



WWW.FUNKDAWGS.COM

WORLD'S FIRST INTERNET JAZZ FUSION BAND

# THE FUNKDAWGS

**Funkdawgs** (fan'kdaags) n. US slang.

1. A virtual band comprised of talented musicians from planet Earth that have found a common groove and freedom to create in the jazz-funk/fusion scene.
2. Jazz musicians that **collaborate in the virtual realm by sending recorded wave files through cyberspace via the internet** to develop infectious instrumental compositions.
3. Contemporary musicians who feel a heavy jazz-funk vibe, occupy the same creative headspace and spend considerable late hours in home-based recording studios..

**Funkdawgs** produce music exclusively via the internet and record for many musicians, magazines and movie productions around the world. Online band since 2000, has recorded and produced over then 100 tunes.

The **Funkdawgs** are five talented, innovative jazz musicians who have gained years of experience, both in the studio and on stage, and still feel the need to create from their various locations around the globe. The **Funkdawgs** feature guitarist **Bobby Brewer from Philadelphia (U.S.A.)**, drummer **Filippo Bertacche from Vicenza, Italy**; saxophonist **Bob Johnson from Ottawa, Canada**, bassist **Bill Lawrence from Albany, New York**; and keyboardist **Kyle Whitlock from Columbia, South Carolina (U.S.A.)**

Over the past five years the **Funkdawgs** have released three internationally-respected and well-received independent albums, **Borderless, Dawgma**, and **A Dawg's Life**, plus a special Music Minus One company release (**Don't Bite, Jazz fusion unleashed** [www.musicminusone.com](http://www.musicminusone.com)). Also had their first chance to met face-to-face last April 1<sup>st</sup> 2006 in Nashville (U.S.A.) for a concert gig at Gibson Showcase in Opry Mills Drive. That's because the Dawgs all connect, create, contribute and produce their music via the Internet...sending self-recorded WAVE files to each other as their songs are developed.

Their musical influences range from funk to fusion to soul jazz to blues to Latin jazz to acid. It's a heady mixture of rhythms and melodies that breath new energy into today's world jazz scene.

**Funkdawgs** is absolutely first cyber band on the Planet in the jazz fusion scene with all these credits, publications, history and references... many musicians from all around the world keep funkdawgs band as reference for their future music internet projects considering this band as the forerunner of a future music production way (*check out music forums on the web*)...without frontiers, oceans, mountains or deserts for a uniquely way of making music.

## Published CDs:

- **Borderless** (2003) [www.cdbaby.com/funkdawgs](http://www.cdbaby.com/funkdawgs), *Funkdawgs Music*;
- **Dawgma** (2005) [www.cdbaby.com/funkdawgs2](http://www.cdbaby.com/funkdawgs2), *Funkdawgs Music*;
- **Don't Bite, Jazz Fusion Unleashed** (2006) 5 play along CDs [www.musicminusone.com](http://www.musicminusone.com)  
*Funkdawgs Music and Music Minus One Company*;
- **A Dawg's Life** (2006) [www.cdbaby.com/funkdawgs3](http://www.cdbaby.com/funkdawgs3), *Funkdawgs Music*.

## Features:

- **Jazz Player Magazine (2001)**
- **Saxophone Journal (2003,2004,2007)**
- **Bassics Magazine (2005)**
- **CBC Network (Canada national tv) special tv release (2003)**
- **Music Minus One company releases (2006)**
- **Nine by Five TV documentary by Skye Films (2006)**
- **Winner of the netmusicmakers.com virtual band contest of Jeff Tamelier (Tower Of Power; 2007)**
- **Guitar World Magazine CD (June 2007)**

Please visit our official web site for live releases, collaborations, podcast and everything else.

