

"Michael Blanco is an imaginative bandleader, an emerging composer and a damn fine bassist."
-- Fred Hersch

**Award-Winning Bassist/Composer MICHAEL BLANCO Releases
Fresh Sound New Talent CD, *In The Morning* (December 5, 2006),**

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A Moonlighter on Broadway, Blanco Has Performed with Everyone
From Norah Jones to Carole King to Doc Cheatham

Bassist/Composer **Michael Blanco** is a two-time recipient of the ASCAP Foundation Young Jazz Composer Award (2005, 2006) and now presents those winning compositions on his debut release for the esteemed Fresh Sound New Talent jazz label out of Barcelona, Spain.

The CD, *In The Morning*, will be released in the U.S. on December 5, 2006 and features 10 original compositions by Blanco, who is joined by his regular band mates: **Aaron Goldberg**, *piano*; **Rich Perry**, *tenor saxophone*; **Rob Wilkerson**, *alto saxophone*; **Alan Ferber**, *trombone*; and **Bill Campbell**, *drums*.

In the Morning begins with the instantly catchy "Within Reach," which sounds like traditional jazz meets modern cool and which jazz radio will want to showcase to introduce this talented young musician to a wider audience. The brooding title track highlights pianist's Goldberg's well-known touch at the intro, which plays nicely off Perry's plaintive horn further into the piece. "Point of View" is more upbeat and brings in Wilkerson's alto as counterpoint to Blanco's fleet bass solo. "Uptown Meditations" moves briskly into the slower, moody "Rainy Afternoon," which Blanco leads strongly. "Of Those Who Know" is a clear standout for radio airplay and features Blanco's steady harmonic line driving the pace along with Campbell's savvy drumming. "One More Time" finds and maintains a steady groove that pushes us into the beautiful, soundtrack-worthy "Reverie," which features Blanco prominently. "Moodswings" showcases Ferber's trombone, almost sounding like a French horn. Closing the disc is Blanco playing duo lines backed only by Campbell on "A Long Way From Home," which is certainly true for this San Diego native.

Since moving to New York City in January 2000, Blanco has studied privately with New York Philharmonic bassist Orin O'Brien and jazz musicians Fred Hersch, Scott Colley, Michael Moore, Drew Gress and Joe Martin. Blanco has been involved in a wide variety of musical projects with Doug Wamble (Marsalis Music), Frank LoCrao (MAXJAZZ), Bob Reynolds (Fresh Sound New Talent), John Chin (Fresh Sound New Talent), John Stevens (Maverick), and Frank Basile (Village Vanguard Orchestra).

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Blanco is also in high demand outside of the world of jazz, having performed in the orchestras of 10 Broadway shows, including current hits *Wicked*, *Grey Gardens*, *Avenue Q*, and *Martin Short: Fame Becomes Me*. A frequent accompanist to singers, he has performed in concert with such notable artists as Carole King, Norah Jones, Idina Menzel and Kristen Chenoweth (of *Wicked*) and the legendary Maureen McGovern.

In addition to his ASCAP awards, Blanco was a finalist in the International Society of Bassists jazz bass competition in 2003, where he led a trio featuring his original arrangements and Palmetto Records' pianist, Bill Mays. In 2001 Blanco served as a Jazz Ambassador for the Kennedy Center for the Arts and for the U.S. Department of State. As part of a trio led by Richard Doron Johnson – pianist for the Wynton Marsalis' Septet – Blanco represented the United States on tours of South America, Central America and the Caribbean.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Born and raised in San Diego, California, Blanco was attracted at an early age to the sounds of west coast jazz and the music of Miles Davis, Billy Strayhorn and Bill Evans. Singer-songwriters like James Taylor and Carole King were also quite influential. While attending high school at the San Diego School for Creative and Performing Arts, he hung out at San Diego's short-lived jazz venue, The Horton Grand, to meet and learn from legendary musicians such as Joe Henderson, Ray Brown, Kenny Barron, Rufus Reid, Benny Green, Ben Riley, George Mraz, Al Foster, Charles McPherson and Alan Broadbent. During this time, Blanco also studied with famed west coast bassist Bob Magnusson and spent many nights sitting in with bands led by Holly Hoffmann, Mike Wofford, Peter Sprague and Hollis Gentry. At the age of 19, Blanco was featured on the radio program "Jazz Live" on KSDS FM and wrote, *In the Morning's* composition, "Uptown Meditations" which was inspired by his musical experiences in San Diego.

Blanco left the west coast after receiving a scholarship to attend the acclaimed jazz studies program at the University Of North Texas (UNT). While a student there, he toured and recorded with the Grammy-nominated One O'Clock Lab Band, studied with classical double bass virtuoso Jeff Bradetich and performed with jazz luminaries such as Doc Cheatham, Dave Liebman, Randy Brecker, Carl Allen, Herb Ellis and Eddie Bert. Blanco performed on the One O'Clock Lab Band CD "*Lab '98*" and at the 50th anniversary gala concert celebrating UNT's jazz studies department. Blanco was a founding member of the alternative jazz/rock band *Overground* with singer-songwriter Zack Hexum (Trauma Records), with whom he recorded the album *What Happens Now*.

Blanco currently leads a jazz quintet dedicated to performing his original compositions and has performed at major New York City venues including Carnegie Hall, Town Hall, Birdland and Blue Note and smaller important laboratories for jazz like Makor, Tonic, Barbes and La Lanterna. Presently Blanco plays with Doug Wamble, the Frank LoCrao Trio, the John Chin Trio, and vocalist Shayna Steele.