

Snaggle defies genre boundaries to make 21st century jazz

Terry Pender

Waterloo Region Record | Oct 05, 2016

KITCHENER — The sounds of Snarky Puppy mixed with late-career Miles Davis will be heard Friday night at the Boathouse when the Toronto-based jazz-fusion sensation Snaggle takes to the stage.

"We try and create this genre blurring sound taking influences from funk, from R&B, from metal, there is a little bit of classical music in there, and interpret it within a jazz context, in the jazz background and training that all the members have," bandleader Nick Maclean says in an interview.

The Saturday show is also a CD launch party for the band's second recording, "The Long Slog," which was released earlier this month on the Browntasaurus Records. You can check it out at www.snagglemusic.com.

"We've often been described as Canada's answer to Snarky Puppy, and sometimes we use the analogy of electric era Miles meets Rage Against the Machine," Maclean says.

This music is a joyous, raucous and danceable. It is not from the sit-in-your-chair-and-listen school of jazz. Snaggle was formed in Maclean's final year in the jazz program at Humber College.

With the release of "The Long Slog" just three years after graduating, Maclean has led the band into new, sonic territory. With straight-ahead roots, the tracks soon branch and blossom into a 21st century sound like no other.

"It is absolutely fantastic," Maclean says.

"The Long Slog" was produced by Brownman Ali, and recorded on his label in Toronto. Brownman plays on two tracks. He will be joining Snaggle for the Friday day night show at the Boathouse.

Opening for Snaggle is Ryan Cassidy, a tenor sax player, composer and recording artist based in Kitchener who released his first CD — "At Street Level" — a few months ago. Brownman also plays on that CD, and will play with Cassidy at the Boathouse show as well.

"He (Cassidy) is coming from a similar kind of place — jazz influenced by rock, R&B, soul," Maclean says. "So that is going to be a lot of fun."

Brownman was described by the Village Voice as the best modern jazz trumpet player in Canada. He has played The Jazz Room and the Boathouse before. With a large array of pedals at his feet, Brownman plays an electric trumpet that fuses everything from hip-hop, RB, straight-ahead jazz, electronica and deejay turntables.

For 15 years Brown was in and out of New York City where he studied jazz trumpet under the Grammy-Award winning Randy Brecker. He founded his Toronto-based label to help young musicians bring their new sounds to market, while staying in control of the creative process.

That label and studio are a cauldron of musical creativity, and the fruits will be on stage Friday night at the Boathouse. Maclean met Brown through the Toronto Big Band Chelsea McBride's Socialist Night School.

"I got him to sub in on a Snaggle gig in February 2015 and he really dug the music," Maclean says. "And he said: 'If you guys are making a record I would really like to produce.' And of course, I jumped at that."

Snaggle is: Maclean on keyboards, Graeme Wallace on tenor sax, Max Forster on Trumpet, Michael Murray on guitar, Doug Moore on bass and Tom Grosset on drums.

Friday, Oct. 7th

At The Boathouse, 57 Jubilee Dr. S.

8 p.m. door, 9 p.m. show

\$10 or \$15 with a CD



Fusion band, Snaggle, from left, Mike Murray, Brownman Ali, Doug Moore, Tom Grosset, Nick Maclean, Max Forster and Graeme Wallace.



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