[www.funkdawgs.com](http://www.funkdawgs.com) official funkdawgs web site

<http://feeds.feedburner.com/funkdawgs> official funkdawgs podcast

## The band:

- **Filippo Bertacche, Vicenza (Italy) drums:** Started playing drums in 1988... early on checked out drummers like Jeff Porcaro, Dave Weckl, Steve Gadd, Stewart Copeland and Dennis Chambers...Chad Wackerman, Tom Brechtlein, Joy Baron... and then Bill Stewart and Simon Phillips... Started playing drums in 1988... A self-taught drummer of many musical styles... jazz, fusion, blues, funk, rock, pop, acid, progressive... first demo called POLLUTION (written by himself) recorded in 1996...During 2000 started recording and collaborating via the internet with FUNKDAWGS...Also featured on more than 140 tunes, recorded with over 35 artists from all over the world... Records his tracks using basically three drums kits in his studio...provides drums tracks for numerous internet collaborations & projects...featured CDs include Peggy Morris *Cyber Friends* (2002), trumpeter CM *Shades Of Grey* (2003), Various Artists PTMF featuring Patti Sterling *Blue Train* (2004), Hidden Symmetry *Something About The Sun* (2004), Us keyboardist Bill Cornish *Sojourn* (2007).

- **Bobby Brewer, Philadelphia (U.S.A.) guitar:** Our guitar ace is a native of Oklahoma where he grew up playing everything from country, to rock to soul. Began to study guitar seriously at university first as a student, then taught jazz guitar... a stint with L.A. trumpet player/session ace Jay Daversa took him to the city of angels working with jazz legends Roger Kelloway and drummer Shelly Manne...Began studies with guitar wizard Ted Greene... Bobby regularly holds guitar clinics, jams with his own band, and occasionally performs with former rippingtons and kiko drummer David Anderson...He worked and produced at Fullhouse recordings in Whitehouse, Tennessee where his duties included producing, engineering and guitarist on sessions... his guest guitar appearances including playing with bassist Stanley Clark...Now also guitarist of The Reese Project band and regularly performs over USA and Canada...A true working musician and producer in every sense...
- **Bill Lawrence, Albany N.Y. (U.S.A.) bass:** Freelance bassist who currently resides in upstate New York. He holds a Bachelor of Music degree from Oakland University and has been a featured soloist and clinician at such events as Kingdom Bound, Inferno, Heartsong Festival, and ERMAC (Eastern Regional Music and Arts Conference). As a sideman, Bill has been hired by artists from around the globe to provide bass tracks for numerous recording projects, as well as live concerts. His original compositions have also been featured on several CD's, including the Funkdawgs and his solo bass CD Music From The Bass Guitar. A true working musician in every sense...
- **Kyle Whitlock, Columbia South Carolina (U.S.A.) keyboards:** A studio composer of multi-genres of music including jazz, progressive rock, electronic, world, and others. His live performances have taken him coast-to-coast across the United States. He regularly composes music for radio and public television, has played keyboards and drums/percussion professionally for over 30 years, and has three solo CD releases, **A Curious Catharsis**, (11-99), **Caldron of Joy**, (6-01), and **Ambient Earth**, (12-02). Working with the Funkdawgs jazz group are among his most ambitious and fulfilling musical projects. Kyle's music has been and continues to be featured on many online radio stations and music review websites. One of his jazz songs "**Oasis**," went to #29 in the top 50 charts at Mp3.com, and another song "**Song of Summer**" went to #10.
- **Bob Johnson, Ottawa (Canada), sax and wx11:** Played in local r&b bands in his early 20's... influenced by the whole jazz-funk movement...Online collaborators enabled complete compositions... founder of FUNKDAWGS... Built home studio... began composing jazz fusion tunes... eventually internet became means to compose and play recorded jazz fusion...composes, produces and plays on 80 tunes with artists from all around the world. Soulful jazzy tenor sax stylings complemented by wx11 wind controller...for expressive and uniquely creative sounds...

## **The Funkdawgs - A Virtual Jazz Band** (from **Basics** magazine, issue of November 2005)

Presentation by saxophonist Bob Johnson, founder of FUNKDAWGS band

My background is as a jazz saxophonist and composer. I have lived and played in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada for over 35 years in various small and big band configurations. About 5 years ago I was becoming more and more frustrated with my local music situation since there was very little happening in terms of jazz or even blues here in Ottawa. It was hard to play any type of jazz in public around town, much less get anyone interested in practising it for the joy of it. However I noticed that there were a huge number of artists posting free mp3 files of original jazz tunes at various places on the Web such as the now defunct mp3.com in the United States.

