



CD Review: Invitation – Bernie Senensky

Submitted by cashbox on Fri, 07/15/2011 - 14:47 [CD Reviews](#) [Reviews](#)

By Bill McDonald

"Invitation" is the latest addition to the Bernie Senensky discography. And, a great addition it is.

In this trio recording, with Gene Perla on bass and Ben Riley on drums, Senensky delivers his trademark compelling melodic lines with the seemingly effortless creativity. In their rhythmic and soloing contributions, Perla and Riley dovetail perfectly.

"Invitation" (P.M. Records, www.pmrecords.com) is a mix of standards and original compositions. Senensky brings his insightful melodic interpretations to chestnuts such as "Old Folks", "Come Rain or Come Shine", and "Young and Foolish". The trio also shines on two personal favourites – the title track, "Invitation" and the haunting "My One and Only Love".

In sharing the umbrella with these classics, Senensky's personal compositions intertwine perfectly. From the opening energy of "Come to Me", and "Blues for E.J" (his tribute to the late jazz legend, Elvin Jones) to the closing bebop "Bud Lines", Senensky's compositional talents shine brightly. One other original contribution from bassist Perla, "Bill's Waltz" also highlights this CD.

Senensky is well known to anyone familiar with the Canadian jazz scene. In addition to playing regularly with the legendary Moe Koffman quintet, Senensky has been a sideman to a wide array of international musicians including Art Farmer, Dizzie Gillespie, Chet Baker, and Phil Woods. His personal compositions have been recorded by notables such as Red Rodney, Ed Bickert, and Eugene Amaro. He also has worked frequently with Peter Appleyard and performed in Europe with the largely-US bands of Buddy DeFranco, Herbie Mann, and Terry Gibbs.

Perla and Riley, Senensky's partners on this recording, have impressive resumes of their own. Perla, a graduate from Berklee School of Music, has played with Woody Herman, Thad Jones, Sarah Vaughan, Miles Davis, Nina Simone, and Sonny Rollins.

Riley has recorded and performed alongside a wide variety of performers such as Bruce Cockburn, Holly Cole, Michael Burgess, Molly Johnson, Joe Sealy, Jackie Richardson, Jake Langley, Moe Koffman, Michael Kaeshammer, Domenic Troiano, and Bowfire.

A "must see" in live performance, Senensky is a regular with the Dan Bodanis Trio (with Dan Bodanis on drums and Steve Wallace on bass) every Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evenings from 5:30 pm to 10:30 pm at the Azure Restaurant and Bar, Intercontinental Hotel, 225 Front Street West (www.azzurorestaurant.ca)

