

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

WORLD RISING: A GROOVE TOO FAR
THE SOUND OF A NEW WORLD RISING - WITH ECHOES OF THE PAST

July 20, 2009 (Sherman Oaks, CA) - *World Rising*, to be released by Visionsound on August 11, is an innovative and vibrant jazz project from keyboardist **Ben Dowling** featuring a cast of famous friends from the jazz, funk and world music spheres. A gifted pianist with solid straight ahead jazz, funk and even contemporary-classical credentials, he was a student of Third-Stream advocate **Ran Blake** at New England Conservatory, a protoge of pianist/composer/jazz-educator **Calvin Jackson** and shares recording, writing, programming and/or touring credits with Earth, Wind & Fire's **Al McKay**, **Jon Anderson**, **Don Henley**, **Yellowjackets**, **Tom Coster** and **Freddy Hubbard**. A leading light in the field of synthesizer programming, he has created sounds for **Korg**, Weather Report's **Joe Zawinul**, **Madonna** and the late **Michael Jackson**.

Dowling has focused his most recent project *World Rising* on a Miles-inspired fusion of jazz, world and funk. Clearly influenced by 70's-era Zawinul and Herbie Hancock, he has invited an eclectic array of musicians including smooth jazz sensation **Mindi Abair**, saxophonist **Bob Sheppard**, master drummer **Will Kennedy** and Indian tabla player **Satnam Ramgotra** to create a modal, percussion-rich offering that is as compelling as it is new.

Overlaying infectious grooves with piano, keys and horn ensemble ala vintage Hancock, *World Rising* is a world influenced groove-fest that is funky, ethnic and musically refreshing. As a pianist, Dowling ranges from an almost Chopin-like touch to relentlessly funky, with none of the flashy grandstanding one might expect from a solo keyboard artist. In so doing, *World Rising* holds together as a strong ensemble approach to improvised music with brilliant production and an expansive musical focus. Hard edged, four on the floor dance tempos contrast beautifully with Brazilian-inspired compositions reminiscent of Ivan Lins.

"The Calling" and title track "World Rising" exemplify the polyrhythmic world-funk approach, combining furious percussion and long meter ensemble sections. "Spirit Dance" is a touch of smooth, with saxophonist Mindi Abair turning it out in her featured performance. Dowling's sole lyrical vehicle "Love Embraces All" is an innovative approach to harmonic-loop-based soul fused with a Steely Dan horn-ensemble sensibility. Originally written for the late **Carl Anderson** (Weather Report), the song represents a refreshing new direction in crossover Jazz R&B and introduces Dowling's unique vocal texture to the mix. Also featured is a formerly unreleased track, "Starting Over" with percussionist **Luis Conte** and trumpeter **Jeff Beal** in a brilliant vocal duet between Anderson and former Madonna vocalist **Niki Haris**.

World Rising delivers an inspired approach to new jazz music with a depth of harmony, sophisticated melody and relentless rhythmic drive integrated in a compelling and authentic new direction. Dowling's playing is superb, understated and tasteful, demonstrating that this is one artist with a unique point of view and the chops to pull it off. "I'm committed to making records that push new directions that technology and culture make possible, but that are musically honest, draw inspiration from the moment and speak from the heart," he says. "World Rising' is my first jazz release to honor the tradition that has impacted me so profoundly, as we move together into the new and vital music to come."

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