



# Jakarta Indonesia

On the road with Hubert Laws 2010

*March 5-9 2010*

## ONTOUR

Being the keyboardist in Hubert Laws' Group is one of the best parts of being in music. From the time I first heard "Rite of Spring" when I was in high school to this day I am happy to know him and his music. Hubert stands for a lot of things that I support-musical excellence number one. Few musicians pay as much detail to their sound, practice regimen, and overall musicianship as Hubert. He's a great example to musicians of all eras on what a musician should do.



## IN JACARTA

Traveling any trip that takes longer than 20 hours is brutal. Luckily, there was a hang going on in the smoking area in the Taipei airport, and things started to be a lot more interesting.

The festival itself was huge, and there was little time to do anything other than try and get ready for the show which happened on the night of the first day we were there. My song "Island Girls" played most of the day in my head when I wasn't thinking about gear, Hubert's music, and saying hello to all the LA people who were there-and there were a ton.



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## ONTOUR

It was pretty cool to get a copy of the festival magazine to see that Hubert was being honored as the top performer at the festival and that his picture was the cover of the festival magazine. Those magazines were gone within hours, but I grabbed one and you can see it above.

Lots of prep goes into a Hubert Laws show because the music is very challenging. Forget happy easy tunes like a lot of bands play. We are doing hip hop tracks Hubert wrote in the 70's, up tempo bebop, and classical music orchestrated for jazz band and orchestra. In his band I do the orchestra, play Fender Rhodes, and all the incidental parts including doubling the flute melodies for most of the gig, so knowing how Hubert phrases is the key to pulling the melodies off. All of us in the group





have a lot of leeway when it comes to soloing which is one of the main reasons I like doing the band- Hubert lets everybody play. There are strong frameworks, and a LOT of improvisations.

On show day we are usually too busy to do anything but think about the show. The set list is different at every gig for the same reasons it is different on all of my gigs-keeping it fresh and a very large number of songs from the albums to decide between.

## THE SHOW

Doing the show was cool because we do one of Bob James' classical pieces in the show, and Bob was on the festival with his group FOREPLAY. Bob came to hear us do his tune and to check out the rest of our gig. It was a good hang, and due to heavy traffic on the way back to the hotel, I had a chance to ask Bob everything I had been curious about for the past 25 years about his music. Guys at breakfast the next day were talking about how that would be the most definitive Bob James interview ever. We talked for more than two hours. Bob is a smart and cool dood.

## AROUND THE FEST

There were a lot of people around the festival that I was bumping into, and here's a few photos...



George Duke. Still my favorite album of his is the first one I ever heard "Feel."

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### **GIRL SAX PLAYERS**

Everybody in jazz loves girl sax players. Mindy Abair in the photo to the left is one of the top ones around.

### **TOO MUCH MUSIC!**

There was more music going on at this event than anything I had ever done before...on one night when we were off, I was able to hang and see the following all within a short walking distance: Christian McBride with Steve Wilson, Babyface, Toni Braxton, Bob James Trio, Steve Lukather w Robben Ford and Randy Brecker. and the George Duke Band.



### **JAZZ AMBASSADOR**

If ever there was a modern day jazz ambassador on that side of the world, it has to be Michael Paulo in the picture at left with drummer Joel Taylor. Michael is pretty much everywhere at the same time.

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### **REACTIONS**

People were flipping out after Hubert's show, and there was a very nice and detailed article about it the day after we did the gig talking about how his music and his musical direction were iconic. That was how it seemed at the breakfast table when person after person came up to us talking about what a great gig it was and how they had never heard music so diverse and good ever before.

### **Girl Singers**

Probably the only thing audiences like better than girl sax players is girl singers. The one to my left came over during one of the jam sessions and introduced herself "Hi, my name is Toni." Nice to meet you!

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**OF COURSE THERE HAS TO BE SOMETHING HUMOROUS...**

Those of you who know me well know that I am always looking to find something humorous in any situation I'm in. After walking about 2 miles one evening bouncing around from show to show, I needed to get something to drink and have a seat for a second. When I sat down, There was a giant, and I mean HUGE billboard in front of me, and I had to look at it a couple of times before I was convinced that I had to get a picture of that billboard to bring back to the US. Here it is below.



And there you have it. The next day it was back to LA and back to LA Life.

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