

MO'FONE

"A minimal but mighty romp!" — East Bay Express

BAND BIOGRAPHY

With its surprising and highly combustible line-up of two saxmen and one drummer, the Oakland-based group **MO'FONE** has thrilled audiences with some of the funkier jazz—and jazzier funk—being played today. Powering its way through inventive high-energy original compositions, **MO'FONE** explores the sonic landscape of its unique instrumentation with a relentless adventurousness, creating a huge sound that belies its compact size.

Combining serious musicianship with an infectious sense of fun onstage, **MO'FONE** also manages to groove with abandon while keeping miraculously in balance, as each member of the band pushes his instrument well beyond its role in a more traditional trio. What's more, **MO'FONE** delivers adventurous riffs and grooves, while achieving a sound that's not only accessible, but instantly addictive. Their groovy improvisations and original concept have twice earned them the award for **Best Jazz Group** in the 2008 & 2012 East Bay Express Readers' Poll, and secured them repeated slots at the Monterey, San Francisco and Sonoma Jazz Festivals, in addition to gigs at the Bay Area's premier live music venues. The group was also nominated for Best Funk Band in the 2008 SF Weekly Music Awards.

"I was hooked from the first track," wrote the *Contra Costa Times* of the band's debut disc, *Surf's Up* (Evander Music, 2003). "Mo'Fone proves it's the biggest little band on the scene. On each piece, the trio finds ingenious ways of creating a full, multitextured, hard grooving sound."

A healthy portion of that driving sound comes from the mighty baritone sax and bass clarinet of **JIM PETERSON**, alternating seamlessly between funky bass lines and powerful melodic riffs. A stalwart of the Bay Area scene for more than 20 years, Jim is a veteran of leading bands like Mitch Woods and His Rocket 88s, Indigo Swing, and Motordude Zydeco. Soaring overhead on alto sax, clarinet and flute is **LARRY DE LA CRUZ**, whose own impressive résumé includes stints with Phil Woods, Bobby Hutcherson, the Temptations, Boca do Rio, and Doc Severinsen. Completing the **MO'FONE** magic is drummer **JEREMY STEINKOLER**, "a master of second line syncopation" (*SF Bay Guardian*) whose orchestral approach to percussion drives the trio's turn-on-a-dime dynamics and gives **MO'FONE** its third ceaselessly inventive solo voice.

As AllAboutJazz.com summed up the group's exhilarating and cohesive sound: "This jazz trio is a powerhouse to be reckoned with.... If Mo'Fone doesn't blow your socks off, you're not paying attention."

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