

# THE ZEKE MARTIN PROJECT

the funkier side of jazz



Drummer Zeke Martin has been playing music virtually all of his life. In fact, one can say that he was born to play the drums because he is the son of the late great drummer Stu Martin. When he was just 12, he started his career at the top, playing with legendary jazz saxophonist Steve Lacy and has worked with a wide variety of rock and jazz groups since the age of 16.



During his school years, he received the Pasquale and Mary Reale Music Award and performed the percussion solo at his High School graduation. In the mid-90s, the Belgian born, Paris raised Zeke moved to Boston, then New York, where he began working with The Ed Jones Quartet which evolved into an ensemble called Groove 2 This which spurred Zeke to launch his own progressive funk-jazz outfit called The Zeke Martin Project (ZMP). Over the years, ZMP has been a rising jazz group that features Zeke on drums, and various players and guest recording artists, but with the ultimate key players becoming bassist Rozhan Razman, keyboardist Yusaku Yoshimura and electric guitarist Wan Gigi.

The band made its recording debut with *Landscapes* in 2001, and then released the appropriately titled *Funky Stuff* in 2006 and *U4RIA* in 2009, which won the New England Urban Music Award for Best Jazz CD. Also in 2009, the group did its first tour of Razman's homeland Malaysia, which is where they first hooked up with guitarist Wan Gigi which would take ZMP to a whole new, harder edged musical level on their latest CD, *Four*. Also, Yusaku's use of retro keyboard sounds, from the Fender Rhodes to the Hammond B-3, is another driving force that gives their sound its uniqueness.



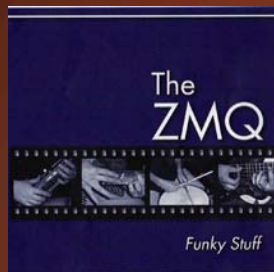
# THE ZEKE MARTIN PROJECT

## MUSIC

The Zeke Martin Project's newest CD, **Four**, kicks off with a hard swinging, super-funky Hammond B-3 organ driven jam reworking of "It Ain't You," which Zeke originally recorded on his 2001 debut CD *Landscapes*. While the driving force of the track is Yusaku Yoshimura's powerful interaction with Zeke's drum groove, Wan Gigi's fiery electric guitar solo is a highlight. The emotional centerpiece of the new album is "Song For Eugenia," a cover of a tune penned by Stu Martin, Zeke's father, where he pays special homage by combining his own drum solo with the one his father did on the original recording—an instrumental jazz equivalent of the iconic Natalie/Nat "King" Cole vocal duet on "Unforgettable" and is a laid back, soulful meditation featuring a colorful synth melody of spacey sounds that recall classic 70s jazz fusion. "I only knew my dad for seven years before he passed away, and during that time I think we played together a total of ten minutes." Through the



wonderful world of Pro Tools, we were able to combine these two drum solos and create something magical. Rozhan is the album's producer and it was originally his idea. We actually did two takes of it, and after the first one I almost broke into tears. Rozhan thought that was the best one. The way it's mixed, my dad is on the left and I'm on the right." "What You Gonna Say" is funky, aggressive rock-jazz fusion, with a potent bluesy B-3 melody and a throbbing bass-drum groove that will knock anyone out of bed. The moody, melancholy "Say Something at 6 am" keeps the old school soul-jazz vibe flowing, this time with Yoshimura creating the retro sound via the Fender Rhodes. True to the Japanese roots of its title, "Tusutsu Motase" (translation "A Badger Game"), is another moody, Rhodes-centered piece, with the muted key sounds floating over a hypnotic bass line and easy shuffling percussion. "Yearning," written by Ray Archie launches with an extended rumbling drum solo and African percussion before evolving into a dreamy, Rhodes flavored soul-jazz affair. *Four* wraps with "Know Time," a spirited jazz explosion featuring a dancing keyboard melody. The elegance of Yoshimura's keys on the melody gives way to a fiery improvisational whirlwind on the solo.



## ON STAGE

Over the past two years, *The Zeke Martin Project* has done two international tours, performing numerous dates in Malaysia and the island of Langkawi. Martin has averaged 120-150 dates annually in the U.S. for a number of years, performing throughout New England, with numerous dates in Boston and New York as well as performing in New Mexico in Santa Fe and the North Fourth Theatre in Albuquerque. They have also opened shows for such performers as The Neville Brothers, Funk Brothers, Ali-Ollie Woodson and Regina Belle.

