

Joe Gransden – Band Leader and Trumpet



Band leader Joe Gransden has performed worldwide and released 16 CDs under his own name. Renowned first for the hard bop approach of his trumpet, Gransden's singing voice has been compared to that of Chet Baker and Frank Sinatra.

"When I first heard Joe nine years ago, I immediately thought of Chet," says Jazziz magazine critic James Rozzi, "but lately his voice has taken on its own style with a deeper resonance. His trumpet has always alternated lyricism with an aggressive, angular approach. He has the ability to cover the gamut of emotions."

Joe is from just north of Manhattan, New York. Coming from a family full of musicians, Joe's introduction to music came early on through his father, a gifted singer and pianist. His grandfather

was a trumpeter of merit, playing professionally his whole life throughout New York. On his mother's side of the family was the piano virtuoso, Carmen Cavallero.

"Music has been a part of my life as far back as I can remember," says the unassuming Joe Gransden. "I can remember practicing with my father, and eventually him taking me along to sit in at jam sessions. Early on I developed a respect for individuals like my father whose lives revolved around music. While still in high school, I knew that music was the life I would choose."

Not long after high school, Joe was on the road as a sideman with the big bands of Tommy Dorsey and Glenn Miller. A number of A.F.M. contracted sideman gigs include Barry White, The Moody Blues, Kenny Rogers, The Temptations, Aretha Franklin, The Whispers, etc. Eventually moving to New York City, he performed with numerous groups, including sub work with Toshiko Akiyoshi and Chico O'Farrill at the famous Birdland Jazz Club. Meanwhile, Joe formed his own group, which performed in Brooklyn each week and included the venerable guitarist Joe Cohn and ex-Betty Carter bassist, Matt Hughes. "Having my own group and being fortunate enough to travel, play, and record has been a dream come true," says Joe.

"Exploring the music with a steady group of great players has enabled me to continually grow." Joe Gransden growing legion of fans around the country have obviously taken note. In Atlanta, where Joe plays steadily 5-6 nights a week in as many venues, his loyal following includes an array of people from blue-collar workers to upper crust businessmen and businesswomen who all share a love of good music. Like many developing jazzmen, Gransden's early influences, which include Kenny Dorham and Miles Davis, were easily recognizable in his playing throughout his formative years. "Emulating the jazz greats is always the very first step," says the historically-rooted Gransden. "But obviously, in order to be true to myself—who I am, what I believe in, my family background—I need to have a sound that's my own. It's taken me until recently to hone in on that voice and explore its potential. One of the truly enjoyable things about my career has been finding that my audience appreciates my individual talents."

A widening schedule has found Joe performing the 1st and 3rd Mondays of every month at Café 290 in Atlanta w/his 16 Piece Big Band, The Jazz Corner in Hilton Head, South Carolina, The Blue Note NYC, The Museum of Art and Design in midtown Manhattan, Spivey Hall in Atlanta, Ga and Tehema Golf Club in Carmel, California (where Joe regularly plays events for Clint Eastwood). Joe also just released his brand new Big Band CD entitled "Go Getta"! The title track was written for Joe by Kipper Jones and features saxophone great Kenny G!

Pick your copy up today on Joe's website, ITUNES, CDBABY etc....

Here's what people are saying about Joe:

"Joe is a young man w/an old soul and a classic voice. He is a great new talent, with a wonderful sense of humor to boot. And don't forget, he plays a hell of a trumpet!"

Clint Eastwood, Actor/Director

"I love listening to Joe perform because he has a marvelous connection with the music he plays and sings. His innate understanding of interpreting classics is something that you can't learn, it's natural. He is a great musician!"

