

## Guitarist Graham Dechter Makes a Debut to Remember

***“Once in a blue moon a talent comes along that grabs everyone’s attention. Graham is the most recent one to grab MY attention.” — drummer Jeff Hamilton***

Young guitarist **Graham Dechter** emerges as a fully developed new voice on *Right On Time*, his recording debut as a leader, out September 22, 2009 on Capri Records. For his inaugural release, he’s brought along bassist **John Clayton**, drummer **Jeff Hamilton**, and pianist **Tamir Hendelman**, all of whom are his band mates in the Clayton-Hamilton Jazz Orchestra. Playing a varied program of familiar and lesser-known jazz originals and standards, Dechter makes one of the most impressive debuts in recent memory.

Dechter plays with an assurance and maturity far beyond his 23 years. His warm sound, with its plush mellow bottom and sun-dappled upper register, is utterly personal, instantly recognizable as his alone. The nuances of his tone add depth and richness to his solos on “Low Down” and “Broadway” and “With Every Breath I Take.” Dechter always plays with clear, clean articulation and his lines burst with melodic and harmonic ideas. On Johnny Hodges’ rarely played “Squatty Roo,” taken a daunting tempo, he spins out one exhilarating phrase after another, not just runs, but substantial ideas. On “I Ain’t Got Nothin’ But The Blues,” another neglected piece of Ellingtonia, and on “Broadway”, he displays his profound understanding of the blues, adding bent notes and inflections that make his solos moan and cry. He creates an intimate statement with subtle use of dynamics and rich harmonies on “The Nearness of You.” The title track, a song written by his father, brings out a lyrical side to Dechter’s playing. Along with being an exceptional soloist, Dechter is also a good listener and supportive ensemble player. He and pianist Hendelman together generate tremendous rhythmic excitement on “In a Mellow Tone” (Ellington, again) and “Broadway,” while their interplay on Jobim’s “Wave” gives the tune added harmonic richness. “With Every Breath I Take” features especially dynamic group interaction. Above all, Dechter swings like the dickens, playing with an infectious drive and *joie de vivre* throughout the disc.

But this album is more than a showcase for its youthful leader, it’s very much a group effort to which his more experienced band mates all make significant contributions. Bassist Clayton, always a swinging presence, displays his lyrical arco work on the introduction to “With Every Breath I Take” and his mastery of time and line in his solo on “In a Mellow Tone.” Hendelman, boisterous as ever, digs into the lickety-split tempo of “Squatty Roo” with enthusiasm and revels in the grooving “I Ain’t Got Nothin’ But the Blues.” Hamilton is at his tasteful best, providing swinging support as well as memorable solos on “Squatty Roo” and “Wave.”