The background is a solid orange color with a pattern of stylized, overlapping leaf outlines in a lighter shade of orange. The leaves are simple line drawings with some internal vein-like lines. The text is centered horizontally across the middle of the image.

paul kogut

press kit

## Biography

For the past 25 years, Paul Kogut has been steadily building an international reputation as a jazz guitarist and composer.

Originally from Utica, New York, Paul relocated to Chicago in the late 1980's, establishing himself on the city's lively jazz scene. "In the late 80's and early 90's, there were a lot of great musician hangs in Chicago: The Get Me High, The Bop Shop, Déjà vu, Chic Rick's. I played at a place called Heart of the City with Charles Earland."

Around this time came another major event in Paul's musical development. "I had studied with Pat Martino some in Philly, and was going to catch up with him at a week-long seminar in Connecticut. Pat had to cancel last minute and Mick Goodrick subbed for him." Mick is the Boston-based guitar guru who counts among his former students Pat Metheny, John Scofield and Bill Frisell. "Mick exposed me to a ton of new stuff for sure, but his approach to organizing music on the guitar was something I had already begun to stumble across on my own. I learned to trust my instincts and approach things in my own way."

Paul moved back to New York few years later to attend the prestigious Manhattan School of Music, placing into the Master's program despite having little undergraduate coursework in music. While attending he performed in composer Harold Danko's National Endowment for the Arts -funded pianoless quintet, and was chosen, along with Jason Moran and Stefon Harris, to represent the school in their Jazz Outreach program. He also would find himself performing at such legendary venues as the 55 Bar, Augie's (now known as "Smoke") and the Zinc Bar and a week as accompanist to Clark Terry for his artist-in-residency at Hamilton College.

Upon graduation he continued his performing in and around New York City as well in Utica area for gigs, concerts and clinics at Hamilton College. During this time, informal jams with friends turned into the band Ant Ester. Ant Ester attracted some high profile fans, among them the Allman Brother's Warren Haynes and Blues Traveler's John Popper. Paul eventually joined the faculty as lecturer in jazz guitar at Hamilton College. In addition to a full load of private students, Paul served as artistic director for the Jazz in the Valley Festival and Jazz in the Pub, supervising the booking and production of featured artists such as Chucho Valdez and the John Abercrombie Trio to name a few.

Seeking out further performing opportunities, 2003 found Paul returning to Chicago. As an in-demand sideman, he led a trio with organist Steve Million and drummer Tim Davis, and a duo with bassist Kelly Sill. The latter led to his second Blujazz release, Peace, where Paul and Kelly explored the music of Wayne Shorter, Herbie Hancock, Steve Swallow and Chick Corea. In addition to his Chicago performances, Paul began to appear regularly at Manhattan's renowned 55 Bar and was featured in a in-depth interview and live-on-the-radio concert on Houston's KUHF.

In his career to date Paul has worked with such artists as Charles Earland, Clark Terry and J.R. Monterose, Drew Gress, Ronnie Burrage, Kelly Sill and Sheryl Bailey.

