet, bass clarinet, and flute. His acute musical sense of expression, and his innovative approach over a classic sound conception, is now helping to catapult him onto the international jazz stage.

## Discography



### **Aspects**

BluJazz 2011

#### **Songs**

1. Titled 5:58
2. Breath 8:00
3. I'm Drifting Apart 6:13
4. A Mile Deep 6:14
5. A Minor Challenge 7:04
6. Independence Day 9:26
7. Voids 6:07
8. Becky's Bash 8:48
9. O Sacred Head 7:58

#### **Musicians**

Kevin Kizer tenor, alto, & soprano saxophones  
Katherine Hughes violin  
Dave Miller guitar  
Jake Vinsel bass  
Neal Wehman drums

#### **Produced by Kevin Kizer and Katherine Hughes**

Recorded live on January 17th, 2010 at Glenview Community Church, Glenview, Illinois. Recording, mixing, and mastering by Vincent Naples of Shivaree Studios, Chicago, Illinois.

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[www.kevinkizermusic.com](http://www.kevinkizermusic.com)**

## Quotes about the CD “aspects”

*The term chamber jazz hasn't enjoyed much currency in recent years – at least, not in its strictest original meaning. This lovely and adventurous album might just change that.*

**Neil Tesser**  
**Chicago News Cooperative**

*"Edgy collection of originals"*

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