

# MIKE Wofford Jazz Pianist

Born in San Antonio, Texas, Mike Wofford grew up in San Diego, California where he began piano lessons at the age of seven. He later studied briefly with a local jazz piano teacher, Bill Franks, an admirer of Teddy Wilson, who primarily emphasized harmonic creativity in improvising rather than technique. Wofford is otherwise self-taught and was first influenced by hearing recordings of Art Tatum, Thelonious Monk and Horace Silver.

Mike began his professional career recording with Slim Gaillard in 1961. That same year he also joined Howard Rumsey's Lighthouse All-stars. In 1962 Wofford became a member of Shorty Rogers and his Giants and also recorded with Mel Torme on the album "Comin' Home Baby."

While becoming active in the Los Angeles jazz club scene, he also toured with vocalist June Christy as her accompanist in 1963, and recorded with vibraphonist Gary Burton in drummer Larry Bunker's quartet.

Wofford's first trio album under his own name, "Strawberry Wine," on Epic Records was released in 1964 and he was subsequently asked to join Shelly Manne's quintet at Shelly's Manne-hole in Hollywood. His musical relationship with Manne would continue until the drummer's passing in 1984.

Wofford became more and more in demand as a free-lance studio pianist working in TV, film scoring and recording in general. During this period he recorded or performed with, among others, The Ventures, Joan Baez, The Jackson Five, Cher, John Lennon, Donna Summer, Sergio Mendes, Harry Nilsson and Roger McGuinn. He has also recorded and performed with jazz legends Sonny Stitt, Stan Getz, Joe Pass, Quincy Jones, Benny Carter, Ray Brown, Tom Scott, Chet Baker, Art Pepper, Joe Henderson, Art Farmer, Kenny Burrell, Benny Golson, Oliver Nelson, James Moody, Phil Woods, Bud Shank, Zoot Sims, Frank Rosolino and Harry "Sweets" Edison, among many others.

In 1979 and again in 1983 he toured as Sarah Vaughan's conductor and pianist, a position he also later held with Ella Fitzgerald from 1989 to 1993.

Most recently he has worked and recorded with John Clayton, Matt Wilson, Oliver Lake, Jeff Hamilton, Lee Konitz, Terrell Stafford, Kevin Mahogany, and Vinny Golia.

Wofford now works primarily with his own trio and quintet, as well as with his wife, noted jazz flutist Holly Hofmann, in duo, quartet and string orchestra settings. They are both Capri Records artists.

Thomas Burns, CEO *Capri Records*