

DAVID BENOIT



Biography

By Scott Yanow

One of the more popular performers in the idiom somewhat inaccurately called "contemporary jazz," David Benoit has mostly performed light melodic background music, what critic Alex Henderson was dubbed "new age with a beat." Benoit has done a few fine jazz projects (including a tribute to Bill Evans and a collaboration with Emily Remler) but most of his output for GRP has been aimed clearly at the charts. He studied composition and piano at El Camino College and, in 1975, played on the soundtrack of the film *Nashville*. After recording with Alphonse Mouzon and accompanying singer Gloria Lynne, he was signed to the AVI label when he was 24, recording sets that paved the way toward his later output. In 1986, Benoit signed as a solo artist for GRP, a relationship that would last until 2003. Albums like 1989's "Waiting for Spring" and 1999's "Professional Dreamer" showcase his smooth, lyrical style, while projects like his 2000 tribute to Vince Guaraldi's *Peanuts* scores, "Her's to You, Charlie Brown: 50 Great Years", demonstrate where his own tastes lie. A decade after their first joint venture, Benoit and Russ Freeman collaborated on "Benoit/Freeman Project II", released by the Concord associated label Peak in 2004. For 2005's "Orchestral Stories" he was joined by the Czech National Symphony Orchestra and members of the Asia America Symphony Orchestra.