### The Initial Experiment

I decided to try a simple experiment and contacted a British guitarist by the name of Matt Thorpe to see if he would be interested in collaborating on a slow blues tune that I had written. This tune called "Blues Infusion" was begging a long electric guitar solo, one I know that Matt could easily provide. To my enjoyment, Matt responded to my email and said he would like to be involved in the experiment. The next step was figuring out technically how to meld his guitar work into my existing tune.

Looking back on it, it seems very easy now, but at the time I wondered if the musical results would be favourable. Indeed they were and here's how we did it. I mailed Matt a standard stereo audio CD of the tune that was mixed with all the instruments in it except for the guitar part. This was straightforward to do since I had previously recorded all the other instruments (alto/tenor sax, drums, bass, Hammond organ) and had stored them as separate tracks in my music production software on my PC. From there I burned a CD which I mailed to Matt in Manchester, England. Once Matt received the CD he extracted the tune as a single stereo wav file and imported it into his music production system. He recorded a fantastic 3 chorus blues guitar solo and accompaniment guitar track for the rest of the tune in his home studio. This was easy for him, since he'd been doing this for years already for his own numerous compositions. Once he was satisfied with the results of his recording, he prepared another stereo wav file. This file had the original wav file he had received panned hard left. This means that the original mix of saxes, drums, bass and organ would only be heard in the left channel of a stereo audio system. Then he placed his guitar track in the new wav file but panned hard right. This means that his guitar would be heard only in the right channel of an audio system.

By keeping the original mix and his guitar totally separated in the new wav file it was possible for me to later extract his guitar track in my production system here in Ottawa. So Matt burned a CD with this new version of the tune, mailed it to me and I then extracted his guitar track and hence was able to mix it to my liking in my tune. So just to re-cap, the steps were as follows:

- 1) I mailed a guitarless version of my tune on a CD to the guitarist, Matt Thorpe in Manchester
- 2) Matt imported the tune into his music studio from the CD (this was done digitally with software that he had)
- 3) he recorded himself playing along with the tune in his studio. He was able to perform as many takes as he liked in order to bring it to his own satisfaction.
- 4) he prepared a new mix with the original tune mix panned hard left and his guitar panned hard right. Then he burned a CD with this new mix and mailed it to me.
- 5) I received the new CD, extracted the guitar part, lined it up in my software and did a whole new mix to my liking.
- 6) then I mailed the completed final mix with guitar on yet another audio CD to Matt.

Both Matt and I posted mp3 file versions of Blues Infusion at our respective Web sites at mp3.com and received some very favourable comments from listeners. Most of these comments were to the effect that it was really impossible to detect that Matt and myself were separated by the Atlantic Ocean and still could be heard playing simultaneously on a recording.

### Extending the Experiment

The only thing that really slowed things down in this experiment was the use of CD's and mailing them to each other. Later on I was able to find some free FTP servers that would allow me to post files for other musicians to work with, thereby eliminating the need for mailing out CD's. I'll get into that a little later, but the important thing at this point for me was realizing that a long distance collaboration was indeed possible.

Gradually I contacted a number of other instrumentalists via email and built up our entire virtual band called "The Funkdawgs" that would use the process I described above to put together entire jazz compositions built up one track at a time. The Funkdawgs currently are comprised of:

- . Filippo Bertacche on drums in Vicenza, Italy
- . Bobby Brewer on guitar in Nashville, Tennessee, USA
- . Bob Johnson (myself) on saxophones and WX11 wind controller in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada
- . Bill Lawrence on bass in Albany, New York, USA
- . Kyle Whitlock on keyboards in Columbia, South Carolina, USA

For a saxophonist that loves playing jazz, this collaborating group of musicians is a joy to play with. It is often difficult to find musicians in your local region who will commit to the same kind of music that you enjoy and that want to be involved on a long term basis composing and creating these tunes. Over the past 4 years, the Funkdawgs have produced over 70 compositions mostly in the jazz fusion genre, but with occasional ventures into acoustic soul-jazz and blues as well. It is a thrill to be able to practice and record

my saxophone along with such high level rhythm section and solo players as these. Most compositions are by guitarist Bobby Brewer, keyboardist Kyle Whitlock and myself, so the Funkdawgs have many different creative sources of material to work with. Also as a saxophonist, I find that being able to tap into the compositional ideas of a guitarist and keyboardist have enabled me to greatly improve my knowledge of harmony, chord progressions and composition in general. My compositions tend to come out of big band roots or from traditional rhythm and blues. With a guitarist and keyboard player involved, I get ideas for much more complicated harmonies than I had previously been used to. That's a great thing!

