

Review: -

**Geoff Eales Trio with Ben Waghorn at Stratford Jazz, Sunday 3rd May 2010
at: The Chapel, No.1 Shakespeare Street, Stratford-upon-Avon**

An outstanding and diverse quartet of musicians took centre stage at the Chapel at No.1, Shakespeare Street on Sunday evening. Leading this admirable quartet was pianist/composer Geoff Eales better known in the past for accompanying pop stars, country singers, opera divas and blues artists as well as working on TV shows, commercials and film sound-tracks.

On saxophones was Ben Waghorn who has built up a sterling reputation recording for TV, film and radio and, as well as leading his own groups, has accompanied numerous stars at jazz venues both national and international.

Sandy Burnett on bass is enjoying a varied and flourishing career that embraces conducting, broadcasting, playing, teaching and communicating his passion for music in all its forms. As a conductor he is presently masterminding a complete cycle of Bach's surviving sacred cantatas at St Michael and the Angels in Chiswick.

Completing the quartet was drummer Mark Fletcher well known to jazz fans throughout the UK for his long periods at Ronnie Scott's where he has supported some of the finest musicians on the planet.

This is a quartet that clearly enjoys its jazz and its relaxed passion for the music mixed with some light-hearted humour quickly had the audience in its grasp. A mixture of jazz standards/ballads was the basis of the repertoire, nothing futuristic here but good honest free-swinging jazz. Every member of this band is a born improviser and some of the rhythmic and melodic forays were quite quirky, particularly when Geoff and Sandy belied their classical roots by inserting passages from Bach or Mozart into their improvisations.

This was an evening of the most accessible and entertaining jazz and Geoff's decision to concentrate on his jazz roots in his future career is a huge bonus for all jazz fans.

For more info visit www.stratfordjazz.org.uk.