Michael Feinstein, Singer/Piano Player

"Joe has an innate ability to connect with an audience. His singing and trumpet playing are world class. Throw in his 16 Piece Big Band and you have something very special!"
Smokey Robinson, Grammy Winning Singer, Song Writer and Producer

"Joe is an extraordinary musician and on top of that, a wonderful person and that ain't no lie! With Joe singin' and the band swingin' It's A Beautiful Thing!"
Freddy Cole, Grammy-nominated singer and vocalist

"Joe, with his talent, smoothness, precision and humor, puts the 'class' in 'classic jazz vocals'. He is sure to ignite a whole new generation of jazz fans."
Dina Eastwood, Actor/Producer

"... Joe Gransden is one of those rare musicians that has it all. He is an incredible instrumentalist with the technique of a virtuoso. His imagination let's him improvise as we'll as anyone on the planet and yet he retains a sense of melody that let's listeners of all musical tastes enjoy his wonderful playing. That should be enough, but for Joe, its just the beginning. Add to this a beautiful singing voice that lets him do all of the above with words!!! As I said, Joe really does have it all.
Kenny G – Grammy-winning saxophonist

"Joe Gransden is one of the most delicious talents working today. In addition to being a gifted musician and vocalist, he doesn't just play AT the event, he IS the event. Sensitive to all moods and capable of elevating the fun quotient, whether performing or leading. Love the guy!"
Elaine Wynn - Wynn Resorts

"My father played the trumpet and I love that sound. It can make me tap my feet or send chills up my spine; one or the other. When Joe plays, it's both!"
Tom Dreesen- Comedian, Frank Sinatra's opening act for 13 years!

Contact Joe: 404-964-7812 JoeGransden@msn.com

Kenny Banks, Sr. - Jazz Pianist

Composer, arranger, and performer who slips effortlessly among musical styles while retaining his own distinct sound. This Columbus Ohio native has been studying and playing since the age of seven. He first developed his gift through the church, which led him to study music at Central State University. Following graduation, Kenny taught vocal music in the Columbus Public Schools before pursuing his dreams by touring as a clinician, keyboardist, musical director and producer across the United States and other parts of the world. Kenny has appeared on **BET** and the **Image Awards**. He has performed at the inauguration and the United Nations Ceremony for **President Barack Obama** and appeared in such notable places as **Carnegie Hall** in New York City and the **Philharmonie** in Berlin. Kenny has also appeared in movie scenes from Tyler Perry's "**The Family That Preys**" and has a composition entitled "Hello Love" on the GMC movie "**Raising Izzie**". Among his many high profile performing credits are appearances with Earl Klugh, Kenny Garrett, Wess Anderson, Russell Gunn, Lizz Wright, Rene Marie, Kevin Mahogany, Kurt Whalum, Albertina Walker, Dorothy Norwood, Jennifer Holiday, Aretha Franklin and the Philadelphia

Orchestra. Kenny received his master's degree in Jazz Studies at Georgia State University. He currently resides in Atlanta with his wife (Angelia) and three children (Kenny Jr., Sydney, and Sasha). Kenny serves as accompanist, music director and chorale director for Cascade United Methodist Church. He occasionally makes appearances at well-known local jazz venues with premiere Atlanta jazz talent and continues to record and travel abroad performing with International recording artist Lizz Wright. The release of "*Truly Free*" is Kenny's first jazz CD but the latest recording of "*Dichotomy*" is as a duo w/ recording artist (trumpet) Joe Gransden.

Neal Starkey - Jazz Bassist

Residing in Atlanta, Georgia, he has had a long and varied career, performing with many of the most notable names in jazz, including Kenny Barron, Eddie Harris, Sonny Stitt, Duke Pearson, Al Cohn, Charlie Rouse, Barney Kessel and many others. He is a regular featured performer at the W. C. Handy Music Festival, and a member of the W. C. Handy Jazz All-Stars. Originally from New York, he has made Atlanta his home for the past 25 years.

Starkey has recorded with Herbie Hancock, Tony Williams and Freddie Hubbard with the CBS Jazz All-Stars, and has served as bass instructor in the jazz program at Georgia State University. He has also had extensive studio recording experience and is one of the most in-demand bassists in the Southeastern region, often working with notable Southeastern regional jazz musicians such as Rick Bell (saxophone), Ken Watters (trumpet), Bill Anschell (piano), Gary Motley (piano) and Ray Reach (piano and vocal).

Neal appeared on an episode of the popular TV show "*In the Heat of the Night*" as bassist for Bobby Short: "*Chez and the Grand Lady*" (1994).