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Saxophonist Mark 'Kaz' Kazanoff is well known to blues, rhythm-and-blues, and jazz fans around the world. Kaz has contributed horn arrangements, saxophone and harmonica solos, and original songs to more than 130 record albums over the last 25 years, as well as producing many CD's, but he still thinks of himself as a live musician! Albums Kaz has played on and produced have been nominated for and won Grammy and W.C. Handy Awards.

Born and raised in New England, Kaz went to University of Chicago in 1967. While living in Chicago, he befriended and played harmonica with many of the Windy Cities' best known blues artists, learning as he went along from the masters. He was a regular at Teresa's, Pepper's Lounge, the 1815 club, the L. and A. lounge, and many other great Chicago blues establishments. He got to hear and play with Magic Sam, Little Walter, Big Walter Horton, Louis Myers, Junior Wells, Howlin' Wolf, Otis Rush, and many other great players in the thriving Chicago blues scene.

After returning to Boston in the early 70's Kaz began playing saxophone, and teamed up with Johnny Nicholas to form the Rhythm Rockers, one of the mainstay young blues bands in New

England throughout the 1970's. Rhythm Rockers' alumni also included Ronnie Earl, David Maxwell, and Sarah Brown. While in Boston, Kaz worked with Muddy Waters alumnus Luther Johnson, in a band that also featured Bob Margolin on guitar. Kaz also played with Geoff Muldaur, Sugar Ray and the Bluetones, and T-Blade and the Fabulous Esquires, a wild band that featured current record execs Steve Berkowitz (Sony) and Richard Rosenblatt (Tone-Cool).

In 1982, Kaz was invited to come to Austin, Texas, to work with Marcia Ball, playing saxophones in her band for almost 3 years. This was the beginning of a long and fruitful association with Marcia that continues to this day.

When Kaz was not on the road with Marcia Ball, he worked regularly at Antone's nightclub in Austin, Texas, gradually becoming a regular member of the Antones' house-band. As part of this versatile and world re-knowned band, Kaz got to know and perform with an amazing number of blues and rhythm-and-blues artists. While with the Antone's house band, Kaz recorded a number of fine records with the Antone's Record label, including work with Angela Strehli, Otis Rush, Buddy Guy, Albert Collins, Marcia Ball, Lou Ann Barton, Memphis Slim, Doug Sahm, Lavelle White, Pinetop Perkins, and James Cotton. Kaz also produced his first CD during this time, for Antones records, with Chicago guitar great Luther Tucker. The Antone's house band also toured regularly with many of these same artists, as part of the Antone's Blues Revue.

While working with Marcia Ball, who traveled and played often in New Orleans, Kaz became friends with Hammond and Naumann Scott. These Louisiana brothers were just starting a blues and R&B label in the early 80's, and Kaz soon began to make records for their label, Blacktop Records. Kaz quickly became their in-house arranger and horn section leader. Throughout the 80's and 90's, Kaz recorded dozens of fine albums and CD's with the Scott brothers and Blacktop, including award-winning work with Anson Funderburgh and Sam Myers, Earl King, Snooks Eaglin, Mike Morgan, Hubert Sumlin, Ronnie Earl, Maria Muldaur, Solomon Burke, and many others.

For the last five years, as a tribute to the high quality of his live and studio performances, Kaz himself has been nominated each year for a W. C. Handy award in the Blues Performance Instrumental Categories. Delbert McClinton's excellent CD "Live From Austin" featured Kaz' sax work, and won a Grammy as Best Blues Album. Kaz co-produced, performed on, and arranged W.C. Clark's acclaimed "Texas Soul" CD, which won the W.C. Handy award in 1997 as Best Soul/Blues album. Other recent production credits include Marcia Ball ("Let Me Play With Your Poodle" for Rounder Records), Pat Boyack ("Super Blue and Funky" for Rounder Records), Bob Margolin ("Hold Me To It" for Blind Pig Records), and Long John Hunter. Kaz played on and arranged the horns

for "The Lone Star Shootout" Alligator CD (1999), featuring Lonnie Brooks, Philip Walker, and Long John Hunter.

In 2001, Kaz recorded with Marcia Ball and Double Trouble, among others. Marcia Ball' s 2001 Alligator CD "Presumed Innocent", which featured arrangements and a horn section led by Kaz, won several W.C. Handy Awards in 2002, including Best Album. Kaz produced, performed and arranged W.C. Clark' s critically acclaimed 2002 CD, "From Austin With Soul", also for Alligator Records.

The movie "The Client" featured Kaz' song,"She Said" (from The Tri-Sax-Ual Soul Champs Blacktop CD). Other songs of his have been used in TV shows such as "The Big Easy", and international TV commercials (American Express). Kaz can be seen and heard on music TV shows such as Austin City Limits, Bravo 'Up Close and Personal', and Lonesome Pines Special, performing with artists like Marcia Ball, Irma Thomas, Tracy Nelson, Angela Strehli, Albert Collins, Colin James, and Delbert McClinton. Kaz has performed often at major international music festivals such as the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage, North Sea Jazz, and Monterrey Jazz Festivals, Chicago Blues Festival, Ottawa Blues Festival, and San Francisco Blues Festival.

Kaz has led a local jazz/blues group, The Kaz Jazz Quartet, for years in the Austin area, playing club dates, festivals and parties since 1985.

In 1998, Kaz received his DMA Doctoral Degree in Jazz Composition from the University of Texas at Austin. He has been teaching privately for years, and presently teaches music at St. Stephen' s Episcopal High School in Austin. Kaz continues to record and play professionally around the world.