

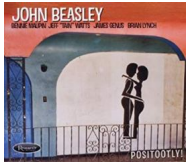
## John Beasley - Positootly! (2009)

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## John Beasley - Positootly! (2009)



1 *Caddo Bayou* 5:04 2 *Positootly!* 4:32 3 *Dindi* 5:30 4 *Black Thunder* 6:41 5 *Shatita Boom Boom (Club Desire)* 4:58 6 *Tanguedia III* 5:29 7 *Elle* 4:53 8 *So Tired* 4:45 9 *8 Winds* 4:51 10 *Hope...Arkansas* 2:32 John Beasley - piano, Fender Rhodes, synthesizer Bennie Maupin - tenor and soprano saxophones Brian Lynch - trumpet James Genus - bass Jeff "Tain" Watts - drums Munyungo Jackson - percussion

On *Positootly!*, pianist John Beasley explores a variety of styles for a thoroughly enjoyable and stimulating experience. Each track benefits immensely from the indelible touch of drumming great Jeff "Tain" Watts, in alliance here with percussionist Munyungo Jackson.

Hailing from Louisiana, Beasley started playing in the late seventies, getting his seasoning with such jazz greats as Miles Davis, Freddie Hubbard and Dianne Reeves. Lately, he has gravitated towards composing for film and television, but he continues to release new music and tour with his band.

This recording follows-up *Letter to Herbie* (Resonance, 2008), in which Beasley presented an impressionistic take on Herbie Hancock's music. Besides Watts and Jackson on drums, the musicians participating here are bassist James Genus, along with the blistering front line of saxophonist Bennie Maupin and trumpeter Brian Lynch.

Most numbers are Beasley originals with three notable exceptions. The standout is a knockout rendition of, Argentine composer Astor Piazzolla's tango "Tanguedia III." On most selections, Beasley plays piano, but here he uses Fender Rhodes and synthesizer to create bandoneon accordion effects essential to tango. It's uniquely tango-jazz all the way in 2/4 start-stop fashion,

building to a dynamic climax

Other selections range from funk and soul to bop and bossa nova. Staying in a South American vein, Beasley puts forth his take on Antonio Carlos Jobim's "Dindi." Genus' bass sets the tone for this soft reflective piece, with the piano delivering softly swaying interludes. Watts and Jackson, as expected, add complexity to the beat.

A further highlight is Beasley's "Black Thunder," dedicated to the late drummer Elvin Jones, and featuring Watts as a positive dynamo with pounding sticks. Maupin and Lynch deliver stirring solos as well. On Beasley's vigorous "The Eight Winds," Lynch's muted trumpet effectively leads the pianist into a burning, double-time solo, again resolutely backed by the churning drum duo.

For hard boppers, there is Beasley's opener, "Caddo Bayou," featuring the whole band in this energized tribute to the leader's hometown. For soulful funk there is Bobby Timmons "So Tired," with Beasley again On Fender Rhodes, framing Maupin's strong tenor solo. ---Larry Taylor, [allaboutjazz.com](http://allaboutjazz.com)

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