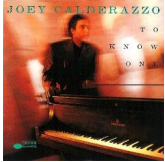


Joey Calderazzo – To Know One (1991)

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Joey Calderazzo - piano Jack DeJohnette - drums Dave Holland – acoustic bass
Branford Marsalis – tenor saxophone Jerry Bergonzi – tenor saxophone

A potentially significant pianist, Joey Calderazzo is somewhat overshadowed by his notable sidemen on this modern mainstream set. Many selections feature bassist Dave Holland and drummer Jack DeJohnette while Branford Marsalis (on tenor and soprano) and tenor saxophonist Jerry Bergonzi are heard on respectively three and five numbers apiece although never together. Calderazzo contributed the majority of the songs (all of which are originals by group members except Richie Beirach's "See Saw") and plays quite well although at this point he was not yet a distinctive improviser. ---Scott Yanow, Rovi

Pianist Joey Calderazzo recently turned 50. But for him, reaching this benchmark doesn't confer upon him grand-old-jazz-man status. Although he's pleased with *Going Home*, his most-recent recording for the Sunnyside imprint, he stresses, "I'm still trying to learn how to play like guys who were half my age." These unnamed musicians are Calderazzo's keyboard heroes — artists such as McCoy Tyner, Keith Jarrett, Herbie Hancock and Chick Corea — all of whom created indelible work while still in their 20s.

"When you think about it, there were a lot of piano players during the late-'50s and '60s period I focus on, at least 40 or 50," he points out. "But we usually only talk about four or five. That's

how good they were.”

Of course, Calderazzo’s something of an accomplished pianist himself. His contributions to groups led by the late Michael Brecker and saxophonist Branford Marsalis, as well as his own impressive discography, provide ample evidence. Not that he’s resting on his laurels. Indeed, the new recording documents what he views as a lifelong pursuit. “I’m trying to get better.”

One of his favorite tools for self-improvement involves playing in trios, a format that’s deeply embedded in his musical DNA. “My brother Gene’s a drummer,” he recounts, “and we always played, going back to when I was 17 or 18. We had a piano, but the piano was crap. So I played a Fender Rhodes with Gene and a guy who’d play upright or a guy who’d play electric.”

In 1991, four years after making a splash with Brecker’s outfit, Calderazzo issued To Know One, his first long-player as a leader. Since then, his approach to the trio has evolved. “I was heavily influenced by McCoy. So all of my trio playing up until maybe 2000, or even after, was power trio,” he acknowledges. “But as I grew as a musician, I changed, and I just didn’t want to do that anymore. So I started writing sketches instead of songs that would basically sound the same every night. And weirdly enough, what really helped me get an understanding of how I wanted to improvise in a trio was by playing standards. I picked standards I felt I could really play and have a unique thing on, and developed my style doing that. And then I wrote music.”
---Michael Roberts, jazziz.com

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