

Cory Weeds

Jazz Impresario

www.coryweeds.ca



The Musician

Saxophonist Cory Weeds has been a professional musician for the better part of 15 years. Growing up in Vancouver, music was always a huge part of Weeds' life. His father introduced him to jazz at a young age and although it took some time for the music to stick Weeds always showed an interest in music. He played piano for 13 years before making the permanent switch to the alto saxophone in high school. Upon graduation Weeds attended the music program at North Vancouver's Capilano College for 3 years before receiving a scholarship to the prestigious music program at The University Of North Texas in Denton. After spending a year in Texas he returned home and decided that he wanted to concentrate on being a performing musician. Shortly after his return he joined popular Vancouver band People Playing Music and found himself touring Canada, the United States and Europe. It was also Weeds' first experience in the recording studio. The band released *Sette* in 1997 to critical acclaim. During Weeds' tenure in the band he became enchanted with the funkier side of jazz by the likes of Maceo Parker, Grant Green, Dr. Lonnie Smith etc. His love of this music led to the formation the instrumental funk/jazz band *Crash*. In 1998 the band released its first CD entitled *Crash*. The band experienced a lot of success and in the summer of 1998 did a cross Canada tour playing jazz festivals across the country including a highlight performance at The Montreal Jazz Festival. The band went back into the studio in 1999 to record their sophomore release *Candyshop* that was received equally as well. It wasn't until 2003 however when by chance the band was booked to back up Hammond B3 organ guru Dr. Lonnie Smith. This chance meeting resulted in the band's 3rd CD *The Dr. Is In on Cellar Live*. The band has since toured the Pacific Northwest 4 times with Dr. Lonnie Smith.

"Alto saxophonist Cory Weeds, the shows star took a wild ride on the band's rhythm as if it would carry him off the stage." Peter Goddard, the Toronto Star

Weeds is currently concentrating on more straight ahead projects including his quartet with pianist / composer Sharon Minemoto, bassist Jodi Proznick and drummer Jesse Cahill. He is also a member of The Night Crawlers which released their debut CD, *Presenting on Cellar Live* in 2007, and was nominated for Album Of The Year at the National Jazz Awards in 2008. The Night Crawlers have just completed their second CD featuring legendary saxophonist Red Holloway. The B3 Kings is a seasonal quartet featuring Denzal Sinclair on voice / drums, Chris Gestrin on b3 organ and Bill Coon on guitar. The band recorded a CD that was released in 2005 that has been a hit worldwide and sold over 2000 units. The band continuously sells out venues in Western Canada during the Christmas season.

In 2006 Weeds was a member of the saxophone section that backed up Paul Anka. Weeds performed 6 concerts with the iconic singer. Weeds has also shared the stage with international superstars such as Lou Donaldson, David Fathead Newman, Charles McPherson, Harold Mabern, Scott Hamilton, Ian Hendrickson-Smith and Mike DiRubbo to name a few. He has also shared the stage with locals like Brad Turner, Mike Allen, Hugh Fraser, Don Thompson, Oliver Gannon, Cam Ryga and Ross Taggart.

Perhaps Weeds' biggest musical accomplishment came in January, 2008 when he recorded his first CD as a leader featuring New York heavyweights guitarist Peter Bernstein, organist Mike Ledonne and drummer Joe Farnsworth. *BIG WEEDS* was released to critical acclaim across the continent. The CD debuted on the Jazz Week chart at #49 and made it all the way up to #17. *Big Weeds* also graced BOB PARLOCHA'S TOP 40 LIST making it as high as #9. *Big Weeds* was recently nominated for ALBUM OF THE YEAR at the 2009 NATIONAL JAZZ AWARDS and was selected by Jazz Week as one of the Top 100 Releases of 2008.



In August, 2008 Weeds shared the stage with yet another New York heavyweight, trumpeter Jim Rotondi. The nights were a huge success and led to the formation of THE CORY WEEDS QUARTET feat. JIM ROTONDI. The band recorded their first CD in January, 2009 and will be embarking on a Canadian and U.S. tour in the fall of 2009.