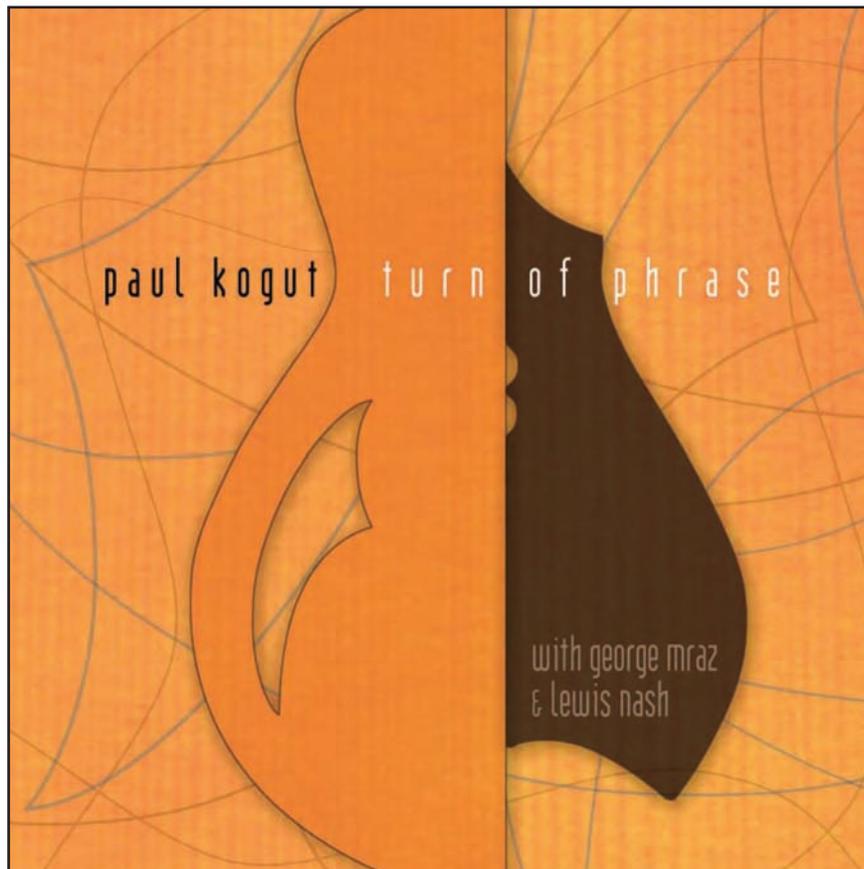
In addition he has led his own trio at numerous venues including Manhattan's renowned 55 Bar, Chicago's Jazz Showcase, Nighttown Cleveland, Chris' Jazz Cafe Philadelphia, Austin's Elephant Room, Inntone Fest Austria and the Red Hook Jazz Festival in Brooklyn, New York.

Paul holds a Master's Degree from Manhattan School of Music.

His latest CD, "Turn of Phrase" features the legendary rhythm section of George Mraz and Lewis Nash. It's release in August 2012 on the Chicago-based Blujazz label was met with heavy airplay and critical acclaim, with Neil Tesser of the Playboy Guide to Jazz saying "Here's the main thing to know: you won't hear a better guitar-trio album this year."

Hiro Yamanaka of Jazz Guitar Book Japan calls Paul "a great player with a contemporary style" and The Chicago Tribune says "There's no question that Kogut stands as a serious player with a sophisticated sense of harmony and a penchant for meticulously honed motifs."

Speaking of Paul, John Abercrombie says, "His musical approach to guitar playing, and his compositional skills, are first rate."



## Turn Of Phrase

Paul Kogut  
with Gerge Mraz and Lewis Nash

BluJazz 2012

### Songs

1. So That Happened 5:45
2. About You 7:32
3. Know It? I Wrote It! 4:18
4. Body and Soul 9:46
5. Days of Wine and Roses 8:16
6. Sister Cheryl 7:04
7. Wayne Shorter Solo Medley 8:10
8. Back-Woods Song/Ramblin' 5:50
9. Especially When It Rains 6:14
10. Turn of Phrase 5:41
11. Blue In Green 5:36

### Musicians

Paul Kogut electric and acoustic guitars  
George Mraz acoustic bass  
Lewis Nash drums

