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Guitar Player

Chris Flory: Vintage Swing, Modern Sting

Though Chris Flory works within the jazz tradition of legends like Charlie Christian, Oscar Moore, and Bill Jennings, his fiery fretwork is no mere copy. "Coltrane's inspired modal improvisation drew me

from rock when I was a teenager," explains the 40-year-old. "Living in Providence, Rhode Island, exposed me to a lot of blues and organ-trio stuff. Duke Robillard was a local star, and I was knocked out by how he would play 20 choruses on a blues. Realizing the interrelationship between blues and jazz got me into swing, which seemed far more emotional than a lot of the bebop I heard."

Chris and saxophonist Scott Hamilton, his longtime musical

partner, teamed up in Providence before moving to the Big Apple, where they worked with jazz greats Roy Eldridge, Hank Jones, Milt Hinton, Ruby Braff, Rosemary Clooney, and Benny Goodman. On his own, Flory also backed Illinois Jacquet, Bob Wilber, Buck Clayton, and Maxine Sullivan. While Flory still performs and records with Hamilton, his growing solo career receives most of his attention. His second recording as a leader, Concord Jazz' *City Life*, thoroughly demonstrates his mature yet hungry-sounding improvisational approach. Flory burns on uptempo tunes like Bill Jennings' "Alexandria, VA" and his own "Drafting" and reveals his melodic side on classics such as "S'posin'" and "Penthouse Serenade." His fat 1948 Gibson L-7 sound is authentic without being derivative.

"Although I'm identified with vintage swing," Chris says, "I've always hated doing 'tribute' music based on a single person's repertoire. I'm constantly finding new sources of inspiration, like Wes Montgomery, whose sound is hardly archaic. By broadening my scope while remaining close to the blues, I'm hoping that my audience will continue to be interested and maybe even grow."



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