

BRIAN OWENS

Brian Owens is rapidly earning a reputation as one of the most promising young vocalists on today's music scene. At the age of 26, Owens has already shared the stage with many notable performers: Peter Martin, Christine Brewer, Herlin Riley, Reuben Rogers, Greg Hutchinson, Neal Caine, David Torkanowsky, Reggie Thomas, Rick Haydon, Tom Kennedy, and Cassandre McKinley. Owens has opened for jazz legend Ramsey Lewis, smooth jazz artists Boney James and Spyro Gyra, performed with Peter Mayer (guitarist for Jimmy Buffett) for 40,000 teens at the ELCA Youth Gathering, and recently presented workshops and concerts at St. Croix in the Virgin Islands. In addition, Brian has made television appearances on ABC's "Good Morning America", BET's "Jazz Discovery" and the Emmy Award-winning, "The Wayne Brady Show." Brian is currently working on a new effort, "The Revival Project," which is designed to reconnect the traditional roots of African-American music with contemporary culture.

Brian's recent recording, *Inspired*, is the follow up to *B Natural*, his debut studio recording. *Inspired* captures Brian's dynamic, exciting vocals in a live setting, backed by an outstanding group of musicians including Peter Martin on piano. "More than anything," explains Brian, "I enjoy performing live because for me, that is where the music lives." *Inspired* features Brian's unique interpretations of an array of classic songs -- Stevie Wonder's "If It's Magic," Carole King's "You've Got A Friend," Sam Cooke's "That's Heaven to Me" -- and a swinging version of "Three Is the Magic Number"--from the TV show, *School House Rock*. The recording also features "B Natural," a collaboration between Owens and composer and long-time friend Greg Jasperse, and "Fall," an improvised duet with Martin. "The truth is," states Owens, "I choose music based upon the lyrics, then try to arrange them in a style that's suitable for the text; whatever that style may be. I never want to limit the music and the experience that's comes with it"

Like many gifted vocalists raised in the church, Owens has strong ties to his faith. His first musical training came from his father, a crooner in his own right. Owens spent three years as a lead vocalist with the United States Air Force Band of Mid-America at Scott Air Force Base, IL, where Brian greatly expanded his repertoire and began to perfect his signature style of complex, yet understated vocal interpretation. A major turning point in his career occurred in 2005, when Brian sang at a tribute for Dianne Reeves and was invited to participate in her master class at Carnegie Hall in April 2006. "Working with Dianne Reeves and playing at Carnegie Hall was an amazing experience," recalls Brian. "I truly believe it was a defining moment in my progression as a vocal musician, to work with and learn so much from everyone involved and to then share that with a live audience."

Following in the tradition of great vocalists such as Nat King Cole, Sam Cooke and Al Jarreau, Brian approaches his craft with a keen sense of responsibility and finds comfort in what he describes as the "classiness" of jazz. In a world of manufactured music, Brian Owens remains true to his moral and spiritual values -- bringing true music and talent to every performance.