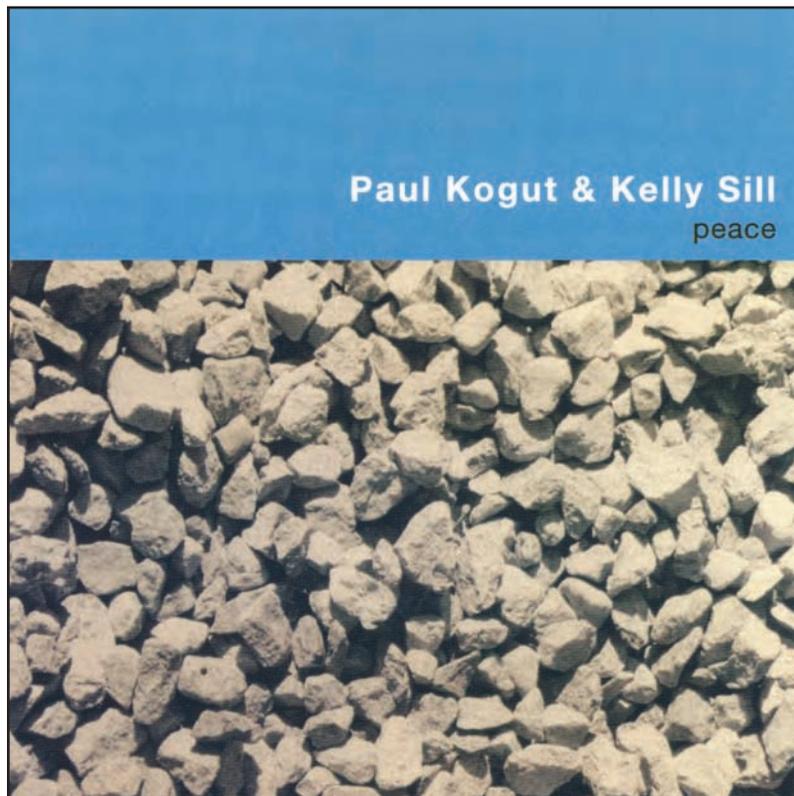
## Produced by Paul Kogut

Executive Producer Greg Pasenko

All songs by Paul Kogut, - & B 2012 Paul Kogut Music (BMI) except "Body and Soul" by Heyman/Sour/Eyton/Green, Warner Bros. (ASCAP), "Days of Wine and Roses" by Henry Mancini, Warner Bros. (ASCAP), "Sister Cheryl" by Tony Williams, Tillmon Music (BMI), "Wayne Shorter Solo Medley" by Wayne Shorter, Miyako Music (BMI), "Back-Woods Song" by Dave Holland, LOJAC Music (BMI), "Ramblin'" by Ornette Coleman MJQ Music (BMI) and "Blue In Green" Miles Davis, Jazz Horn (BMI).

Recorded on April 28th and 29th, 2012 at Avatar Studios, New York City

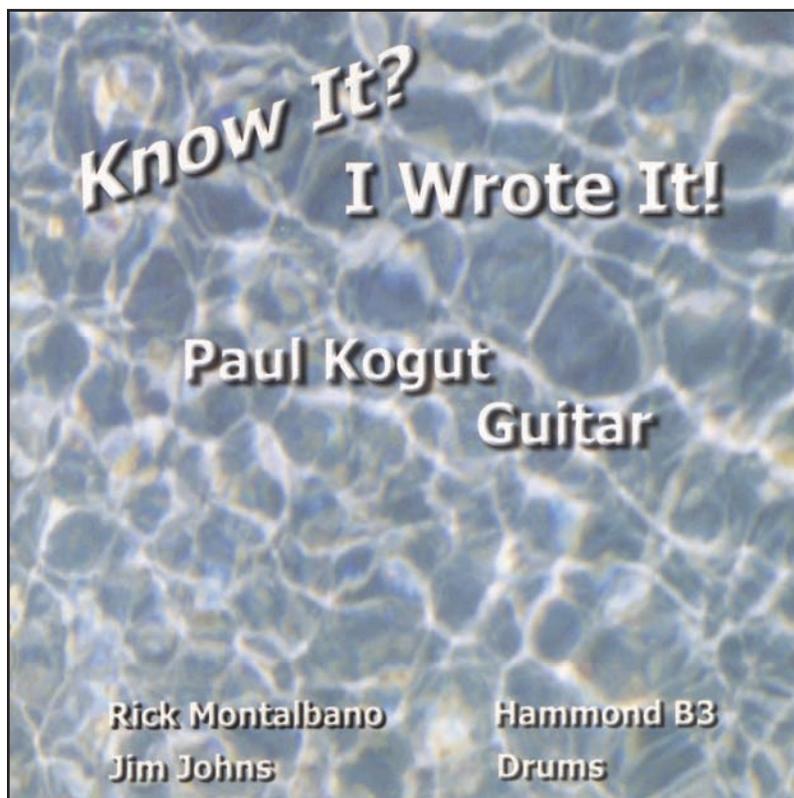
Recorded, mixed and mastered at Avatar Studios by Katsuhiko Naito  
Assistant Engineered by Tyler Hartman



**Peace**

Paul Kogut and Kelly Sill

BluJazz 2003



**Know it?, I Wrote It!**

Paul Kogut

BluJazz 2008

## Quotes

*"Here's the main thing to know about Paul Kogut's Turn Of Phrase: you won't hear a better guitar-trio album this year."*

**Neil Tesser**

Examiner.com and the Playboy Guide to Jazz

*"His musical approach to guitar playing, and his compositional skills, are first rate"*

