

TONY SAUNDERS



Looking back over an incredible multi-faceted career that's found him vibing with everyone from Eric Clapton and David Crosby to Les McCann, Joe Sample and Chaka Khan, Tony Saunders kept his creativity poppin' all these years: "I Romance The Bass Like I Romance Life."

The sweet, infectious fusion of passion, sensuality and funk that's defined and driven the two-time Emmy winning musician, composer, arranger and producer's life from the get-go reaches full throttle expression on **All About Love** – his first album for BAJA/TSR Records. Celebrating a decade of hit making since his 2011 San Francisco Records debut titled – what else? – *Romancing the Bass*, the dynamic, stylistically eclectic 14-track collection keeps Saunders on what he calls the "joyful ride of the smooth jazz rollercoaster," creating a transcendent melodic and rhythmic flow with an all-star array of genre greats, including keyboardist/producer Gail Jhonson, guitarists Blake Aaron and Paul Jackson, Jr., keyboardist/producer Greg Manning, saxophonist Jazmin Ghent, and #1 Billboard artist Adam Hawley.

All About Love follows another breakthrough year for Saunders, whose album *Sexy Somethin* hit #1 on Smoothjazz.com Global and whose single with labelmate and guitarist Nils, a fiery instrumental twist on The Whispers' late 80's #1 R&B hit "Rock Steady," was one of the top played singles for 2020. The track hit #1 on their Indie Chart, stayed at #2 for 26 weeks and also placed on their Radar Chart for most of the year. "Bouck Avenue," another single from *Sexy Somethin*, hit the Radiowave Monitor chart. The title track from the bassist's previous album *Uptown Jazz* (2016) reached #5 on the Smoothjazz.com singles chart and its follow-up "Speak to My Heart," featuring Gerald Albright, hit #3.

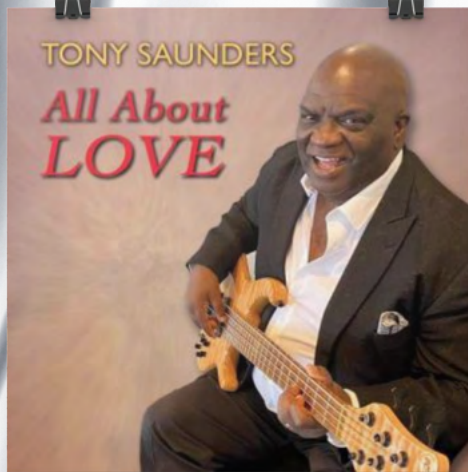
"Because I worked on the album during the pandemic, I fully intended to call the project *In The Meantime*, as if to say, during the downtime, I've been doing this and that," he adds. "But one morning I woke up and told my wife Loretta, I'm going to call it **All About Love**. I looked at all the song titles, from 'Forever Yours' and 'The Look of Love' to 'Celebrate You' and 'Summertime Love,' and thought about the vibes of each song and the overall flow and it just made sense. The tunes and title are also reflective of where I'm at in my life. Everything right now is based on my love of life, love of my wife, kids, grandkids, great grandkids and music. Every day, I strive to exude love and kindness to all people."



I Romance The Bass
as I Romance Life.

