

Antonio Hart

Antonio Hart was born September 30, 1968, in Baltimore, Maryland. He wasn't always interested in jazz, admittedly, "I really didn't get into jazz until I was 17 or 18. I wasn't really into it until just before I went off to college. I was studying classical music." After graduating from the Baltimore School of Arts, he migrated north to the prestigious Berklee School of Music. Upon graduation, he made his way to New York, joining forces with friends and classmate Roy Hargrove. In 1991, Hart made his own aptly-titled debut-recording *For The First Time* on which critics praised him for his "fresh and meticulous" approach.

Incredibly, while touring with Hargrove, he earned a masters degree in performance and composition at Queens College under the tutelage of Jimmy Heath. He also released his second album *Don't You Know I Care*, dedicated to the late be-bop magnate Dizzy Gillespie.

Antonio Hart's third album *For Cannonball And Woody* marks the release of an ambitious as well as impressive project. Not only has Hart recorded alto-saxophonist Julian "Cannonball" Adderley and trumpeter Woody Shaw's most influential works, but he also dedicated two original pieces to them.

Such an undertaking isn't for the faint of heart. It requires an individual with keen music sensibilities, polished technical form and a dedicated wantonness to preserve the tradition of jazz - all of which saxophonist Hart possess. With the release of this album, Hart has made the transition from "young lion" sideman to accomplished performer, composer, arranger and bandleader.

"The music of Cannonball and Woody has had a great influence on me," Hart says. "Both were great innovators on their respective instruments. Woody took the trumpet to the next level with his harmonic approach to music, as well as his advanced compositions. Cannonball was always open to trying different things, not restricting himself to the traditional rhythms and progressions."

Now that Hart has two degrees in music, a working band and three albums under his belt, one might think he would rest on his laurels. Quite the contrary - his appetite for academia has only been teased. "I would like to go to Columbia [University] to get my doctorate," Hart says. "I really want to learn as much as I can about music. I know this will aid me in my quest to become a better player and composer."