**John Abercrombie**

*Intimate, swinging and free-flowing...Fans of Jim Hall will dig this"*

**Bill Milkowski**

Jazz Times

*"Paul Kogut? I've heard of you. Jim Hall called me and said you were a mother^%&^%&!"*

**Mike Stern**

*"Elements of John Coltrane's labyrinthine chords, John Scofield's power choruses and the flightiness of the Grateful Dead"*

**Nathan Turk**

Syracuse New Times

*"Listen to this young man. He understands how to play the blues."*

**Harold Mabern**

*"There's no question that Kogut stands as a serious player with a sophisticated sense of harmony and a penchant for meticulously honed motifs"*

**Howard Reich**

The Chicago Tribune

*"Paul is a great guitar player."*

**Warren Haynes**

Allman Brothers

*"might just be the prescription needed."*

**Cadence Magazine**

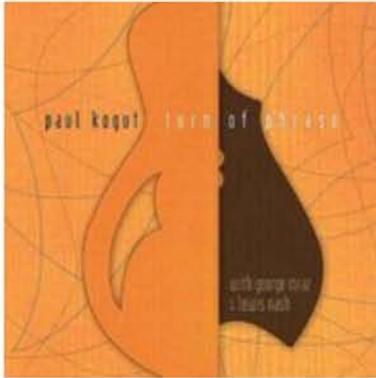
*"a great player with a contemporary style"*

**Hiro Yamanaka**

Jazz Guitar Book

*"will appeal to the taciturn jazzbo and the festival twirler alike."*

**James Keepnews**



09/18/12 [Albums](#) [By Scott Albin](#)

## Turn of Phrase-- Paul Kogut

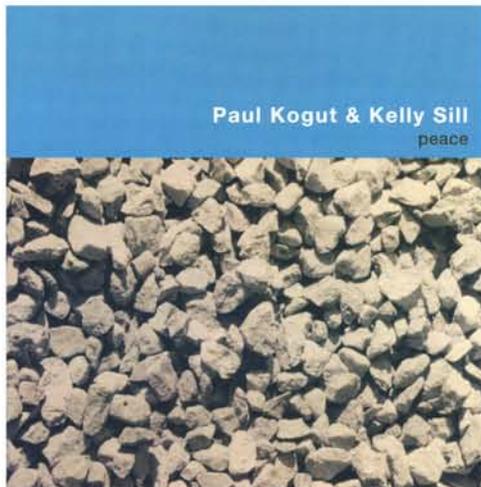
Paul Kogut's outstanding third CD, a trio date with the unbeatable rhythm team of George Mraz and Lewis Nash, will hopefully generate wider recognition for this polished guitarist. Kogut plays with secure confidence and a pristine, mellow sound that has been recently enhanced thanks to his decision to switch from guitar pick to thumb. He was raised in the Utica, NY area, where he studied with Carmen Caramanica. Later teachers included Pat Martino and Mick Goodrick, and Kogut has himself taught at his alma mater, Hamilton College. Over the years he has spent quality time performing primarily in Boston, New York, and Chicago. Lovers of jazz guitar owe it to themselves to hear this CD.

"So That Happened" is Kogut's clever reworking of "It Could Happen to You." It sparkles with his lucid, crisp, and flowing phrasings and a tone that may recall Jim Hall or John Abercrombie. Mraz solos with consummate authority and articulation. The slippery, winding melody of his "About You" suits Kogut's approach to a tee. The nuanced accents, harmonies, and rhythmic variations of his improvisation combine for a tantalizing listen. The exceptionally consistent Mraz delivers another impressive solo, and Nash's drum work is deft and stimulating. At about the six-minute mark, Kogut suprisingly begins wailing with a more piercing sound, only to revert back to his more refined true(?) self at the close a minute later. "Know It? I Wrote It?" was first heard on Kogut's 2005 organ trio debut CD by that title. A catchy rhythmic hook somewhat reminiscent of Eddie Harris' "Listen Here" lays the foundation for this new funky treatment. The leader is penetratingly soulful, and Nash engagingly assertive, with Mraz keeping things well-grounded just as an organist might have done.

