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## the JAZZ PROJECT

by Jehn-Keith Fagon



### Crescent Shores •••

*Les Sabler, Big Deal Records*

Sometimes revisiting the past enables us to move forward. That's exactly what contemporary jazz guitarist Les Sabler did on his sixth studio album, *Crescent Shores*, along with the use of a nylon-stringed acoustic guitar for the first time ever. Produced by Mr. Sabler and keyboardist-trumpeter Allon Sams, the genesis of the collection sprang from sessions recorded in 1991 in Richard Elliot's Tampa studio. Mr. Sabler re-did most of the original tracks, composed new songs (including the title track) and selected a few covers for the album.

"Shortly after releasing my first album, my band and I started recording material for what was intended to be my second album," Mr. Sabler said. "We all lived in the Sarasota area and I used to walk around Crescent Beach on Siesta Key. It inspired my songwriting. Some business challenges caused the shelving of the original tapes, but I rediscovered them recently. We transferred the tapes to digital and went back into the studio to finish what we started nineteen years ago. Teaming with Allon, we were able to strike a creative balance

between the old and new recordings resulting in what you hear today on *Crescent Shores*."

*Crescent Shores* fits neatly into a contemporary jazz, R&B and adult pop collection. Three cuts — "Market Street," "Walfredo" and "Peace River Suite" (the latter of which retains an original performance by saxman Richard Elliot) — did indeed appear on Mr. Sabler's second album, *Time For Love*, but they were re-recorded. Also re-recorded were four songs from the 1991 sessions "Crescent Shores," "Island Princess," "Turn Of The Century" and "Sunset Serenade," although some of the original performances were

retained, including rhythm tracks laid down by drummer David "Frankie" Toler and the late bassist Bruce Waibel, both of whom had played with the Gregg Allman Band. Contributing beats to the new recordings were drummer Erik Hargrove (James Brown Band) and percussionist Joe Lala (CSNY, Bee Gees). In addition to delivering agile guitar work that took on adds emotional depth through the use of his acoustic instrument, Mr. Sabler coolly croons breathy lead vocals on "Lonely Girl" and "Mirror Of Your Heart." A version of Sting's "Fragile" appeared on last year's *Les Sabler Live CD*, but appears as a newly recorded studio version on *Crescent Shores*. Another standout on the album is the gorgeous version of Stevie Wonder's ethereal paean "Overjoyed."

*All CDs and DVDS reviewed in this article are heard through Bowers & Wilkens 802D Speakers and ASW 4000 subwoofer, and Rotel Preamp 1070, amplifier 1092 and CD player 1072. CDs are available for purchase through amazon.com For more information about this column, please email your questions to [fagon@hillrag.com](mailto:fagon@hillrag.com). ★*