

Les Sabler



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The Montreal native and long time Florida resident has been living, recording and performing in Nashville since 2014 and released his eighth CD in 2021, *Tranquility*. For this project Les teamed with legendary producer and recording artist **Paul Brown** and collaborated with **Shane Theriot** (Hall and Oates / Neville Brothers) on several selections that include the radio singles “Crescent City Strut” and “Esselle’s Dance”. The initial recording sessions were done at Paul’s Funky Joint studio in Los Angeles and resulted in the first single release “Keep Pushin”, co-written by Paul, Les and **Lew Laing**. Prior to working with Brown, Les produced and recorded a single in Nashville, “In The Light” which did exceptionally well at radio, reaching #1 for three weeks at WAVE.fm. The song features a punchy horn arrangement by the late **Tim Akers** (Tim Akers and the Smoking Section) and was later remixed by Paul for inclusion on *Tranquility*. The critically acclaimed release has been well received at radio including frequent rotation on SiriusXM Watercolors and Music Choice and Les received an excellent review and a feature article in **Vintage Guitar Magazine**.

Les released his seventh CD in 2014, entitled *Jobim Tribute*, which he produced in Nashville, Tampa and Los Angeles. It has been very well received by critics, radio and listeners and reached #1 on Amazon Brazilian Jazz and Latin Jazz best sellers and #36 Latin Music one week after its release. 50 years after saxophonist Stan Getz and guitarist Joao Gilberto fueled the bossa nova craze in the U.S. and around the world by sharing the genius of Antonio Carlos Jobim on their classic album Getz/Gilberto, Les celebrated the emotional power and enduring beauty of the Brazilian composer’s works with a soulful and heartfelt Jobim Tribute. More than simply a wonderful re-visitation of familiar songs and an exploration of lesser known Jobim classics, the renowned guitarist and vocalist’s labor of love recording captures the spirit of global unity at a time when Rio de Janeiro is gearing up for the 2016 Summer Olympics and Brazil recently hosted the 2014 FIFA World Cup--whose slogan, “All In One Rhythm,” Sabler expresses perfectly over the course of the collection’s 12 tracks.

The mix of seven lushly produced vocal tracks and five instrumentals received high praise from a unique array of tastemaking voices. Edward Blanco of AllAboutJazz.com writes: "Les Sabler delivers a winner on Jobim Tribute as he salutes and remembers a man and his music with a measure of taste and a touch of class, on one of the most compelling and engaging tribute albums to a legend." Robert Silverstein from Music Web Express 3000 (www.mwe3.com) writes: “Les Sabler’s sublime jazz guitar tribute to Brazilian bossa nova king Antonio Carlos Jobim is better than a trip to Rio, a memorable set of elegant tropical jazz.” Noted jazz author and critic Scott Yanow (Jazz Times, Jazziz, Downbeat) writes, “Les Sabler has created an irresistible recording that crosses the boundaries between genres. Antonio Carlos Jobim would be pleased.” Ronald Jackson, President/Publisher of The Smooth Jazz Ride, says, “Guitarist Les Sabler, in a wonderful tribute to the genius of Antonio Carlos Jobim, offers a melodic piece of heaven here on Jobim Tribute. Soothing, exotic, and beckoning you to the shores of Brazil to bask in the sensual warmth, this project will be fully embraced by Jobim lovers.”

Robert Lamm, the legendary founding keyboardist, singer and songwriter from the band **Chicago**, enthuses, “Les sounds great playing and singing these gems. The orchestrations are appropriate too. While the source of this music is Brazilian, he’s made them more Latin in feel, to my ear, which is refreshing. I like his voice in the baritone range – and extra kudos for singing (at times) in Portuguese!”

Unlike many homages to Jobim which simply scratch the surface of his catalog, Jobim Tribute delves refreshingly deeper, mining obscure gems amidst the more familiar to engender a fuller

understanding of the legend and his music. Complementing Sabler's exquisite vocals, acoustic guitar playing and thoughtful arrangements throughout Jobim Tribute are contributions by a carefully chosen ensemble of musicians, both old friends and fresh acquaintances, including keyboardist **Clay Perry** (Julio Iglesias), acoustic bassist **Byron House** (Robert Plant's Band of Joy, Emmylou Harris), Brazilian drummer **Celso Alberti** (Airto, Flora Purim, Stevie Winwood) and the late **Joe Lala** (CSNY, Bee Gees)."

His 2010 recording, *Crescent Shores* spent several months near the top of the jazz and smooth jazz album download charts at amazon.com, as high as #2 and received substantial international attention. This project was a departure stylistically for Sabler as he performed exclusively on nylon string guitar. The title track continues to receive recurring radio play. Supporting musicians on the recording include saxophonist **Richard Elliot**, keyboardist **Allon Sams**, drummers **Erik Hargrove** (James Brown, Bootsy Collins, Sister Hazel) and the late **David "Frankie" Toler** (Allman Brother Band), the late bassist **Bruce Waibel** (Gregg Allman Band) and Joe Lala.

In 2007, Sabler released his fourth album, *Sweet Drive*, produced in Los Angeles by **Brian Bromberg**. The disc is a varied, soulful body of contemporary jazz, R&B and adult pop music that delivers a master's class level of musicianship, performance and production on eight thoughtfully composed originals and four carefully selected classics. Accomplished musicians **Jeff Lorber**, **Eric Marienthal**, **Ricky Peterson**, **Vinnie Colaiuta**, **Alex Acuna** and **Gary Meek** played on the record while the **Jerry Hey**-orchestrated horn section added warmth, fullness and explosive energy to the tracks.