The "Wayne Shorter Solo Medley" is Kogut's eight-minute vibrant solo acoustic guitar exploration of several Shorter tunes, starting with "Fe FI Fo Fum" and then a tender recital of "Infant Eyes." Eloquently melodic and harmonically sophisticated, Kogut takes his time with the apparent intention being to emphasize and draw out the immense beauty of these works, which he succeeds impressively in doing. "Back-Woods Song / Ramblin'" commences with the theme of Ornette Coleman's "Ramblin'" but interjects elements of Dave Holland's "Back-Woods Song," while Mraz and Nash generate a hearty pulse that borrows from both compositions. Kogut's solo is an absorbing gem that resoundingly sings of both the blues and back country roads. The incomparable Mraz is not to be outdone, constructing an equally boisterous and communicative solo. Kogut's "Especially When It Rains," despite its title, is sunny and uplifting. The guitarist, as he did on "About You," ups the reverb and hence the impact of his ceaselessly inventive improv. Mraz again shines in his melodically expressive follow-up. Nash is the epitome of taste and finesse here as always.

"Turn of Phrase" is a deceptively simple, infectious Kogut theme that offers more than enough substance for this trio to expand upon. Kogut hop, skip, and jumps through a striving, harmonically rich and bluesy solo, propelled insistently by Nash. The bassist responds with a deliberate, deep-toned excursion that never loses its focus. "Blue In Green" is given a guitar and drums interpretation that dances restlessly and imaginatively around the well-known melody for five minutes without fully stating it. Nash's cymbal work is exquisite and striking, and when Kogut finally delicately states the theme at the end it provides the listener with a very satisfying release.

Kogut's is luminous on an over nine-minute duet version of the never stale standard "Body and Soul." His and Mraz's solos are compelling, with the bassist more straightforwardly lyrical than the unpredictably tangential but never less than logical Kogut. Mraz's comping for Kogut, and his coda at the very tail end of the guitarist's reprise, are masterful. Kogut's fascinating, harmonically adventurous intro to "Days of Wine and Roses" leads to more of the same after he plays the melody, except the rubato opening is now replaced by the trio's driving momentum, as you listen in anticipation of the guitarist's next inspired move. Mraz creatively recasts the theme in his resolute solo, and then Kogut and Nash exchange sharp-witted passages. Drummer Tony Williams' "Sister Cheryl" is fittingly introduced by Nash's declarative and commanding statement. The ensuing "Poinciana"-like rhythm groove carries Kogut through the alluring theme and onto his persuasive improv, which throbs with a relaxed determination.



JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2009

## **Paul Kogut & Kelly Sill**

### **Peace**

Blujazz

By [Bill Milkowski](#)

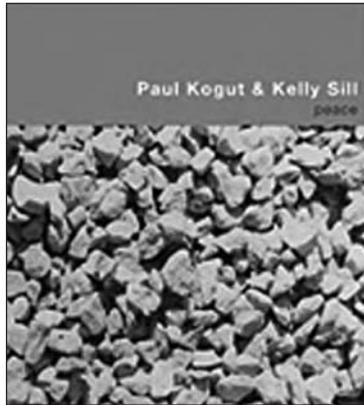
Intimate, swinging and free-flowing duets highlight the chemistry between Chicagoans Kelly Sill on bass and the accomplished guitarist Paul Kogut, who showcases his chordal mastery on standards (“Like Someone in Love,” “How My Heart Sings”) as well as on such decidedly un-guitaristic numbers as Sam Rivers’ “Beatrice,” Chick Corea’s “Windows,” Wayne Shorter’s “House of Jade” and Horace Silver’s “Peace.” Guitar aficionados, particularly fans of Ted Greene, Lenny Breau and Jim Hall, will dig this.

## PAUL KOGUT/KELLY SILL

### PEACE

(BLUJAZZ)

*Peace* is a wonderful mix, very soft, and gentle. There is a contemplative feel to this elating musical patchwork featuring twelve eclectic compositions covered by Kelly Sill at the



acoustic bass and Paul Kogut at the electric guitar. It starts with a take on Burke/Van Husen's "Like Someone in Love," a beautiful choice to open the set, and ends with "Peace" which gives its name to the album. Sill and Kogut thoughtfully include Sam Rivers' "Beatrice," a song the saxophonist dedicated to his wife who passed away a couple of years ago. Harold Danko's "When she Smiles," is taken at an upbeat tempo and is storytelling of the highest order. The piece is like a dance, with the guitar stating the wonderful melody with the support of a low, rhythmical, and stable bass.

