



**PERRY SMITH – *PEACE***  
**The Guitarist Offers *Peace* Through an Exploration of Timeless Standards**  
**With Sam Minaie (bass) & Dan Schnelle (drums)**

Available April 23, 2021 On Smith Tone Records

"Listening to this recording makes me want to check out Perry Smith's earlier albums. He is excellent . . . With a tight band and their superb playing, 'Live in Brooklyn' is simply outstanding."

- Ron Weinstock, *The Jazz & Blues Report*

"Smith has got that thick, slightly blurred yet nimble, big cushy-chords thing as Burrell . . . He takes sleek bebop flights of fancy and gets mellow with the best of them . . ."

- Mark Keresman, *ICON* (four stars)

"Whether skirting fusion or funk or bursting with modern melody, Smith's compositional style, musical direction and fret boarding hit that sweet spot between classic and experimental, improvisational and fine-tuned melody."

- Denise Sullivan, *DownBeat Magazine*

**For guitarist/composer/bandleader/educator Perry Smith**, standards are an integral part of his life as a musician, accompanying him on the ups and downs of life, providing a landscape for him to explore, and improvise on, from his heart. Smith elaborates, "I had been interested in recording a trio album of standards to really draw the listener in through classic melodies, dynamics and the natural sound of my Gibson ES-175. Using a traditional archtop hollow body, my style of jazz guitar can really work with a sensitive and swinging rhythm section like Schnelle and Minaie. I chose to record a variety of standards that have meant a lot to me over the years, and what I discovered is that as my own life experiences have unfolded, my connection to these songs, and what I have to offer them musically has only gotten deeper. It leaves me with an immense amount of gratitude for these standards."

The genesis of ***Peace*** (available April 23, 2021 on Smith Tone Records) materialized in November of 2019 when Smith found himself on the road with two old friends and great musicians, Los Angeles drummer **Dan Schnelle** and NYC bassist **Sam Minaie**. Musically, and personally, this trio is thick as thieves, having all coming up together in Southern California about two decades ago, and creating music together for many years. The trio recorded the album on a day off in LA. After the initial trio recording Smith returned to LA in February, 2020 to mix the album and record three solo guitar tracks ("A Child Is Born", "I Remember You" and "Alone Together"). "I wanted to close out the album in a more intimate way and provide some contrast to the trio. Solo jazz guitar has always been a big part of my artistic path. I view the guitar as an orchestra and each string a separate voice. Playing solo gives me an opportunity to shape the song exactly as I'm hearing it in the moment. Solo guitar is kind of like walking on a tight rope, if you're centered and in the zone, it feels so natural," says Smith.

The standards of the jazz tradition are a very rich and valued trove of music that can accompany you through joy, lamentation, celebration and sorrow. Whether it's a song by Jimmy Van Heusen or Sam Rivers, these compositions have stood the test of time, and have provided countless generations of listeners and musicians with a foundation on which to build, on which to express oneself; a vast source of solace, entertainment delight, triggering/making memories, serving as the "cornerstone of the jazz repertoire" (Ted Gioia, *The Jazz Standards*), and providing the soundtrack to many of our lives.

"In these trying times where all our lives and careers have been upended by a pandemic, I offer this album as a soothing escape from the daily headlines. We could all use a little more Peace in our lives and I hope this album provides listeners some comfort through these turbulent times," says Smith.

**Peace:**

- 1 - This Nearly Was Mine (5:38) by Richard Rodgers
- 2 - Cyclic Episode (5:57) by Sam Rivers
- 3 - Darn That Dream (6:57) by Jimmy Van Heusen
- 4 - Upper Manhattan Medical Group (3:58) by Billy Strayhorn
- 5 - Like Someone in Love (5:32) by Jimmy Van Heusen
- 6 - Peace (4:28) by Horace Silver
- 7 - A Child is Born (3:00) by Thad Jones
- 8 - I Remember You (3:41) by Victor Schertzinger
- 9 - Alone Together (4:24) by Arthur Schwartz

*Recorded and mixed by Justin Stanley in Los Angeles, CA Mastered by Fred Kevorkian in Brooklyn, NY \*tracks 7,8,9 are solo guitar performances*

**More about Perry Smith:**

Guitarist Perry Smith combines the tradition of Jazz with broad influences from contemporary music to create his signature style. Originally from the San Francisco Bay Area, Smith is now based in Brooklyn where he is an educator and performs as a bandleader and a sideman for local and touring artists. Smith's extensive performance resume includes notable venues and festivals such as the Blue Note Jazz Club (NYC & Tokyo), Smalls Jazz Club (NYC), Dizzy's Club Coca Cola (NYC), Montreal Jazz Festival, Java Jazz Festival (Indonesia), Jazz a la Calle (Uruguay), Rochester Jazz Festival, San Jose Jazz Festival, Yoshi's Jazz Club (Bay Area), The Blue Whale (LA), Philippine International Jazz Festival, The Healdsburg Guitar Festival and SFJazz.

As a bandleader Smith has now released 5 full-length albums with his most recent being **Peace** on Smith Tone Records. As an active player in the NYC jazz scene, Smith hosted a weekly series in Brooklyn called The Soda Session every Wednesday from 2015-2019. Each week he performed with a different group of NYC's finest jazz artists while hosting an open session for NYC's international jazz community. The Soda Session was generously supported by a grant from KeyedUp.org in conjunction with the Jazz Foundation of America. Smith built the session from scratch along with bassist Matt Aronoff. His album *Live in Brooklyn*, featuring saxophonist Melissa Aldana, was captured from one of their final performances hosting the series.

In addition to leading his own projects and working as a sideman, Smith is a founding member of the critically acclaimed New West Guitar Group. Based in Los Angeles featuring guitarists John Storie and Will Brahm, NWGG has been performing internationally since 2005 and they are recognized as one of the premier jazz guitar ensembles in the country. Currently they are hosting a popular podcast series all about guitar called High Action!

In 2005, Smith received his Bachelor of Music degree from the Flora L. Thornton School of Music at the University of Southern California, where he studied jazz guitar legend Joe Diorio. In 2011 he completed his Masters in Music at New York University studying with the great modern jazz guitarist John Scofield and was named the "Outstanding Graduate" for the NYU Jazz Department.

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