"..the main reason to acquire Big Weeds is for the excellent playing of the leader, who creates one colorful solo after another. Hopefully there will be many more recordings in the future from this club owner/label head." Scott Yanow - All Music

Guide

"*Everything's Coming Up Weeds*, the 51st release from the Cellar Live stable, is a stellar recording featuring an extraordinary quintet. At first blush, it recalls the energy and fervor of wonderful [Benny Golson](#) bands and, if the memory can be stretched a wee bit further, also some memorable sessions of [The Jazztet](#)—or even a [Jazz Messengers](#) middle passage. The date is led by the big tenor sound of Cory Weeds—saxophonist, broadcaster, jazz impresario extraordinaire and owner of Canada's leading West Coast nightspot, The Cellar Restaurant and Jazz Club. There is also excellent work from pianist [Ross Taggart](#), trumpeter [Jim Rotondi](#), bassist [John Webber](#) and drummer [Willie Jones III](#).

There are several remarkable aspects to this record. First, the writing of the originals is of the very highest order. The music is wonderfully crafted with an extraordinary ear for tonal colors and rhythmic textures, whether it is a blues such as Taggart's "BB's Blue Blues," which appears to be an oblique tribute to [Monk](#), or an exotic narrative from Rotondi, "Biru Kirusai," which is almost a title in Bunga Emas (the language of Malaysia) and conjures up images of the sights and smells of exquisite Southeast Asia. The highlight, of course, is Weeds' writing, which is mature and exquisitely crafted, with a fine sense of the sonority and sliding elegance of the tenor saxophone. On his "Little Unknown One," Weeds paints sonic images of [Dexter Gordon](#). And like Gordon, Weeds is able to bend his fat sound to practically cry at the most tender moments of the song."



The Club Owner

In 2000 Weeds embarked on perhaps the most challenging journey of his young career purchasing The Cellar Restaurant /Jazz club. Since the purchase Weeds has single handedly turned it into one of the continents most respected jazz rooms. It has been voted in the Top 100 Jazz Clubs Worldwide by Downbeat Magazine four times and is often compared to New York's Village Vanguard for its ambiance and acoustics. The club has hosted the likes of Charles McPherson, Frank Wess, Mulgrew Miller, Harold Mabern, George Coleman, Lou Donaldson, Dr. Lonnie Smith, Benny Golson, Tom Harrell, Buddy Montgomery and David Fathead Newman to name a few. It is however the local talent that graces The Cellar's stage that makes it such a special place. The Vancouver jazz scene is very rich and diverse with incredible talent. The Cellar is a place where they can play their music uninhibited.

"The hardest working man in the jazz-business!" - Kate Hammett-Vaughan

The Producer

Cellar Live was founded in 2001. When Weeds purchased The Cellar Restaurant and Jazz Club in August, 2000 he immediately started assembling some recording gear to preserve the incredible music that was being performed on stage every night. In July of 2001, Weeds had accumulated literally dozens of tapes of spectacular performances and he began listening to them and selecting the best material for a compilation CD. It was at this time that Brian Watson from Maximum Jazz came into the picture and offered Weeds a production and distribution deal for the record. In September 2001, Maximum Jazz Presents: Live @ The Cellar was released to critical acclaim. This was the beginning of Weeds' producing career and 7 years later the label now has almost 50 records to its credit. What started out as a label dedicated to producing records by local artists recorded live at The Cellar has grown in to a label that releases studio records, live records recorded in other venues across the continent and an imprint called Cellar Live Futures dedicated to nurturing and exposing young talent.

