

Shelly Berg



The LA Times calls Concord recording artist, Shelly Berg "a powerhouse jazz pianist who always swings hard". Shelly's new CD, "Blackbird" (Concord Records) has reached the top five in US jazz radio. His previous CD, "The Will" (CARS Records) spent eight weeks in the Top Ten.

A finalist in the 1988 Great American Jazz Piano Competition (PBS Television), he is the long-time pianist and arranger for trombonist, Bill Watrous, and the musical director for vocalists, Patti Austin and Lorraine Feather. Shelly and Carmen have a new CD, "Home With You", on Azika Records.

Shelly maintains a busy, worldwide schedule of jazz festival and club performances. He has performed and/or recorded with a "Who's Who" of jazz legends, including Ray Brown, Louie Bellson, Eddie Daniels, Woody Herman, Clark Terry, and Sonny Stitt to name a few. Other recent projects include two CD's with vocalist, Lorraine Feather on Sanctuary Records (EMI), and a CD collaboration with drummer Peter Erskine and bassist, John Fremgen (Viewpoint Records).

Shelly's composing and orchestrating for television includes ABC's Fudge, CBS's A League of Their Own, and HBO's Dennis Miller Live. He has orchestrated for Kiss, Chicago, Carole King, Richard Marx, Joe Cocker, Kurt Elling and Lou Rawls. Film orchestration work includes Warner Bros. Almost Heroes and Three To Tango, Fox's Men of Honor (Robert DeNiro, Cuba Gooding, Jr.), and the NBC Mini-series The 60's. He has written for the Royal Philharmonic, the American Symphony, and orchestras worldwide. Shelly composed the theme song to the 1986 U.S. Olympic Festival, and orchestrated Japan Concerto, for the 10th anniversary of the Emperor's coronation. His orchestrations are called "magnificent. . . incredible" by Johnny Mandel.

Shelly holds the McCoy/Sample professorship of Jazz Studies in the Thornton School of Music at the University of Southern California.

Agency

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"The great drummer Art Blakey once told a young musician: 'Play with conviction. The audience isn't interested in self-doubt.' With this album, his first for Concord Records, Shelly Berg flies the Blakey flag proudly, delivering a stunning set packed with thrills and surprises. It's not just music with conviction: it's the pianistic equivalent of a day on the roller coaster followed by a night of intimacies by the fire...There is rapture in this music and a good deal more. Wit. Humanity. And bravura performances by three artists playing at the very top of their game. Grab a seat: Professor Berg's seminar on The Art of Jazz is about to begin."

- David Browning

Shelly Berg is a great pianist who seems to have total command of his instrument. He is talented, too, as a composer, arranger and group leader, which is evident in the way he utilizes in his trio the excellent playing of his drummer and bassist."

-Dave Brubeck

"Berg burns hard, his fingers flying over the keyboard while his body nearly levitates off the bench. Exhilarating . . . filled with breakneck parallel runs, sudden rhythmic shifts and harmonic modulations that leave the crowd breathless!"
L.A. Times Sunday Magazine