The whole album is reminiscent of the music guitarist Pat Metheny and bassist Charlie Haden made. In particular, one cannot help but think of their album *Beyond the Missouri Sky* (released in 1997) upon listening to *Peace*. "Short Stories," the subtitle of *Beyond the Missouri Sky*, would also be a quite appropriate title for *Peace*, a delicious combination of sounds, artistry, and stories. Among the highlights, Kogut and Sill's rendition of Chick Corea's "Windows" as well as those of "Nerfertiti" and "House of Jade," both penned by Wayne Shorter stand out.

Is it, for Kogut and Sill, a blend of poise and serenity

that pushes them to interpret these tunes so well? Their dexterity serves their music. Airy, ambient, but also sophisticated, *Peace* is, at times, heady.

— EMILIE PONS

### JAZZGRAM Newsletter for the Jazz Institute of Chicago

A monthly newsletter published by the Jazz Institute of Chicago for its members. The Jazzgram represents the views of the authors and the editorial staff, and, unless so designated, does not reflect official policy of the Jazz Institute. We welcome news and articles with differing opinions.

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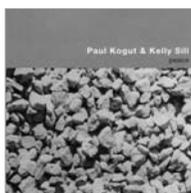
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"This is a duo album with a veteran guitarist Paul Kogut & bassist Kelly Sill, and it begins with gentle but beautifully played guitar solo of "Like Someone In Love". Right from the beginning, you become addicted to their Jazz spirits. This album contains 12 songs, like Chick Corea's "Windows", Herbie Hancock's "Dolphine Dance", Wayne Shorter's "Nefertiti", and as you can see from his song selections, Paul Kogut is a great player with contemporary style. You can hear beautiful natural tone of a solid body guitar made by luthier Stephen Marchione. Highly recommended." Hiro Yamanaka (translated by Taka Moro)



**[Peace] Paul Kogut & Kelly Sill (ポール・コガット&ケリー・シル)**  
(Blujazz) 3364 (輸入盤)



優しくも美しいギター・ソロで始まる「ライク・サムワン・イン・ラヴ」で幕を開けるヴェテラン・ギタリストのポール・コガットとベースのケリー・シルのデュオ作品。この1曲目で彼らのジャズ・スピリットの虜になってしまう。チック・コリアの「ウィンドウズ」やハービー・ハンコックの「ドルフィン・ダンス」、ウェイン・ショーターの「ネフェルティティ」、スティーヴ・スワロウの「フォーリング・グレイス」など12曲が収録されており、その選曲から想像出来るように、コンテンポラリーなスタイルを持つ素晴らしい演奏家だ。名工マルキオーネの手によるソリッド・ギターのナチュラルなトーンが実に綺麗に響いている。お薦めです。(山中弘行)

# NEW ISSUES

On the other hand, **(2)**, the duo recording of Chicago-based guitarist Paul Kogut and bassist Kelly Sill follows more conventional paths. They provide more contemplative, slower interpretations of standards and some lesser-known gems (at least among the general listening public) like Steve Swallow's beautifully sketched "Falling Grace," which ironically Kogut limns angularly at a faster tempo than usual over Sill's walking lines. However, most of the tracks on *Peace* proceed at a relaxed pace that allows for Kogut to delve into the song's harmonic potential, as he does in his introductory unaccompanied first chorus of "Like Someone in Love," before Sill comes in with ever-intensifying subtly nudging movement. Through the successive key changes and gradually accelerating speed, the duo retains the listener's attention gained during the initial solo. Remaining faithful to the changes nonetheless, Kogut attains a richness that benefits the music he plays without excessive notes. His studies with Mick Goodrick provided the insight to organize his interpretations by remaining faithful to his own instincts. And his tenure with Harold Danko's quintet receives acknowledgement when Kogut performs Danko's under-appreciated "When She Smiles," a loping ballad in which Kogut plays the lead-in phrase with singing lyricism. For the most part, Kogut chose the tunes for *Peace* with care to emphasize his interest in that lyricism. Many of its songs, even those without words, could be sung, like Wayne Shorter's "House of Jade" or Sam Rivers' "Beatrice." While Kogut exhibits no ground-breaking technique or compositional innovations, he and Sill do perform with harmonic depth, unhurried confidence and ever-present grace.