2008 was a big year for the label. The National Jazz Awards recognized Cellar Live as Label Of The Year marking the first year in the existence of the awards that a label other than Justin Time has won. In addition to the prestigious award, three of Cellar Live's records were nominated for Album Of The Year; PJ Perry / Cam Ryga Quintet - Joined At The Hip, Night Crawlers - Presenting and the winner Jodi Proznick Quartet - Foundations. Cellar Live's efforts were also recognized at this year's Juno Awards with Jodi Proznick Quartet - Foundations being nominated in Traditional Album Of The Year category and Chris Tarry Group - Almost Certainly Dreaming winning in the Contemporary Jazz Album Of The Year category. 2009 has started off well for the label including the release of its fiftieth CD, Presenting The Ross Taggart Trio and nominations for ALBUM OF THE YEAR (Big Weeds), LABEL OF THE YEAR (Cellar Live) and PRODUCER OF THE YEAR (Cory Weeds) at the 2009 National Jazz Awards.

"In my 35 years of playing professionally in the Vancouver music scene, I would consider Cory to be the most successful and important promoter and producer of Canadian Jazz in the Vancouver area." - Oliver Gannon

The Radio Host

For the better part of 10 years Cory has been a fixture on Vancouver's CO-OP Radio. His show CHASIN THE TRAIN has been self produced and hosted by Weeds. He has become one of the most recognized voices in the lower mainland promoting local, Canadian and International talent. He has also hosted the popular CBC show HOT AIR.

REVIEWS OF CORY WEEDS QUARTET - BIG WEEDS

The cover art on Vancouver saxophonist Cory Weeds' debut album evokes the Reid Miles graphics on the classic Blue Note albums of the '50s and '60s. That's no accident, as the music on the disc is a throwback to the soul jazz of organist Jimmy Smith, as Weeds' big-toned meat-and-potatoes playing is supported by the New York-based organ trio of Mike LeDonne, with Peter Bernstein on guitar and Joe Farnsworth on drums on this live set recorded at Weeds' club, The Cellar, in January of this year. There's nothing fancy here, and no one is trying to reinvent the wheel - this is simply honest, swinging hard bop with a lot of heart.

★★★★

Mike Chamberlain - The Hour, Montreal, Quebec

When you put a saxophone in the hands of Cory Weeds and have him performing live at a club, you're in for a jazz experience. Fortunately for us, when Weeds was performing at The Cellar Restaurant / Jazz Club this January, the performance was recorded and we can now enjoy the evening over and over on the CD Big Weeds. You have to love Cellar Live for putting out this type of quality CD, because it gives us access to shows we could not generally hear any other way. In the case of Big Weeds, it is a collection of only eight numbers, but each one is a jazz journey which meanders across the musical landscape. The CD starts with a 7:35 rendition of Darben The Red Roxx, a cut by James Moody many jazz fans will recognize. It is an excellent choice as a lead-in because it has elements that are recognizable. From there Weeds goes with his own compositions, and that too works as it let's us enjoy an accomplished saxophonist playing the music he is most familiar with, his own. To round out the sound here Weeds is joined by Mike LeDonne on Hammond b3, Peter Bernstein on guitar, and Joe Farnsworth on drums who has a killer solo on the cut Corrupted Mango. The three musicians are all accomplished performers, and they blend seamlessly with Weeds as he leads them through cuts such as For Fathead, It's Only A Paper Moon and No Bull, the longest cut here at 10:47. In general terms this is rather straight ahead jazz, no wild electronica, just music to relax and weave too. Perfect for a lazy day at the cabin, or a nice evening on the patio this summer. Sit back, sip something refreshing, and let Weeds take you to a happy place. This is one weed you want to have. Another fine effort from this Vancouver-based label. Big Weeds can be checked out in more detail at www.cellarlive.com or www.coryweeds.ca

Calvin Daniels Yorkton This Week

When I played in the first time I got a very excited phone call from Sonny Carrington. Sonny is a tenor player and he is the father of drummer Terri Lyne Carrington. He has been listening to me for over 35 years. The last time he called me so excited over something he heard me play was when I played some Basie with a Paul Gonsalves solo. Sonny had a lot of good things to say about Cory and Mike LeDonne.