### The Collaboration Process

Let me now elaborate on the process we use to record entire tunes via the Internet. Usually one composer takes ownership of a tune. In my case, I generally start with a mock-up or crude version that starts out in the software application called "Band In A Box" from PG Music. This is a tremendously useful program, both for self practice and for composition. I enter the chords to a new composition into the Band In A Box spreadsheet, select a tempo and pre-programmed style (such as walking blues, for example) and Band In A Box generates drum, bass and piano parts that will play on the computer's sound card and/or be stored as a MIDI file for future playback. Generally, I spend a week or so going through a number of iterations in Band In A Box to bring a tune to its final form. Certainly these computer generated parts sound somewhat mechanical and predictable, but they definitely give a composer a good idea of what will and what won't work in a new composition. Like anything else, it takes some getting used to and adapting to, but the selection of pre-programmed Band In A Box styles is a very good starting point for a composer.

The next step is to save the new tune as a MIDI file and import it into my music production software, "Musicator Audio". Here I can jam along with it and record my sax parts. Once I'm happy with the results, I record the whole thing (Band In A Box parts and saxophone) as a wav file and then convert it into an mp3 file. This mp3 is uploaded to a server the Funkdawgs use, ready for guitarist Bobby Brewer in Nashville to download. He imports it into his system and then records his guitar parts along with it. Once complete, Bobby uploads a separated wav file to the server (original mix panned left, guitar panned right), ready for me to download. I then extract the guitar part and line it up in my system as I described earlier in my initial experiment with Matt Thorpe.

From here I create a new mix and upload it to the FTP server for keyboardist Kyle Whitlock in South Carolina. The new mix has the Band In A Box piano part removed, but the real guitar and saxophone added in. It's important to remove the Band In A Box piano part at this stage so that Kyle doesn't have to listen to it. Kyle does a similar thing, recording his parts, then uploading a wav file with his keyboard part separated from the rest, ready for me to work with. Again I extract his keyboards, and produce a new mix for the drummer Filippo in Italy.

This drum-ready mix at this point has Band In A Box bass, real sax, guitar and keyboards and no drums. Filippo works with it as the others have previously, and eventually sends me a new mix at the FTP server with drums only and a two bars of metronome click at the start so I can line it up in my system. His situation is slightly different from the others since I need a full stereo mix of his drums and there is thus no spare channel available for the original mix he was playing along with. Thus he doesn't have any of the original mix present in the file he sends to me once he is finished.

Finally, Bill Lawrence in Albany receives a mix that I have prepared for him. This mix has all real musicians, no Band In A Box parts and no bass part. It's ready for him to work with. After he is complete, he again sends me a separated wav file with a bass part on the right stereo channel that I will incorporate into the final mix for the tune. Bill likes being the last one in on the process. He has such a great sense of ensemble playing and always reacts so musically to the other players, making the "in the same room" illusion totally convincing.

Complicated? Yes, certainly. But once you are used to the whole recording process, you find that it is not that much different from what takes place in most recording studios these days. Often, recording studios will record only one or two instruments at a time in order to be able to extract the best performance out of each musician without necessitating the entire ensemble to repeat performances ad nauseam. For the Funkdawgs, it's the same idea here, plus you have the advantage of being able to work in a non-pressure environment, i.e. your home and do as many takes as you like.

### Is It Jazz?

We are asked this from time to time, and I can answer a resounding yes! As I have described, each

musician in the collaboration has the benefit of hearing those that have preceded him in the recording process. The guitarist hears the sax player, the keyboardist hears the guitarist and saxophonist, the drummer hears the saxophonist and guitarist and keyboardist, and the bass player hears everyone. It's not total interaction as at a live performance, but as you adapt to this concept, you get more comfortable with it. In addition, everyone has the huge benefit of being able to do as many takes as they like to realize their own individual performance to their own satisfaction. At live gigs you don't have this flexibility and rarely do you get everyone "on" for every composition.

