

Bennett Paster
Bio (Medium Short Version 1/2014)

Keyboardist, composer and producer Bennett Paster is one of New York City's most creative and versatile musicians. He has performed original music at clubs, concerts and festivals in the United States, the Caribbean, South and Central America, Central and South Asia and throughout Europe. He has been a featured performer with jazz stars Wallace Roney, Keb Mo, Robben Ford, Kurt Elling, Rufus Reid, Bill Stewart, Billy Hart, Albert "Tootie" Heath, Ndugu Chancler and Yosvany Terry among others.

Paster's current primary projects as a leader are: *The Bennett Paster Group*, an acoustic quintet which performs his broad-based jazz and Latin-jazz compositions and *Bennett Paster's Funktet*, a hard grooving band which showcases his formidable abilities on vintage electric keyboards and Hammond organ. He is also in-demand as a sideman and studio session musician, regularly performing and recording in NYC. Paster was a finalist in the 2008 Jacksonville Jazz Piano competition, held annually in Jacksonville, Florida.

His most recent solo release "Relentless Pursuit of the Beautiful" (2011) is a broad-based modern jazz recording that equally showcases his compositions and his piano playing. Joined by six masterful instrumentalists, he effortlessly integrates swing with Latin and Brazilian rhythms to forge a contemporary, accessible style. Recorded one sweltering July day in Brooklyn after a series of monthly performances at Greenwich Village music club The 55 Bar, the album vividly captures snapshots in the ensemble's development. Their group interplay and unwavering melodicism render a rich, eminently listenable music that draws in the listener and brings them along on their journey.

"My diverse musical background and life experiences all contribute to my personal style," Paster said. "I thrive playing in many contrasting groups- I can't choose just one style of music. My colleagues appreciate the broad palette of styles in which I am conversant. I always try to find the most appropriate sound to bring to any song or project. My motto is: serve the song."