Eric Jackson - WBGH Radio, Boston MA

Cory Weeds is the owner of the Cellar Restaurant in Vancouver, B.C. and the Cellar Live label. However, as he proves throughout Big Weeds (his first recording as a leader), he is also a very good saxophonist on both alto and tenor. Teamed with three New York veteran giants (organist Mike LeDonne, guitarist Peter Bernstein and drummer Joe Farnsworth), Weeds shows that he is on their level. This hard bop set, which consists of six of Weeds' originals plus "It's Only A Paper Moon" and the James Moody obscurity "Darben The Redd Foxx," features blues, ballads and straightahead jazz, all played with spirit. The music may not be groundbreaking but it swings hard, sounds fresh, and finds all of the musicians in top form. LeDonne, who originally gained recognition as a pianist, has to be one of the most underrated organists on the scene. Bernstein is always creative within this format and Farnsworth is consistently solid. But the main reason to acquire Big Weeds is for the excellent playing of the leader, who creates one colorful solo after another. Hopefully there will be many more recordings in the future from this clubowner/label head."

Scott Yanow - All Music Guide

"Big weeds? More like huge chops and a truckload of jump and swing. Vancouver's Cory Weeds explodes out of the gate on this, his first offering as a quartet leader. While Weeds may be the dynamic owner of Vancouver's Cellar jazz club and the Cellar Live label that in just seven years has released over 30 recordings and garnered critical praise throughout North America, he has always deferred to others to lead when it comes to his own recording career—until now. And what a debut this is, with a well-known NYC-based organ trio backing Weeds

on alto and tenor sax. Supported by Mike LeDonne (Hammond B3), Peter Bernstein (guitar), and Joe Farnsworth (drums), Corey Weeds joins a long tradition of great West Coast sax players producing stellar original bop- and blues-based material. These guys swing. Hell, they rock. It's a keeper."

Rick Gibbs - Monday Magazine - Victoria, BC

Weeds's own CD, *Big Weeds*, is a strong outing, with the leader arguably showing a bit of New York envy himself. He's imported three New York/Smoke jazz club heavyweights -- guitarist Peter Bernstein, organist Mike LeDonne and drummer Joe Farnsworth -- to back him. That, I say, takes guts. Weeds could surely have played with his regular Vancouver cohorts and been comfortable in those circumstances. Instead, he wanted to bask in and be inspired by the brilliance and soulfulness of three Big-Apple players who likely represent the epitome of straight-ahead playing for him. Weeds is an alto player first and a bopper above all, showing agility and a big, welcoming sound on the deep-groove blues *No Bull* and the aggressive closer *Modal Issue*. He has a hearty approach to tenor too, well-suited to the bright blues opener *Darben the Redd Fox*, the greasy loper *For Fathead* and the big, open-hearted ballad *Blossoms in May*." However, with Bernstein and LeDonne sharing the stage with him, Weeds has surrounded himself with truly striking players. While Bernstein and Weeds speak the same language, Bernstein speaks its more fluidly and freely, pretty much at a world-class level. LeDonne is a one-man orchestra, and a double-time, long-line whiz in Seamus Blake's league. So as good as Weeds is, Bernstein and LeDonne can't help but upstage him. But then again, the jack of many jazz trades masters none. Are those New York guys club owners too, with radio shows and blogs and their own record labels? *Big Weeds* is far from a vanity project. It's an honest and worthy debut from a musician who plays not only saxophones, but also a crucial role sustaining the music he loves in the city where he lives. I'll be glad to get to the Cellar the next time I'm in Vancouver, enjoy some fine music, and buy Weeds a beer.

Peter Hum - Thriving On A Riff Blog - Ottawa

Cory you finally did it! After all the producing, touring and managing of other acts...the time to do it up yourself emerged. Totally Awesome for the talented musician Cory Weeds. The Vancouverite booked in 3 of New York Cities finest jazz musicians. Great sound and even better songs. BRAVO...put on this hot cd.