*Bill Donaldson*

Featured Artist: Paul Kogut

**CD Title:** Know It? I Wrote It!

**Year:** 2003

**Record Label:** Blujazz

**Style:** Contemporary Jazz

**Musicians:** Paul Kogut (guitar), Rick Montalbano (Hammond B3), Jim Johns (drums)

**Review:** Paul Kogut has been a mainstay on the Utica jazz scene for many years. Having played with some of the greats such as the late sax player J.R. Monterose, and organist Charles Earland to name but a few. Having learned valuable skills from guitar masters Pat Martino and Mick Goodrick, Kogut is able to incorporate his own brand of finger bending into every track on this delicious recording.

*Know It? I Wrote It!* is a fine example of how Kogut incorporates some of Martino's unique harmonic approach. Blending the melody in such a way as to give the piece a certain feel that is unforgettable. From the beginning phrase, that is repeated a few times, the trio settles into a swinging groove. Kogut makes use of subtle dynamics and phrasing that work well. Stretching the melody as well as an ability to leader bring out the best in the trio.

Another original up tempo piece, *Small Doses* is a tricky arrangement that beautifully displays the skill and dexterity that Kogut possesses. His ability to successfully weave in and out as well as around the melody, note for note and phrase for phrase is a joy to the ear.

A lovely and rich interpretation of *Stella By Starlight*, Kogut's fat sounding intro segues smoothly into a bright and swinging exercise in dynamics and overall fun. The trio explores the melody with verve and gusto. Of special note is Montalbano's use of staccato chords in combination with a fluid delivery.

Another original from Kogut is the gorgeous ballad, *Especially When It Rains*. A beautifully structured guitar solo followed by Montalbano's rhythmic organ make this a satisfying listen.

Most musicians love to cover a Beatles tune or two mainly because of the melody and the chord changes. Kogut's version of *Can't Buy Me Love* is no exception. Swinging from start to finish, he leads the way with some exceptional playing. Another example of trio integration.

With admirable support from Montalbano and John's, Kogut is able to cut loose and tastefully explore different avenues. *Know It? I Wrote It!* is a balanced recording of up tempo and ballad arrangements worthy of repeated listening.

**Tracks:** Know It? I Wrote It!, Jay Walk, Small Doses, Especially When It Rains, Stella By Starlight, Ballad, Fat Cat, Now You've Done It, In Your Own Sweet Way, Can't Buy Me Love

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REVIEW ON ALL MUSIC GUIDE (<http://www.billboard.com/bbcom/discography/index.jsp?pid=1037503&aid=1190398>):

In jazz, the guitar/bass duo can be a pleasant experience in cocktail lounges or small, intimate nightclubs. Chicago's Paul Kogut and Kelly Sill prove the format can be heard outside these realms, easily transferred to the concert hall, home entertainment unit, or car.

The relaxed style of these musicians is complemented by their choice of material, a stack of well-known post-bop standards that linger as challenging melodic and harmonic vehicles for many players worldwide. Kogut's clean, fluid lines pay tribute to Bill Evans more than other string players, and echo the mastery of Jim Hall. Sill has long been one of the very best bassists in the Windy City, and does nothing to damage that deserved reputation.

What these two men have selected to re-interpret is equally as important as the way they play them, and they seem to come in doubles. Chick Corea's bouncy, witty waltz "Windows" is done quite well, and the difficult "Tones for Jones Bones" turns into a looser interpretation. Wayne Shorter's "House of Jade" and "Nefertiti" vary from the norm in a pensive blues feel or darker hued infusion respectively. This feeling of extrapolation and jumping in without a strict plan is particularly noticeable in Herbie Hancock's "Dolphin Dance" as Sill's silky toned bass intro sets the tone. That similar stance pervades the upbeat, wholly translated version of Steve Swallow's "Falling Grace." The visage of the Bill Evans touch is most evident on the warm-up standard "Like Someone in Love," steadily pumping up in simple, basic, flowing swing to bop. As a "new" standard, the beloved laid-back Sam Rivers composition "Beatrice" is open to certain deft chord substitutions. Kogut heartily adds on to the tune in an Evans/Hall area that heightens its original melody while Sill's cordial and substantive solo further enhances this precept -- a great idea.

This album is a really good listen. It is completely thoughtful, reflective, and above all, engaging. ~ Michael G. Nastos, All Music Guide

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