Bob Johnson

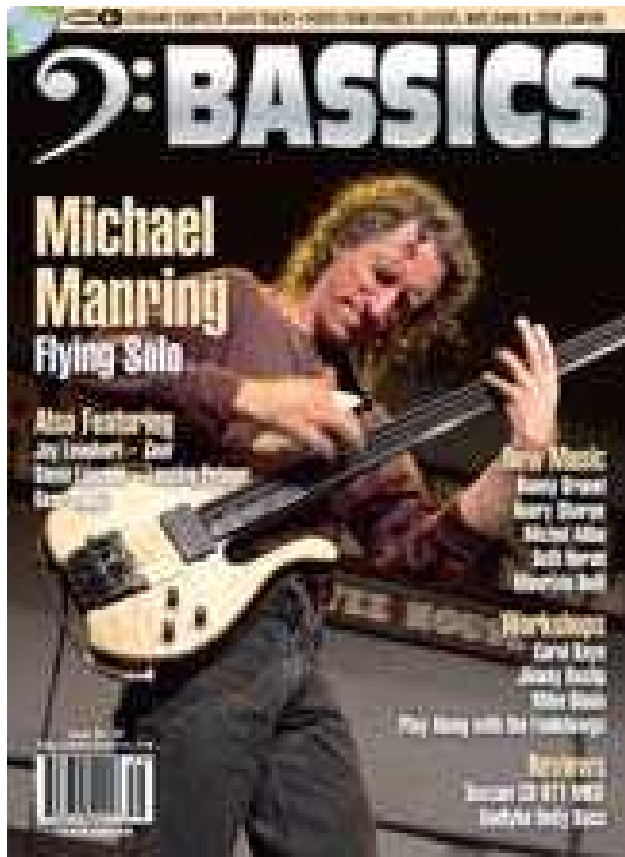
## Pictures:

### Cd features



**Bobby Brewer, Bob Johnson, Filippo Bertacche, Bill Lawrence, Kyle Whitlock**

Magazine Features



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**IN THIS ISSUE**

- Remembering Jackie McLean
- Keeping Track Of Jazz Changes
- Reviews Of New Saxophone CDs
- Emilio Lyons "The Saxophone Doctor"
- Nyle Steiner Inventor Of The EWI & EVI
- Steve Mauk: Finger Placement Technique
- The Art Of Section Playing According To Joe
- Les Silver: Saxophonist & Recording Engineer

FREE/APRIL 2006 COUNTRY/BLUES/ROCK

# Nashville MUSIC Guide

## Internet Funkdawgs Come Alive.

Imagine a band recording 2 albums and never having met person to person. That's exactly what the Funkdawgs band did. With musicians all over the world that hooked up on the mp3.com site, these stellar players recorded a jazz R & B funky sound that is out of this world. The group was formed in 2001 and have released two internationally-acclaimed independent albums, BORDERLESS and DAW-GMA.

These stellar players met in person for the first time to rehearse for their first live gig on April 1st at the Gibson Showcase Club. The musician ship at the show was extraordinary from the flawless guitar riffs to the soulful solos of the sax player woven around a toe tapping jazz and R & B groove. If the live performance is indicative of their CD's, you need to check out their website. Sadly, the next live performance of the band will not be in Nashville but this summer in Saratoga, NY.

The Drummer, Filippo, told NMG, "We all had home studios and never met person to person until this week for our 1st live performance. Bob Johnson, the Saxophone player was the catalyst to get us all together." The Funkdawg members are Bobby Brewer from Nashville, drummer Filippo Bertacche from Italy, Bobby Johnson from Ottawa Canada, bassist Bill Lawrence from Albany, New York and keyboardist Kyle Whitlock from Columbia, South Carolina.

Photo of Guitar Player Bobby Brewer  
[www.funkdawgs.com](http://www.funkdawgs.com)

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[www.funkdawgs.com/press2.pdf](http://www.funkdawgs.com/press2.pdf)