Ms. Sabina Ho from down West Broadway Avenue.
Customer Review from CD BABY.com

MISCELLANEOUS QUOTES & REVIEWS

In my 35 years of playing professionally in the Vancouver music scene, I would consider Cory to be the most successful and important promoter and producer of Canadian Jazz in the Vancouver area.

Oliver Gannon - Jazz Guitarist

The hardest working man in the jazz-business!

Kate Hammett-Vaughan - Jazz Vocalist

Alto saxophonist Cory Weeds, the shows star took a wild ride on the band's rhythm as if it would carry him off the stage.

Peter Goddard - The Toronto Star

The Cellar is one of those special jazz clubs and I just love it. I had a ball playing with Cory's band: he's such a dear heart and a great musician.

Dr. Lonnie Smith - Jazz Organist

Shade was at a premium as fans gathered beneath the maple trees by Gassy Jack's statue, late on Saturday afternoon (June 26), to hear local jazz-funksters Crash and their special guest Dr. Lonnie Smith. The Hammond B3 organ veteran smiled beatifically throughout a sizzling set, as he carved out deep and bluesy grooves, launched into swirling runs, and punched out chords to accompany saxophonists Cory Weeds and Jerry Cook. Smith moaned and groaned James Brown fashion on 'Your Mama's Got a Complex', pounding the keys while singing 'She thinks she's hot, but hot she's not', and the saxophones mimicked a train on 'Leaving on Track Number Nine'. Gassy Jack himself would have hooted approvingly back."

Guy McPherson - Georgia Straight

Vancouver funk group Crash has a regular guest artist in Hammond B3 Organist Dr. Lonnie Smith, and Smith and the boys energize each other with each track on this date, recorded live at The Cellar. Alto saxophonist Cory Weeds and drummer Bernie Arai let fly on the 10 minute opener 'Love Bowl' and tenor saxophonist and guitarist Dave Sikula keeps the 12 minute 'Nick's Kick' kicking hard. The other tracks, though not as long as these two, move and shake as well."

Marke Andrews - Vancouver Sun

The Doctor is Lonnie Smith, whose medical specialty is treatment of a Hammond B3. Crash is a Vancouver quintet that plays an instrumental jazz that incorporates funk. Put Smith and Crash together, record them live in The Cellar and the result is remarkably bluesy with generous space for soloing. The band is busy but tight on grooves that recall James Brown while Smith colours everything with the rich, but piercing, tone of the Hammond. Smith stabs and jabs or counters Crash with a rhythmic precision that is marvelous. It's a record steeped in mutual respect."

Tom Harrison - Vancouver Province

As a fine musician and businessman, Cory knows how to produce recordings with great artistic integrity, and salability. By recording some of the best musicians locally, nationally and internationally, and with excellent graphics and art work, Cory has documented important moments of history for this art form.

