

MADS TOLLING



Mads Tolling, internationally renowned violinist, violist, and composer, is a two time Grammy Award-Winner with the Turtle Island Quartet. As violist with the quartet, 2003-2007 and now as first violinist, 2007-present, Mads maintains an active touring and recording schedule as well as composing and giving master classes. As a soloist, he regularly tours as jazz violinist with the acclaimed bassist Stanley Clarke and his touring band. In 06 and 08 as part of Turtle Island Quartet, Mads won two Grammy Awards for Best Classical Crossover album with the recordings "4+Four" and "A Love Supreme - The Legacy of John Coltrane." Tolling has received Denmark's Sankt Annae's Award for Musical Excellence as well as grants from

Queen Margaret, the Sonning Foundation and the Berklee Elvin Jones Award. He has performed with Paquito d'Rivera, Kenny Barron, Joe Lovano, Stefon Harris, Sergio & Odair Assad, Leo Kottke and Russell Ferrante.

Mads grew up in Copenhagen, Denmark and moved to the U.S. at the age of 20 to pursue jazz studies. He studied under violinist Matt Glaser, and he graduated Summa Cum Laude from Berklee College of Music in Boston in 2003. While still attending Berklee, the renowned jazz violinist Jean-Luc Ponty recommended Mads to join Stanley Clarke's band. Since then, he has performed more than 100 concerts with Clarke worldwide, including the Newport Jazz Festival and the Hollywood Bowl.

In 2007, Mads Tolling started his own trio and immediately recorded the album "Speed of Light" (2008). The following year, the trio expanded to a quartet and added a drummer. In it are some of the top Bay Area musicians, including Mike Abraham on guitar, George Ban-Weiss on bass and Eric Garland on drums. Mads Tolling Quartet has performed all over the San Francisco Bay Area and the West Coast and will tour nationally and internationally in 09 and 10.

Besides his activities as a performer, Mads Tolling is an accomplished composer. The "Speed of Light" release mainly features Mads' original compositions, in addition to well known pieces such as Led Zeppelin's "Black Dog" and Miles Davis' "Blue in Green." Of his three prior recordings of original material, one features the legendary pianist JoAnne Brackeen. Mads is an integral part of Stanley Clarke's album "Toys of Men" (2007), appears on R&B singer Teena Marie's recording "La Dona" (2004) and on jazz vocalist Ann Hampton Callaway's "At Last" (2009). He has additionally contributed numerous arrangements and compositions to Turtle Island Quartet's repertoire.

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Mads has been a thriving force in the educational aspects of jazz and improvisation. He has been active as a Yamaha clinician and has been involved in workshops, coaching and master classes throughout Canada and the U.S. He was recently invited as a performer and clinician to the 34th International Viola Congress in Montreal, Canada. Mads was also featured on NPR's Performance Today on Christmas Eve, where he on solo viola performed his version of the carol, "Beautiful Savior."

In his spare time Mads enjoys golfing, tennis and hiking. In 1999, together with his father, he climbed Mt. Kilimanjaro in Tanzania.

Mads' sophomore project "The Playmaker" will be released under his newly formed label Madsman Records. Street Date: October 20, 2009.

"Mads has the amazing talent and skills that few young musicians can match. His music is both beautiful and refreshing exhibiting his superb mastery of the modern American Jazz music that is rarely seen among his peers."

-Jean-Luc Ponty

"Mads Tolling is the most exciting musician I have come across in the past ten years. This recording represents some of the most creative music making out there."

-Stanley Clarke

"Mr. Tolling is a virtuoso who doesn't abandon his listeners. "Speed Of Light", with sophistication and maturity doesn't abandon accessibility. This is fascinating, hooky and satisfying music and Mads takes it beyond the academy and back to the ear."

-Leo Kottke