



**In Demand Piano Veteran John Beasley  
Bows Second All-Star Release On Resonance Records  
*Positootly!***

**Follows His Acclaimed 2008 Release *Letter To Herbie***

*"To my ears, he's absolutely one of the best of his generation"* - Bennie Maupin

Veteran pianist-composer-arranger John Beasley gained invaluable bandstand experience on the road with such revered jazz elders as Freddie Hubbard and Miles Davis while also recording with the likes of Chick Corea, Hubert Laws and Dianne Reeves along with serving as musical director for Queen Latifah and Steely Dan. In recent years, Beasley has made impressive strides as a bandleader in his own right. On *Positootly!*, his eagerly anticipated follow-up to 2008's acclaimed *Letter to Herbie* (Beasley's impressionistic take on the music of Herbie Hancock), the Louisiana native showcases his own engaging compositions along with a few choice covers.

Joining Beasley on his second outing for Resonance Records are drummer Jeff "Tain" Watts, bassist James Genus, percussionist Munyungo Jackson, Grammy-winning trumpeter Brian Lynch and saxophonist Bennie Maupin (a charter member of Hancock's Mwandishi Sextet and Headhunters).

A prolific film/tv session player and composer (for *Star Trek*, *Cheers*, *Family Ties* and *Fame* as well as such Hollywood box office hits as *WALL-E*, *Finding Nemo*, *Erin Brockovich*, *Godfather III*, *A Bug's Life* and *Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me*), Beasley was also associate musical director for season four of *American Idol* (the year that produced country music sensation Carrie Underwood) and has been lead arranger season after season. He returns to his passion composing jazz music, which is heard on the eminently swinging *Positootly!*

*"Letter to Herbie* was more about arranging," he explains. "I had fun mashing up Herbie's songs. In fact, when I was 13 years old, before I really got into playing the piano, I was writing and arranging. I wanted to be like Thad Jones and Quincy Jones, writing, arranging, producing and playing jazz, funk and pop for records TV and films. For this recording I really wanted to showcase my writing."

*Positootly!* opens with Beasley's driving, hard boppish "Caddo Bayou," an energized quintet number named for the marshy body of water where he played as a child. The title track, a buoyantly swinging, highly interactive trio number, features some of Beasley's most lyrical and uplifting piano playing on the album.

From the spirited 5/4 rendering of Jobim's "Dindi" to the intensity of "Black Thunder" on which Beasley channels the spirit of the late, great drummer Elvin Jones, the pianist's stylistic diversity and deft arranging skills show why he is in demand across musical styles in today's hippest recording sessions.

An authentic Louisiana spirit comes out in full force on Beasley's infectiously funky "Shatita Boom Boom (Club Desire)," named for a social club in New Orleans' Ninth Ward that was devastated by Hurricane Katrina. Beasley's stunning recreation of "Tanguedia III" by the Argentine tango master Astor Piazzolla represents one tour-de-force on the album.

There is the soulful original ballad “Elle,” a kind of gospel-blues quartet number as well as an inspired updating of Bobby Timmons’ soul-jazz anthem “So Tired” which is handled with a modernist sensibility that deftly straddles the worlds of funk and swing.

“The Eight Winds” is Beasley’s other compositional tour-de-force on *Positootly!* A challenging, suite-like piece, it traverses different tempos and moods, from a bebopish opening theme to an odd-time Afro-Cuban motif to a burning, Max Roach-ish double time feel.

The collection closes on an introspective note with the solo piano piece “Hope...Arkansas,” Beasley’s personal reflection on the election of President Barack Obama. This song is about what we’ve been through as a nation – reaching across the aisles -- and the hope that we must carry to move forward.”

That rich expression, which taps into Beasley’s own past while projecting an optimistic future, culminates what is easily his most potent and personal recording to date.

JOHN BEASLEY – *POSITOOTLY!*  
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