Ross Taggart - Jazz Saxophonist

PERFORMANCES OF NOTE

NIKKI YANNOFSKY - Temple Shalom, Vancouver, BC, June 7th
NIKKI YANNOFSKY - The Westin Bayshore, Vancouver, BC, March 28th
NIGHT CRAWLERS with DENZAL SINCLAIRE - The Cellar, Vancouver, BC, April 3rd - 5th
MELODY DIACHUN EQ - Calvary Community Church, Kamloops, BC, November 21st
CORY WEEDS w/JOE DORIA TRIO - The Ballard Jazz Walk, Seattle, WA, November 20th
CORY WEEDS w/ MARK EISENMANN TRIO - The Rex, Toronto, ON, November 13th and 14th
CORY WEEDS w/ VANESSA RODRIGUEZ TRIO - UPSTAIRS, Montreal, QC, November 5th and 6th
CORY WEEDS QUARTET - PENDER HARBOUR JAZZ FESTIVAL, Pender Harbour, BC, September 21st, 2008
CORY WEEDS QUINTET feat. JIM ROTONDI - The Cellar, Vancouver, BC, August 15th and 16th, 2008
HUGH FRASER PURPLE HAZE - The Cellar, Vancouver, BC, July 11th and 12th, 2008
NIGHT CRAWLERS w/RED HOLLOWAY - The Cellar, Vancouver, BC, June 27th and 28th, 2008(Jazz Festival)
NIGHT CRAWLERS w/RED HOLLOWAY - The Roundhouse Theatre, Vancouver, BC, June 28th, 2008 (Jazz Festival)
MELODY DIACHUN EQ - The Cellar, Vancouver, BC, June 21st, 2008 (Jazz Festival)
CORY WEEDS QUARTET CD RELEASE - The Cellar, Vancouver, BC, June 6th and 7th, 2008
WEEDS/MINEMOTO QUARTET - The Vernon Jazz Club, Vernon, BC, May 24th, 2008
MELODY DIACHUN EQ CD RELEASE - The Cellar, Vancouver, BC, April 18th and 19th, 2008
CORY WEEDS TRIO - O'Douls Restaurant, Vancouver, BC, March 27th - 29th, 2008
CORY WEEDS QUARTET LIVE RECORDING - The Cellar, Vancouver, BC, Jan. 11th - 13th, 2008
B3 KINGS WITH DENZAL SINCLAIRE - The Cellar, Vancouver, BC, December 21st - 23rd, 2008
B3 KINGS WITH DENZAL SINCLAIRE - The Cellar, Vancouver, BC, December 22nd - 23rd, 2008
B3 KINGS WITH DENZAL SINCLAIRE - Hermanns, Victoria, BC, December 16th, 2008
B3 KINGS WITH DENZAL SINCLAIRE - Artspring, Salt Spring, BC, December 16th, 2008
B3 KINGS WITH DENZAL SINCLAIRE - Yardbird Suite, Edmonton, AB, December 15th, 2008
B3 KINGS WITH DENZAL SINCLAIRE - Uptown Theatre, Calgary, AB, December 14th, 2008
B3 KINGS WITH DENZAL SINCLAIRE - Yardbird Suite, Edmonton, AB, December 15th, 2008
B3 KINGS WITH DENZAL SINCLAIRE - Yardbird Suite, Fernie, BC, December 15th, 2008
B3 KINGS WITH DENZAL SINCLAIRE - The Old Firehall, Rossland, BC, December 15th, 2008
B3 KINGS WITH DENZAL SINCLAIRE - The Paddlewheel Theatre, Whiterock, BC, Dec. 7th, 2008
B3 KINGS WITH DENZAL SINCLAIRE - The Vernon Jazz Club, Vernon, BC, December 6th, 2008
CORY WEEDS QUINTET w/ DR. LONNIE SMITH - Bell Center For The Performing Arts, Surrey, BC, Feb. 9th, 2007
CORY WEEDS QUINTET w/ DR. LONNIE SMITH - Blue Monk, Portland, OR, Feb. 2nd & 3rd, 2007
CORY WEEDS QUINTET w/ DR. LONNIE SMITH - Triple Door, Seattle, WA, Feb, 1st, 2007
CORY WEEDS QUINTET w/ DR. LONNIE SMITH - Mary Winspear Theatre, Kelowna, BC, Jan. 28th, 2007

DISCOGRAPHY

CORY WEEDS QUINTET - EVERYBODY DIGS WEEDS featuring JOEY DEFRANCESCO, Cellar Live, 2010
NIGHT CRAWLERS - NOW PLAYING with RED HOLLOWAY and JERRY WELDON, Cellar Live, 2010
MELODY DIACHUN EQ, 2008, Cellar Live
CORY WEEDS QUARTET - BIG WEEDS, 2008 - Cellar Live
NIGHT CRAWLERS - PRESENTING, 2007 - Cellar Live
CELLAR LIVE XMAS, 2006 - Cellar Live
CRASH - The Dr. Is In, 2005 - Cellar Live
CRASH - Candyshop, 2002 - Maximum Jazz
SPACIOUS COUCH - TONAL VISION, 2003 - Independent
SPACIOUS COUCH, 2000 - Independent
CRASH, 1998, MoFunk Records