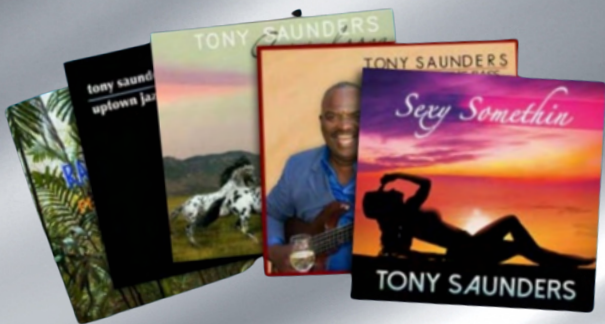
www.TonySaunders.com

TONY SAUNDERS



MUSIC

One of the powerful foundations of *All About Love* is his four co-productions with Gail Jhonson, the founder of the group Jazz in Pink who also wrote four songs and produced eight songs on *Sexy Somethin*. Their new collaborations include the brassy, jangling funk jam opener "Forever Yours"; the sensually romantic ballad "Just Between Us," centered on a lush bass-flute duet by Saunders and the tunes co-writer Marcia Miget; the lilting, sweetly whimsical (but with just a touch of funk) "Unlimited Access," another sparkling duet with Miget; and the atmospheric, slow simmering ballad "That Beautiful Lady." Jhonson's sparkling piano also lights up a dreamy seductive and soulfully exotic spin through the Burt Bacharach classic "The Look of Love" and the summery, freewheeling flow of "Highway 5."



www.TonySaunders.com

The success of *Sexy Somethin* led the Bay Area based Tony Saunders to meet and work with some of Southern California's top musicians and artists – many of which he invited to join the musical love fest he was creating and recording. Among these are Blake Aaron, who adds his crackling, hard grooving guitar solo to "Highway 5"; Greg Manning, who produced, arranged, recorded and mixed the vibrant, high octane and horn-fired "Celebrate You"; and Adam Hawley, who co-wrote, produced, recorded and mixed the wildly funky, blues-tinged slam "Summertime Love," which is centered on the dual energy of Saunders and saxophonist Jazmin Ghent, and driven by the pocket groove of Mel Brown (bass), Eric Valentine (drums) and Ramon Yslas (percussion). The SoCal contingent also includes drummer Tony Moore, who appears on "Highway 5", "Unlimited Access", and the intimate, reflective ballad "Theme For Ellen," dedicated as a prayer to the wife of Michael Parlett, who recorded and mixed the tracks on *All About Love*.

In addition to those tracks, Saunders keeps his lifelong passion for *The Whispers* soaring mightily onto the dance floor with his explosive disco meets smooth jazz romp through their 1979 #1 Dance and R&B smash "And The Beat Goes On." Saxman Tom Politzer is featured on the balmy, buoyant "Fiesta" and the Bill Hampton penned old school rock-soul fusion joint "Push." Saunders wraps the set with a hypnotic yet jangly rhythm guitar filled seduction "All About Love."

"I've done a lot of vocals on previous albums, but if you listen to this one, it's all about the bass playing and the melodies," says Saunders, "my belief and confidence in my melodic writing has grown tremendously over the years, and I better understand the role that I and my bass should play in a song. My goal was to create songs that were cool and hooky, and these were the 14 songs that were in me and that I felt excited about sharing right now."

TONY SAUNDERS

ON STAGE

In recent years, Tony Saunders was in the house band at the Blue Note in Napa, where he has also played with his own group, featuring guitarist Vernon Black (Mariah Carey, Maze, Herbie Hancock, Booker T.) and a young drummer named Austin White. Saunders has also played jazz at Yoshi's in Oakland, Humphrey's Concerts by the Bay in San Diego and has opened for Jeffrey Osborne. For many years, he headed back East to perform at an all-star concert celebration of Jerry Garcia's birthday at such venues as the Strand Theatre in Lakewood, N.J. Playfully hinting at the romantic nature of his music, Saunders says, "We play music that when you get home, you'll thank God you came to the concert."

"I play the bass like B.B. King played Lucille, with a passion that is all about conveying a warmth and making people feel the music," he adds. "I'm not a virtuoso and don't feel the need to play fast to impress anyone. My music's got punch and pizzazz, but it also takes you to a cool place where you can chill for a while and walk away humming the melody. Completely in line with the theme of All About Love, I truly love people – and creating and sharing music is the way I let them know," Saunders explains.



