

ALLEN WON QUARTET



the jewel in the lotus ↘

In composing the 'Jewel in the Lotus', I found out that the work itself was one of an inner journey. A look into how I perceive life through my personal experiences.

Growing up in Hawaii, I was surrounded by colors and sounds of nature. The cry of birds, the pounding of surf, the myriad noises one hears when you immerse your head in the ocean. Hiking in the hills above my parents home, I listened to the wind rustling the leaves of guava and koa trees and the special percussive symphonies of bamboo forests. I would watch with fascination the endless parade of clouds sometimes stately other times with great urgency. My fire initiation came as a dramatic act of tending the last 12 hours of a wood burning Dragoon kiln containing hundred of fine ceramics. My job was to overcome my fear of being burned and to maintain the intense heat required to complete a week-long vigilance of this very special event held annually at one of the only zen-dojo's in the western world. A very special place where the emphasis of Zen studies are experienced through the various martial arts, calligraphy, flower arrangement, ceramic ware and, of course, sitting meditation-zazen.

All of these and many more memories are what makes up the totality of who I am. I would hope that the 'Jewel in the Lotus' would help to bring you back to yourself to acknowledge your unique existence and personal journey. It is my wish and prayer that by finding your self, that you can celebrate your life and find in it the many common traits we all share on this planet, to first change ourselves, enabling us to move forward and bring every living creature into enlightenment, regardless of the creed.

"Whether it's on soprano or baritone sax, Allen puts the birds to shame his haunting, persuasive style.."

Galt MacDermot
Composer

"ALLEN WON IS ONE OF THE MOST CREATIVE AND EXCITING SAXOPHONE PLAYERS ON THE SCENE TODAY! I have witnessed his development for more than the last twenty-five years of his playing career and watched him mature and evolve into the player he is today. His musical abilities have no boundaries."

Ira Nepus

"What Allen Won breathe thru a soprano sax is indeed so haunted by the memory of Thomas Chapin. The blend of jazz with spirit and earthly evocation cast a wonderful spell."

Kirk Nurock
Composer

references ↗

For more info visit Allen's website at www.allenwon.com

For info on booking and workshop call Allen Won (917) 304-4776 or email info@allenwon.com



Venues:
Alice Tully Hall, NYC
Avery Fisher Ha., NYC
Birdland, NYC
Brown University RI
Carnegie Hall, NYC
Hawaii Theater, HI
Jacob's Pillow, MA
Jacques Marchais Museum of Tibetan Art, NY
Kaufman Hall 92 St Y, NYC
The Kitchen, NYC

The Knitting Factory, NYC
La Mama, NYC
Merkin Hall, NYC
Miller Theater, NYC
Painted Bride Philly
Public Theater, NYC
Snug Harbor NY
State Theater - Lincoln Center, NYC
Sweet Basil, NYC
The Village Gate, NYC
Weill Recital Hall, NYC

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Japanese born Allen Won is a woodwind musician and composer based in New York City. He has toured extensively in the United States, Canada, Europe and Japan and is a graduate of the Mannes College of Music in Manhattan. He has performed as a classical musician with the New York Philharmonic, The New York City Ballet, the New York City Opera, the American Symphony Orchestra and The New York Pops. His contemporary music performances include dates with Hair composer Galt McDermott, the Harvey Pittel Saxophone Quartet and Bernard "Pretty" Purdie and the Kiyoto Fujiwara Quintet, among many others.

In addition to composing and club dates, Won is also an accomplished Broadway musician. He has performed in Thoroughly Modern Millie at the Marquis Theater (2002-present), Chicago at the Shubert Theater (1997-1998), a Hair revival at City Center (2001) and Fosse at the Broadhurst Theater (1998-2001).

He is the founder of the Allen Won Quartet and a member of the Wu Wei Trio, both based in New York City. The quartet's recent release called "The Jewel in the Lotus" is now available and includes music inspired by Won's Hawaiian upbringing.

"I used all acoustic instruments to evoke a sense of timeliness or timelessness. The classic jazz quartet uses these same instruments in a slightly different manner. I cannot deny my influences: Trane, Duke, Shorter, Miles. There are others for sure. But I would like you to see if you can hear the not-so-obvious influences as well. I'll give you a hint--I grew up in Hawaii. There, let your mind chew on this one while you give the album a listen or two. Aloha"

"The strong individuality of the instrumentalists - particularly Allen Won's wide ranging saxophone - produces a shifting kaleidoscope of musical colors that turns each piece into a multifaceted cameo."

- The New York Times

"A super sax player named Allen Won drifts about the stage like an amiable Pied Piper."

- The Kansas City Star

"Music critics have described Won as 'dazzling and wide ranging.' He has performed with orchestras and jazz ensembles. This order of versatility makes me want to call him the Wynton Marsalis of the saxophone."

- Robert Kogan, Conductor, The Staten Island Orchestra

"Audiences react to his performances with enthusiasm."

- Weekly Vista

"Won's winds sinuous silver threads of sound up and down his sax, making it clarinet, flute and jazz siren by turns and was exceptional in everything he played."

- Staten Island Advance

"Won's fills and solos in flute and soprano and alto saxes provide added touches of spontaneity and depth."

- RCC Cultural Arts Center

"Allen Won's baritone saxophone playing has a special eloquence."

- The New York Times

reviews ↗

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