

# JAZZ TRUMPETER DUKE HEITGER

Trumpeter Duke Heitger came to New Orleans in 1991 to join Jacques Gauthé's Creole Rice Jazz Band and since that time he has become one of the most sought after players on the international scene, performing and recording around the world with a diverse roster of musicians.



Hailing from Toledo, Ohio, Heitger carries on a family tradition in the music business. As a youngster he became fascinated with the sounds embedded in the grooves of his dad's record collection, discs by Louis Armstrong, Bunny Berrigan, Roy Eldridge, Red Allen, Bobby Hackett, and Bix Beiderbecke. Rather than rebel against that music, he would sit in with his father's Cake Walkin' Jass Band, a Toledo institution that had played a weekly engagement at Tony Packo's Restaurant from 1968 to March 2001. Duke started playing professional jobs at age twelve and was touring while still in his teens. His travels broadened as he played jazz festivals across the country with his father's band.

Since arriving in New Orleans, Heitger has received international exposure leading to work with bands led by such classic jazz stalwarts as Dan Barrett, Engelbert Wrobel (Germany), Marty Gros, Dick Hyman, John Gill and Banu Gibson. He has made a number of guest appearances on Garrison Keillor's "A Prairie Home Companion" with Butch Thompson, and has been featured numerous times on broadcasts by the Jim Cullum Jazz Band live from the riverwalk in San Antonio, TX.

Heitger has been featured at the Hollywood Bowl, at New York's 92nd St. Y, Lincoln Center's "Midsummer's Night Swing" series, and Orchestra Hall in Minneapolis, MN. Internationally, he has toured Europe extensively either as a bandleader or as a guest soloist with regular appearances at the Edinburgh Jazz Festival, Nairn International Jazz Festival, and the Ascona Jazz Festival. This summer he played the Caesarea Jazz Festival in Israel as a member of the Statesmen of Jazz which also included Warren Vache, John Allred, Howard Alden and Ken Peplowski.

While not on the road, Heitger maintains a busy schedule in New Orleans, leading his own Steamboat Stompers aboard the Natchez Paddlewheeler daily, a weekly appearance at the Palm Court Jazz Cafe, as well as a heavy dose of spot work.

As a sideman Heitger has recorded widely. While well known among jazz enthusiasts through those many recordings, he also made his mark on popular music with his trumpet work on the Squirrel Nut Zippers million selling disc *Hot*, earning him a platinum record.

Heitger has recorded six compact discs under his own name. The first featuring his *Steamboat Stompers* was recorded for GHB Records; the second, a critically acclaimed Fantasy release *Rhythm is our Business*, features his Swing Band; the Stomp Off release *Prince of Wails* finds Heitger leading a quartet; the 2003 recording *Krazy Kapers* is on Jazzology, and the newest Jazzology release, *What is This Thing Called Love*, is now available. Hot off the presses is Heitger's debut on Arbors records, a collaboration with German piano maestro Bernd Lhotzky titled *Doing the Voom Voom*.

In March of 2000, Singapore's Lindy Hop Ensemble premiered "New Heights," a dance item performed to the music of Duke Heitger.

When not playing, Heitger managed to squeeze in a Bachelor's Degree in Geology and is finishing his Masters at the University of New Orleans.