## NOTABLE LIVE PERFORMANCES

Nero Fico - *Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia*  
Groove Junction - *Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia*  
Back Yard - *Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia*  
Gallery in France - *Paris, France*  
North Fourth Theater - *Albuquerque, NM*  
El Farol - *Santa Fe, NM*  
The New England Urban Music Awards - *Boston, MA*  
Steppin' Out Gala - *Boston, MA*  
Sweet Rhythm - *New York, NY (U4RIA CD release Party)*  
The Precinct - *Boston, MA (U4RIA CD release Party)*  
Minton's Playhouse - *New York, NY*  
Beantown Jazz Festival - *Boston, MA*  
Northeastern University - *Boston, MA*  
Berklee Performance Center - *Boston, MA*  
Lowell Summer Music Series - *Lowell, MA*  
Earth Day at City Hall Plaza - *Boston, MA*  
Slades - *Boston, MA*  
Darryl's Bistro - *Boston, MA*  
Ryles Jazz Club - *Cambridge, MA*  
Boston Tremont Temple - *Boston, MA*



# THE ZEKE MARTIN PROJECT

## REVIEWS

"The Zeke Martin Project's fantastic **Four** is old school funky soul-jazz the way it should be played: freewheeling and explosive in its power at certain times, and subtly hypnotic and sweetly soulful at others. Working with longtime cohorts Yusaku Yoshimura and Roshan Razman and joined for the first time by high-energy electric guitarist Wan Gigi, the drummer takes his exhilarating hybrid funk-jazz vibe to a higher level than ever before. The diversity is remarkable both rhythmically and melodically, with Zeke ranging from shuffle grooves to African percussion and Yoshimura running the tonal gamut from spacey synth to Hammond B-3 organ to Fender Rhodes. Adding emotional heft and great grace to the seven track set is Zeke's drum solo "duet" on "Song For Eugenia", with his late father Stu, whose jazz legacy continues to be in great, capable and very creative hands." — *Jonathan Widran, All Music Guide, Jazziz*

"There's no one finer at holding down the bottom line than Boston drummer Zeke Martin, and you'll find no groovier and funkier instrumental CD this year than the Zeke Martin Project's **Four**. If Rhodes runs springy guitar work (from Wan Gigi) and in-the-pocket tunes are your thing, you have to get your hands on this album. Creed Taylor would be proud of this gig. Everything gets thrown into the mix on "It Ain't You", "What You Gonna Say" and "Song for Eugenia", three dynamite tracks with plenty of stretching out from band members, especially from Yusaku Yoshimura's organ on "Song For Eugenia", a track written by Martin's late father, the jazz drummer Stu Martin. But not all's up-tempo, as I hereby vote "Say Something at 6 am" as cool jam of the year. While Martin's staccato drums and Rozhan Razman's bass keeps the groove anchored, Yoshimura's suave organ floats above it all in a gentle, swaying motion. "Tusutsu Motase" is the most traditional jazz tune, a swinging number with acoustic piano. "Know Time" has a seventies feel which swings happily. "Four" shows a tight ensemble at its best, and can't be recommended enough for fans of funky, tight and exhilarating jazz." — *Brian Soergel, JazzTimes*



“The musicianship on **Four**, which gained its name by being the Zeke Martin Project's fourth recording, is excellent and even while the music grooves, it is creative in subtle ways. Throughout **Four**, while the individual solos are impressive, it is the group sound and the spirit of the ensemble that is most memorable. The Zeke Martin Project is in prime form on **Four**, a set that is easily recommended to those who love the funkier side of jazz.”

— *Scott Yanow, Jazz Author and Journalist*

”



# THE ZEKE MARTIN PROJECT



## FROM THE BEGINING

Zeke's father, Stu Martin was a legendary jazz drummer who passed away in 1980 when Zeke was only seven, but his legacy endures through Zeke's own successful career as a drummer and bandleader. The elder Martin launched his career in the mid-50s and his résumé ultimately included Slide Hampton, Maynard Ferguson, Donald Byrd, Lee Konitz, Art Farmer, Jean-Luc Ponty, Dexter Gordon, John McLaughline and Charles Mingus. Zeke's godparents Jack DeJohnette and Barry Altschul are also two of his greatest influences.

Born in Brussels in 1973 to American parents, he made his musical debut in France with soprano sax great Steve Lacy at age 12 and later moved with his family to Cambridge, Massachusetts, where he attended Cambridge Rindge and Latin High School; there, he developed his drumming technique in the jazz and percussion ensembles, band and via other musical outlets. He received the Pasquale and Mary Reale Music Award and performed the percussion solo at the CRLS graduation. At 16, he joined the rock band Small Town No Airport, which performed throughout New England and released a locally released self-titled CD. He later moved to Manhattan and joined a world music group led by Jeremy Lodeon before moving back to Boston to work with The Ed Jones Quartet.

Zeke's talent has not gone unnoticed, as he has been reviewed in Drum Magazine, LA Jazz Scene and Jazz Times Magazine. He has also received endorsement deals with Creation Drums, Evans Drumheads, Murat Diril Cymbals, Mono Cases and Vic Firth Drum Sticks and he is committed to sharing his passion and love for music. Zeke continues to serve as a drum coach and instructor for students in the greater New England area including teaching at the Music and Arts Center in Newton and Milford and Northeastern University.

## Contact

For info check out:  
[zeke@zekemartin.com](mailto:zeke@zekemartin.com)  
917-684-5512  
[www.zekemartin.com](http://www.zekemartin.com)  
[www.youtube.com/zekemartinproject](http://www.youtube.com/zekemartinproject)