Critics praised *Sweet Drive* and the collection was nominated as **Album of the Year** at the **2008 Canadian Smooth Jazz Awards**. Sabler, who performed at the awards show in March, earned a second nomination as **Guitarist of the Year**. He also received a nomination as Jazz Artist of the Year at the **2008 Canadian Indie Awards**. Smooth jazz radio program *Café Jazz* named Sabler the #1 most played Canadian artist in 2007 while *Sweet Drive* was the #1 most played album by a Canadian artist, and "Club Street" was the #2 most played single by a Canadian artist.

His first recording project came in 1989 when asked to score a **Canadian Television Network** documentary titled *Lost Treasures of the Titanic*. The following year, he released his solo debut CD, *Hidden Treasure*. Five years later, Sabler's second album, *Time For Love*, garnered radio spins and hit the charts, enabling him to land concert dates headlining or opening for artists such as Lorber, **Spyro Gyra**, Richard Elliot, **Michael Lington**, **Diane Schurr** and **Fattburger**.

In 2003, Sabler's third album, *Bridge the Gap*, included an instrumental version of **Earth, Wind & Fire's** "Reasons," which achieved top 20 status in some markets. The title cut went #1 at Canadian smooth jazz radio and ended up #8 on the yearend chart. The album exhibited staying power as Sabler was nominated for Album of the Year and Guitarist of the Year honors at the inaugural Canadian Smooth Jazz Awards two years later.

Like many Canadians, Sabler grew up an avid hockey fan thus it was a thrill for him to team with vocalist **Marshall Gillon** to perform the U.S. and Canadian National Anthems before numerous games for the **Tampa Bay Lightning** and **Tampa Bay Rays**. Together they have done more than seventy anthem performances over more than ten seasons.

"Like the artists that influenced me most I set out to blend a variety of styles while balancing art, emotion and technique," said Sabler. His catalogue reflects this outlook and direction and his performances demonstrate an eclectic mix of passion and energy.

www.lessabler.net

Press Quotes about Les Sabler:

“His playing is the very definition of restraint, authority, and dynamics - chill guitar music at its most chill.” - Oscar Jordan / Vintage Guitar Magazine

“Tranquility is an aromatic expression of coolness, and it demonstrates that Les Sabler has amazing chops and musicality” - Joe Caroselli / Jazz Monthly

"Invigorating, melodious, and outright sophisticated" - Stu Berketo / WAVE.FM radio

You really make my Electric Nylon guitar SING!" • Roger Sadowsky, Sadowsky Guitars

The place, where virtuosity meets emotion.” • Hans-Bernd Hulsman / www.smooth-jazz.de

“Long recognized as possessing the magic formula for top notch contemporary jazz, Les Sabler has come roaring back with his brand new single ‘In The Light’ . It is the kind of easy grooving number that succinctly demonstrates exactly what Sabler is all about.” • Dennis Poole / www.smoothjazztherapy.com

"In paying honor to a master, Sabler proves to be quite masterful himself!"; "Sensual, magical, sensational, fabulous - a journey to Brazil without the TSA lines!" • Jonathan Widran, SmoothJazz.com

“Beautiful in the extreme” • Dennis Poole / www.smoothjazztherapy.com (2014 review of Jobim Tribute)

“Crescent Shores is Sabler's new masterwork. The place, where virtuosity meets emotion.” • Hans-Bernd Hulsman / www.smooth-jazz.de (2010 review of Crescent Shores)

“a captivating and diverse collection of some delicious and rich tracks ripe with melody and charm” • Ronald Jackson / www.thesmoothjazzride.com (2010 review of Crescent Shores)

“It’s the sort of music that leaves the listener wanting more” “an album for which the description “beautiful” would not be out of place.” • Dennis Poole / www.smoothjazztherapy.com (2010 review of Crescent Shores)

“filled with rich, delectable nylon string guitar performances” “CRESCENT SHORES is an exotic audio excursion!” “one tasty, uber-listenable collection of Smooth Jazz” • Scott O’Brien / www.smoothjazz.com (2010 review of Crescent Shores)

“quite simply as fine an example of great smooth jazz as you will hear anywhere”, “features his own picture perfect playing” • Dennis Poole / www.smoothvibes.com (2007 review of Sweet Drive)

“stellar production and mesmerizing guitar work” • Paul Ericson / www.smoothjazznow.com

“Powerful songs, master talents and great interplay make this album a ‘must have.’” “mega-talented guitarist” • Nina Goodrich / www.jazzreview.com (2007 review of Sweet Drive)

“Bridge The Gap positively glows”; “there’s something quite original about Sabler’s elegant approach to instrumental guitar jazz” • Robert Silverstein / 20th Century Guitar Magazine

“as guitarist Les Sabler and his band played spirited contemporary jazz, it became one of those Florida postcard moments” • Eric Snider / St. Petersburg Times

“Sabler’s playing is dynamic like John Scofield’s, melodic like George Benson’s and compelling like Jeff Beck’s. But Sabler’s sound is not just a conglomeration of his influences, his playing is clearly and refreshingly his own.” • Phil Matlock / MAC

“a first class contemporary jazz artist.” • Ron Severini / Walt Disney World Co.

“Les’ jazz guitar work is incredible.” • Troy Vanliere / CCM

“exquisite jazz-pop offering.”; “a shimmering guitar style that is sleek, chic and sexy.” • Steve Persall / Players Magazine