NOTABLE PERFORMANCES

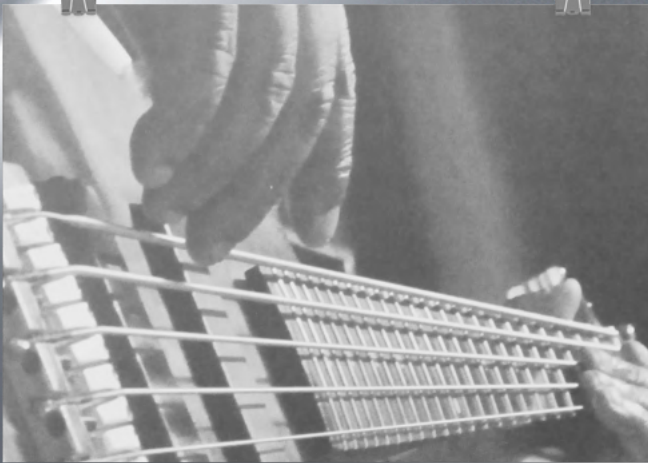
- Yoshi's – Oakland, CA (two solo "sold out" CD Release Parties)
- Blue Note – Napa, CA (w/ Gail Jhonson)
- Strand Theater – Lakeland, NJ (tribute to Jerry Garcia)
- Humphrey's By the Bay - San Diego, CA
- Baked Potato - Universal City, CA
- Starlight Serenade at The Harmony Theater – Hollywood, CA (w/ Paul Jackson Jr., Sinbad, Jessie J, Geoff Alpert, Gail Jhonson)
- Project Imagine for Yoko Ono and The Jerry Garcia Foundation (Vianisi Winery, Sonoma, CA)
- Bogies at Westlake Village - Los Angeles, CA
- Oakland Jazz Festival – Oakland, CA (w/ Gail Jhonson and Destiny Muhammad)
- Stockton Jazz Festival – Stockton, CA (w/ Gail Jhonson and Destiny Muhammad)
- North Tahoe Jazz Festival - Lake Tahoe, CA (opened for Jeffrey Osborne)
- Great American Music Hall - San Francisco, CA



TONY SAUNDERS

THE EARLY YEARS

The son of legendary Bay Area keyboardist Merl Saunders, Tony Saunders counted Wynton Kelly and Jimmy Smith as his godparents, took his first musical lessons on piano from Herbie Hancock, received his first bass from John Fogerty's brother Tom, and was given an organ by Sly Stone at age 10. He earned the first of his two Emmys at age 14 for collaborating with his dad on the PBS documentary "Soul Is" and by 17 was playing with Merl and Jerry Garcia on their collaborative projects. All these decades later, Saunders is still jazzed, inspired and excited to learn from and collaborate with the great musicians that cross his path.



Saunders graduated from the prestigious Conservatory of Music in San Francisco as a piano major, but has focused on the bass throughout his career, drawing on the influences and encouragement of greats like James Jamerson, Stanley Clarke, Chuck Rainey and Jack Casady. After launching his career with Merl and Jerry Garcia, Saunders embarked on a diverse

career that has found him playing and recording with a virtual who's who of popular music and jazz – including Dave Liebman, Dr. John, Ringo Starr, Bo Diddley, Andre Crouch, Mavis Staples, John Lee Hooker, George Howard, Esther Phillips and The Hawkins Family. In the smooth jazz realm, he has played with Jessy J, Nils, Paul Brown, Jeff Lorber, Jeff Ryan, Randy Crawford and Harvey Mason. Over the years, he has scored films, corporate videos, TV shows and commercials and produced many artists out of his own studio, BJW Studio. He's also written the music and has been musical director for stage musicals, including Rock Justice, which was co-written by Jefferson Starship's Marty Balin.



CONTACT

BOOKING AND MEDIA CONTACT:

Gina McCain
Major Scale Management
703.930.4594 | ginamccain@majorscalemanagement.com

PERSONAL MANAGEMENT:

Anthony Washington
AnthonyWashington24@yahoo.com

CONNECT HERE:

Website: www.tonysaunders.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/TonySaundersBassistProducer
Twitter: www.twitter.com/SaundersBass
Instagram: www.instagram.com/saundersbass

www.TonySaunders.com