

## ANDY FIRTH FACT SHEET FOR MEDIA. Updated April 2008

**Andy Firth** is one of a very small number of Australian artists to have ever performed a concert under their own name at the famed **Carnegie Hall**.

On the evening of the **21st March 2008**, Andy Firth played a concert in Weill Recital Hall, Carnegie Hall billed as “*Goodman & Beyond*” to a standing ovation. Andy Firth’s guest artist for this special event was living jazz legend and Andy’s jazz clarinet mentor, **Buddy DeFranco**.

An excellent US rhythm section consisting of award winning artists, **Gary Motley** (piano), **Paul Keller** (bass) and **Pete Siers** (drums) supported Andy & Buddy for this “history-making” event.

The concert featured musical tributes to **Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw, Buddy DeFranco, Eddie Daniels** and Australian jazz icon, **Don Burrows**. An afterglow reception party was hosted after the concert for VIPS and invited guests at Jumeirah Essex House overlooking Central Park.

*“Andy Firth is the first clarinettist in 30 years or so, since Eddie Daniels, that I have really paid attention to...what he can do on the clarinet, I consider to be impossible-yes, true! The thing is, Andy doesn’t know this...and I’m not gonna tell him”.*

– Buddy DeFranco (US Living jazz clarinet legend). 21st March, Weill Recital Hall, Carnegie Hall as Andy’s guest artist for Andy’s “Goodman & Beyond” debut concert at Carnegie Hall. New York.

Andy Firth was also honored to accept and perform a concert on March 19th at the Australian Consulate General in New York. Talented Australian jazz pianist **Monique diMattina** (now living in New York) accompanied Andy Firth on this occasion. The concert was described by officials as one of the best and well attended concerts ever given at the Australian Consulate building in New York. Australian Consulate General, The Honorable **John Olsen** gave a heartfelt and informative talk about Andy Firth and his musical achievements and praised Andy Firth for his standards of excellence whilst promoting Australian music in the United States. The Honorable John Olsen and his wife **Julie Olsen** also attended Andy Firth’s debut recital at Carnegie Hall on the 21st March.

Andy Firth then flew to Florida and gave a master class and performance at the University of Florida before heading to Los Angeles to play at the Il Moro club with the wonderful jazz guitarist, **Jim Fox**.

*"You're amongst the very greats Andy! A wonderful success story".*

Alan Jones on 2GB 14th March 2008.

*"Once in a blue moon along comes an artist whose talent, musicianship and expertise is awesome. Such a man is Andy Firth, whose reputation as a brilliant performer is Australia wide and acknowledged internationally as well. He is a sought-after wonderful teacher, a lecturer of "good music" and a fine composer. I am privileged to be associated with him and also call him a friend."*

Maestro Tommy Tycho. AM. MBE

*"I have never heard anything like this guy; he is a one in a million! His musicality and playing is totally unique! Andy Firth is, in my opinion, one of our greatest artists and musicians like him pass this way but once. I am thrilled to have met and heard him perform!"*

Vincent J. Abato (Revered U.S reeds virtuoso & teacher. 14th August 2006, USA.)

Andy Firth has performed with some of the world's finest musicians:

Buddy DeFranco, Ingrid Jensen, Diana Krall, Wynton Marsalis- (associate guest artist) B.B. King- (associate guest artist), Lee Konitz, Gary Motley, Jay Hungerford, Ken Kehner, Joe Berger, Bud Shank, James Moody, Don Lusher, Steve Harlos, Steve Haughton, The Dutch Swing College Band, Kenny Ball and his jazz men and Acker Bilk.

Australian artists include:

Maestro Tommy Tycho, Anthony Warlow, Marina Prior, Julie Anthony, Don Burrows, Tommy Emmanuel, George Golla, James

Muller, Ray Alderidge, Julian Lee, Kevin Hunt, Galapagos Duck, Rolf Harris, Daryl Somers OAM, Tony Gould Trio, Jackie Love, Little Pattie, Bob Barnard, Ian Date, Graeme Bell, Tom Baker, Ed Wilson, Vince Jones, Jonathan Wade, Ian Cooper, Peter Hooper, James Clark, Nic Cecire, Terence Koo, Andrew Wallace, Nick Sinclair, Jamie Jones, Anita Wardel, The Society Syncopators, Myles Collins, Larry Stellar, Rob Guest, Mike Nelson, John Foreman, Jonathan Wade, James & John Morrison and many more. Andy also worked with the late great Ricky May, and Bobby Limb.

Andy Firth has also worked with many of Australia's major symphony orchestras as a jazz and classical soloist where the great Australian **Maestro, Tommy Tycho**, often features him as soloist in his musical arrangements. In April 2006 Andy Firth was honored with an **Australian MO AWARD** for "*Best Jazz Instrumentalist*".

Personal Information: Born in Pt. Augusta (March 1966).

Married in 1995: Liz Prigg - Novacastrian-clarinetist, teacher & Cellist.

Current Residence: Newcastle.

### Musical Background:

\* Took up the clarinet at age 5 after hearing Benny Goodman and Buddy DeFranco. He then decided that being a great jazz clarinetist was what he wanted to do and be one of the best in the World at.

\* Took up the saxophone at 10 years and started working professionally around South Australia by age of 14.

\* Attended The South Australian College of Education in Adelaide and received a Degree in Music (Classical Performance) and later a Diploma of Education (Secondary).

\* Appeared on National Television with Don Burrows and James Morrison at the age of 17 and instantly became recognized as a leading Australian jazz talent.

