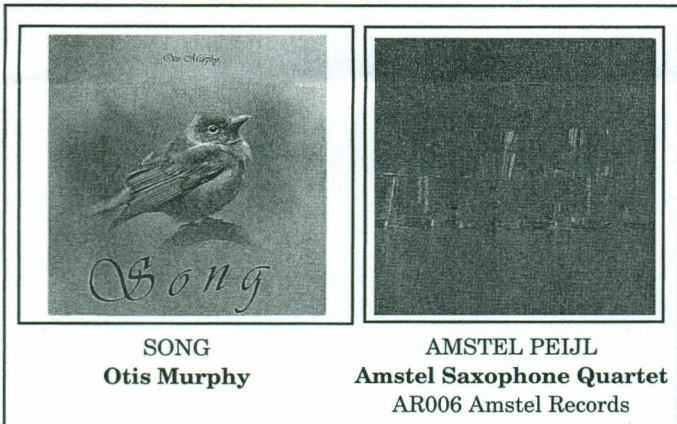
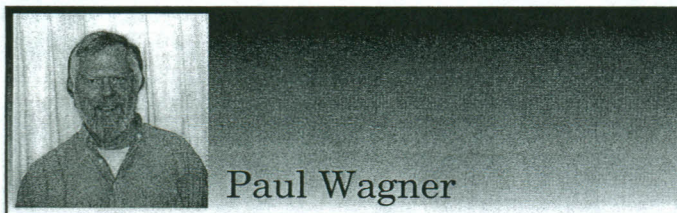




# Recommended Recordings



SONG  
Otis Murphy

<http://amiestreet.com/music/otis-murphy/song/>  
<http://itunes.apple.com/us/album/song/id338041103>

Otis Murphy is an artist who can make the saxophone sing from the heart and this he does on his latest CD, *Song*. This is the second appearance of this artist in the recommended recordings pages of *Saxophone Journal*, his first appearance was with a wonderful CD titled *Fantasy*.

Otis Murphy joined the faculty of the Indiana University, Jacobs School of Music at the age of 28 becoming one of the youngest faculty members in the school's history. He studied in France under a Fulbright Fellowship for foreign study at the Conservatoire National Régional de Musique in Cergy-Pontoise, earning the *Prix de Perfectionnement* by a unanimous decision. He holds Doctor of Music and Master of Music from the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music graduating with the Performer's Certificate, the highest honor given to a performer at this institution. He received his Bachelor of Music Education, Magna Cum Laude, from the University of Georgia. His Saxophone teachers include Jean-Yves Fourmeau, Eugene Rousseau, and Kenneth Fischer. He has won many awards including the Saint Louis Symphony Young Artist Competition, the Heida Hermanns International Woodwind Competition, the Adolphe Sax International Saxophone Competition and the Jean-Marie Londeix International Saxophone Competition. As a soloist and clinician he has appeared in Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Japan, Singapore, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, Taiwan, and the United States. He has appeared in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> World Saxophone Congresses. Recently he was awarded the S & R Foundation's 2008 Washington Award and its special Ambassador Award in Recognition of his contributions to

Japanese and American cultural understanding.

Otis Murphy's tone is superb, warm, supple, and intense. His technique is precise and rapid. He has the ability to phrase the music so that it takes on a life of its own, making the notes weave into musical stories that enliven the listener's imagination. Every piece of music he plays comes off sounding completely without struggle, no matter the difficulty of the piece.

In a chamber setting he is most delicate, and in the concert hall with a large orchestra Otis Murphy is larger than life, filled with bristled excitement.

On this CD Otis Murphy is joined by the renowned Indiana University Wind Ensemble, the premier concert band of the Jacobs School of Music. The first and third compositions are conducted by Stephen Pratt. He is Professor of Music and Director of Bands at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music. The Conductor for the second piece is Ray Cramer. He was a member of the Indiana University School of music from the fall of 1969 through May 2005. Under his leadership the Indiana University Wind Ensemble earned an international reputation for outstanding musical performances. The Wind Ensemble is an excellent ensemble and performs extremely well under either Conductor.

The First selection is *Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Band* by Paul Creston. Creston composed five pieces for the saxophone and three of them were for Cecil Leeson, which were *Opus 6* (a suite for alto sax and piano), *Sonata Opus 19*, *Rhapsodie for Alto Saxophone and Organ, Opus 108.*, and the *Concerto* on this CD. He also wrote a *Suite for Saxophone Quartet Opus 111* for Jean-Marie Londeix.

The Creston *Concerto* on this CD was composed to be performed with orchestra or wind ensemble. This is a lovely piece and has many musical similarities with his *Sonata*, particularly the second movement which shares much thematic material with the *Sonata*. The ensemble opens in a declamatory manner and the alto responds with a long fluid melodic line.

The second movement is equally beautiful throughout. The third movement is lighter while more fleet in character. Creston's *Concerto* on this CD is a superb performance by everyone involved.

The second selection is *Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Wind Ensemble* by David Maslanka. It is a programmatic piece in five movements with each of the movements having extremely provocative titles. The first movement is titled *Fire in the Earth*, followed by *Bright Window*, *Your Night is Full of Stars*, then *Dear Jesus*, *What Have You Done?*, followed by *Starry Night*, *Not a Quiet Night*, and finally *Mortal, Have You Seen This*. On Maslanka's *Concerto* there is a marvelous interaction between the saxophone soloist, conductor, and ensemble. The music paints aural images allowing a listener's imagination to swirl away with the music.

The final selection is *Tosca Fantasy* by Giacomo Puccini, arranged for alto and wind ensemble by Ralph Hermann. Puccini's lovely melodies remain true to the composer's intent except in this case they are sung by the alto saxophone rather than the vocalists.

*Song* a beautiful CD with that reflects a high degree of excellence to all involved in its production. Special kudos go to our saxophone soloist Otis Murphy for the beautiful performance given to all of us on this CD titled *Song*. §