

Matt Baker and the Trio Bio / Press:

Australian born Jazz Pianist/Vocalist Matt Baker has performed jazz festivals, clubs and concert halls in Australia, Europe, USA and the Pacific Rim. As of 2010, he is now proud to call New York City his home.

Matt Baker and the Trio features two of New York's finest young rising stars, double bassist Endea Owens and drummer Darrian Douglas. The Trio presents music from Baker's new album "*Almost Blue*" - a "fully realized love letter to the place he longed to be a part of, a place he now calls home", each song echoing a part of the album's haunting narrative. The trio is constantly adding new repertoire from the Jazz and Great American songbooks to their library. Hard swinging piano and warm vocals – all presented in a program of classic jazz with an exciting contemporary edge.

Baker recorded his 5th album *Almost Blue* (via JazzElm Music), with producer Matt Pierson, released in June 2016. The album features tenor saxophonist Joel Frahm, along with Luques Curtis on bass, Obed Calvaire on drums and guitarist Lage Lund. His previous album '*Underground*' featuring Gregory Hutchinson, Dayna Stephens and Jeremy Pelt received rave reviews in *Downbeat*, *Jazz Times* and *Jazz Wise UK*, and reached #26 on the US JazzWeek charts.

Baker's sideman credits include engagements with, among others, guitar icon Bucky Pizzarelli, tenor saxophonist Joel Frahm, bassist Marco Panascia, and vocalists Alexis Cole, Tierney Sutton, Judy Collins and Barb Jungr. In addition to refining his presentation of the Oscar Peterson repertoire in his show 'An Oscar Moment', (which has been presented at Birdland and different venues in North America and abroad with sidemen Jim Cammack, Jerome Jennings and vocalist Brianna Thomas), Baker has played numerous trio engagements that feature his own repertoire conception in diverse NYC rooms like Birdland, The Blue Note, Cleopatra's Needle, Gin Fizz, Iridium, Kitano, Bemelmans, Le Cirque, the Zinc Bar, as well as The Side Door in CT and Scullers Jazz Club in Boston.

Matt Baker was an award winner in the 2003 Montreux International Solo Jazz Piano competition and a semi-finalist in 2004 and 2005. The Montreux Jazz Festival also engaged the Matt Baker Trio as its exclusive in-house band for 2 years straight, where they performed 17 nights in the Montreux Festival Jazz Club, accompanying and supporting many of the headlining artists.

A student of Taylor Eigsti's since moving to New York, Matt watched Oscar Peterson perform live an entire week at the Blue Note, which he recounts as being as great a lesson as any! Baker has also studied with Mulgrew Miller, Benny Green, Fred Hersch, Aaron Goldberg, Jacky Terrasson, James Williams, Ralph Sutton and Ella Fitzgerald's life-long accompanist Paul Smith.

"The Australian piano whiz.."

Stephen Holden, The New York Times, Oct 2014

"Swings confidently ... full of clever reharmonizations and hip syncopation. The threesome demonstrates seamless group chemistry."

Bill Milkowski, JAZZ TIMES, April 2012

"... [The vocal tracks] showcase Baker as a wise curator and charming singer free of extraneous flourishes".

Bobby Reed, *DOWNBEAT Magazine*, June 2016

"He and his band sizzle on 14 songs, [and] showcase a vocal legend in the making along the lines of a more buoyant, fetchingly pure Chet Baker".

Carol Banks Weber, *AXS.com*, May 2016

"Baker... launches vibrant, re-harmonized chords and explores the melody obliquely in a charmingly quirky manner".

-and-

"Baker croons in a warm, soft-sell style that complements his restrained pianistics".

Mark Holston, *JAZZIZ Magazine*, Fall 2016

"Matt Baker is one of the most respected and versatile pianist-composers yet to come out of Australia. Baker's playing sounds as though it belongs on ECM. An exceptional pianist."

Tony Hall, *JAZZ WISE UK*, April 2012

www.mattbaker.com.au