\* Moved to Sydney in 1987 and worked with James Morrison and Ricky May bands and given a regular spot at the Don Burrows Supper club with the Julian Lee and Later Roger Frampton bands.

\* Andy Firth is now widely recognized as being one of the finest jazz clarinetists in the World and appears at International Clarinet conferences as a guest performer.

\* Andy Firth has been honored with his own clarinet & saxophone book series with music publishing giant Boosey & Hawkes and his books can be found in shops all over the World. Andy has also had a clarinet mouthpiece series named after him by American company Lomax classic. He also enjoys sponsorship and endorsements with Buffet-France, Keilwerth-Germany, Rico-USA, SmartMusic-USA, Lomax Classic-USA, Trevor J James flutes-UK and BG France. Andy continues to tour as a master class & jazz improvisation specialist for The Music Group (formerly Boosey & Hawkes).

\* Andy Firth moved to Newcastle, NSW Australia at the beginning 2003 and is focusing on educating and promoting jazz there. Firth is also conductor and director for his community saxophone big band program, "Sax to the max!" and is passionate about developing and promoting big bands/jazz talent in the Hunter area. Andy Firth is also studying the orchestration techniques of Maestro Tommy Tycho and has just been given his own big band arranging series on UK website lushlifemusic.com. Firth enjoys teaching and gives clarinet and saxophone lessons in the NSW Hunter area to select students.

\* Andy Firth Continues to work with Australian show biz names such as; Maestro Tommy Tycho, Julie Anthony, Anthony Warlow, Rob Guest, Jackie Love, Kevin Hunt trio, Ed Wilson, Rob Guest, Johnny Nicol, George Golla, James & John Morrison, Galapagos Duck, Bob Barnard and Australia's major symphony orchestras.

## International acts that Andy Firth has appeared with:

\* B.B. King and the Phillip Morris Super band, Buddy DeFranco, Ingrid Jensen, Wynton Marsalis, Diana Krall, Don Lusher, Bud Shank, Kenny Ball, Acker Bilk, Dutch Swing College, North Texas One O'clock Lab Band and Lee Konitz.

\* In April 2007, Andy Firth performed a concert with the Montana University big band and with his clarinet idol, Buddy DeFranco as part of the Buddy De Franco Jazz Festival. Buddy DeFranco introduced Andy Firth as "A musical phenomenon" and told a packed theatre that it has been 30 years since a clarinetist has impressed him as much.

\* Andy Firth received rave reviews for his performances in August 2006, during his trip to Atlanta USA to perform as guest artist with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. Firth also gave master classes in jazz improvisation at the conference and received 5 standing ovations during his performance with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. Andy Firth also met up with clarinet giants, Buddy De Franco, Eddie Daniels, Ron Odrich and Vincent "Jimmy" Abato on this trip, all of who praised him for his sensational performances.

\* Andy Firth is as equally at home performing and writing classical music as he is jazz. In 2000 Andy Firth released his World first 16 clarinet big band CD that enjoys regular airplay on ABC FM classical and jazz programming. Firth also composed Treacherous Tango and Tycho, Tycho, Tycho (pron:teeko) for Janet Webb- principal flautist of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra's- recent CD release "Tango & all that jazz".

\* Andy Firth has just finished writing a Cuban Fantasy for flute and piano (for Janet Webb), a series of saxophone books and book of jazz duets for clarinet, (for Boosey & Hawkes) and his "Duo Fantasia Concertante"-for two clarinets & piano. (Dedicated to his wife Liz).

\* Andy Firth was featured with Tommy Tycho's Big Band for the 2005 "Best of Taronga zoo Twilight concerts" series alongside of Jackie Love & Larry Stellar. In 2005 Andy featured as Anthony Warlow's associate artist with the West Australian Symphony Orchestra conducted by Masestro Tommy Tycho for a series of big band concerts.

\* Andy Firth is committed to the ideals and standards of musical excellence set by his mentor, Maestro Tommy Tycho. Firth says that he wants people to feel the joy and energy that he does playing for them.

*"I like people to know that whether it's a big band or small group that I'll do whatever I can to give them a World class show!. I want my name to be associated with musical excellence and mind-blowing performances".*

#### **QUOTES ABOUT ANDY FIRTH:**

Maestro Tommy Tycho has described Andy Firth as,

\*"A genius of the clarinet".

Revered US woodwind legend, Vincent (Jimmy) Abato said of Andy Firth;

*"I have never heard anything like this guy; he is a one in a million! His musicality and playing is totally unique! Andy Firth is, in my opinion, one of our greatest artists and musicians like him pass this way but once. I am thrilled to have met and heard him perform!"*

Kenny Ball said of him,

\*"Andy Firth is perhaps the finest clarinetist that I have ever heard".

\* US Composer and woodwind master Victor Morosco describes Andy as,

"...A virtuoso that goes beyond virtuosity. The joy and

enthusiasm in his playing & teaching reminds us all of why as musicians we wanted to play music in the first place...”

\* Jazz clarinetist Buddy De Franco wrote:

“Andy, congratulations on your superb playing! I only hope that the World will take note of your amazing talent!”.

\* AT the World clarinet summit in Japan, (1991) Andy Firth was introduced by fellow clarinetist John Denman as, “One of the most amazing clarinetist since Benny Goodman. One of the most gifted of all clarinetists.”

\* The great Australian Jazz Icon, Don Burrows said of Andy:  
"Andy sent me a cassette of his playing as a lad in Port Augusta and even at age 17 I knew that this boy was going to be something special. He amazed me then and what he is achieving now I can't find words for!"