

## ABOUT CHARLEY LANGER

Since the release in 2010 of his acclaimed debut album, *Never the Same*, Charley Langer has kept busy, gigging on the Northern California winery circuit with guitarist Kurt Shiflet and performing in the award-winning tribute band, *Steelin' Dan*. *Never the Same* earned the multi-talented saxophonist a sizeable fan base. Its title track received significant airplay on smooth jazz radio and the Weather Channel.

Langer is blazing into 2017 with an exuberantly infectious, playfully grooving new full-length album, *Happy Hour*. While he refers to the eclectic *Never the Same* as “an art project with some very hot players,” he has upped his game with radio-ready, urban jazz magic, courtesy of fresh collaboration with guitarist and producer Nils—one of smooth jazz’s top artists and producers.

The 10-track collection showcases the saxman’s powerhouse alto on five tracks penned by Nils and five co-written by Langer and Nils. While some tracks find Nils backing Langer as a one-man studio band (guitar, keys, synth bass, and drum programming), others feature the cream of the crop of L.A.’s contemporary jazz scene, including keyboardists Johnny Britt and Nate Harasim, bassists Darryl Williams and Reggie McBride, drummers Gordon Campbell and Richard Rightman, and percussionist Oliver C. Brown.

Langer credits his wife with the name for the title track, as the couple loves going to happy hour at local restaurants. The music is imbued with joy and optimism. “I wanted the album to have an upbeat, uplifting vibe,” says Langer. Songs like “Set Me Free,” “Big Sur,” “J Street Groove,” and “This One’s for the Girls”—which I dedicate to my wife and daughters—reflect the positive energy I envisioned.”

## ON STAGE

Langer’s live performances over the years have encompassed many genres, reflecting his unique array of styles. Early in his career, he performed with Southern California area orchestras and with such notables as Morton Gould, John Adams, and Zita Carno. While living in Hawaii, Langer worked as a sideman for local entertainers, including island chart-topper Jon Basebase (“Suddenly”), the Bobby King Royal Combo, and the Willie Barton Orchestra.

Today, you are more likely to hear him in a popular music or jazz setting. In addition to his duo winery gigs with Kurt Shiflet, Langer performs with *Steelin' Dan* at numerous festivals, clubs, and other venues. He has also opened for guitarist Craig Chaquico and jazz singer/songwriter Spencer Day.

## NOTABLE LIVE PERFORMANCES

Benvenuti Performing Arts Center—Sacramento, CA (w/ Spencer Day)

Naggiar Vineyards & Winery—Grass Valley, CA

Crest Theatre—Sacramento, CA

Sacramento Jazz Festival—Sacramento, CA

Sacramento Convention Center—Sacramento, CA (Best of Sacramento Awards)

Art & Wine Affaire—El Dorado Hills, CA

Young’s Vineyard—Plymouth, CA (opening for Craig Chaquico)

Harrah's Reno—Reno, NV

David Girard Vineyards—Placerville, CA

Crystal Bay Casino—Crystal Bay, NV

Grass Valley Center for the Arts—Grass Valley, CA

Harrah's Tahoe—Lake Tahoe, CA

Spotlight 29 Casino—Palm Springs, CA

Harlow's Restaurant & Nightclub—Sacramento, CA

Sweetwater Music Hall—Mill Valley, CA

Colusa Casino Resort—Colusa, CA

## MUSIC

True to its title concept, Langer's debut *Never the Same* incorporated everything from smooth contemporary jazz to rock/fusion, old school soul-jazz, Latin, and straight-ahead/swing. He described it as "Phil Woods meets Boney James." Collaborating with Nils, Langer keeps his emotional, adventurous playing front and center, but takes a much more streamlined compositional and production approach – which leads to many potential radio singles that pop from the first few bars. **Happy Hour's** infectious, high-energy first single "Set Me Free" finds Langer spreading joy and optimism to combat these uncertain times, and bring our spirits to hopeful new levels. Driven by his emotional solo lines and sizzling horn textures, the track begins with a hypnotic groove and shuffling percussion before easing into a light funk, mid-tempo flow with a sensual sax melody. It then bursts into a punchy and playful chorus that truly inspires the musical soul to soar along with its sensual fire.

With its easy flowing groove, graceful sax melody and bright, inviting horn textures, Nils' composition "Big Sur" reminds Langer of a drive up the coast of California. Their first collaboration was "J-Street Groove," a slyly soulful, Tower of Power flavored deep-bass funk tune, which was named for the location of one of Langer's favorite hotspots, Harlow's Restaurant and Nightclub. While funky, jamming party tracks like "Happy Hour" and the vocal-infused "This One's For the Girls" reflect Langer's ultimate joy for life and music, the soulful ballad "Carry Me Home" shows that his passion extends to candlelit romantic nights as well.

## ROOTS IN COLORADO

Langer grew up in Boulder, Colorado, the son of a geophysicist who was also a jazz and big band aficionado. His father tried to steer him toward engineering, but music was Langer's first love and he took classical music lessons from his junior-high band teacher, who worked with several prominent classical groups. Langer developed his style under such saxophone masters as Vincent Gnojek, Douglas Masek, and Laura Hunter. After receiving a master's degree in Performance from the University of Southern California, he worked a day job in fundraising for radio station KUSC, and later becoming an environmental specialist supervising clean-up of hazardous waste sites. This career gave him the financial foundation to pursue his musical dreams.

Langer had been away from music for a few years when Jon Basebase, a renowned musician from Honolulu, suggested he begin playing and writing again. Langer began playing with Basebase, and, after relocating to Sacramento, he focused on composing and recording. He hooked up with drummer/producer Ron Wikso, who performs with Gregg Rollie, founding keyboardist for Journey and Santana. To record *Never the Same*, Wikso brought in a heavyweight ensemble that includes rock guitarist Kurt Griffey, world-class bassist Alphonso Johnson (Weather Report), keyboardist Wally Minko (Jean Luc Ponty), and percussionist Michito Sanchez (Joe Sample).

## REVIEWS

"Bold, eclectic, and featuring some killer ensemble playing, there was certainly a lot to admire on Charley Langer's debut album *Never the Same*—but it's even more exhilarating to hear him apply his wildly passionate alto and deep well of musical emotions to the more focused, perfectly in the contemporary urban jazz pocket follow-up *Happy Hour*. . . . an instantly infectious set full of exuberance, hope, optimism, and even a bit of sensual romance. . . . by far, the best indie contemporary jazz set of 2017!" —**Jonathan Widran, music journalist**

"Charley Langer wears melodies like second skins. So adept is Charley at keeping you engaged in the most sublime way that you forget why you were stressed . . . . The soaring, clean and honest production (via Nils) allows Charley's sax to tell stories. And they all sound as though they have happy endings." —**Trish Hennessey, Hybrid Jazz Radio**

“Charley Langer has nailed it with his latest release *Happy Hour* . . . . the album grabbed me from the first notes and wouldn't let go, demanding that I pay attention to its sassiness. Definitely one to watch!” —**Ronald Jackson, *The Smooth Jazz Ride***

“An exciting selection of great tunes from Charley and a top selection of supporting musicians. Initial favorites include "That Certain Feeling" and "Big Sur," but the whole album hits the spot! An exciting addition to the playlist and highly recommended!” —**Richard Edwards, *SmoothGrooves Radio UK***

**Available now on iTunes, Amazon, and CDBaby**