

Steve Allee Biography

Pianist, composer and arranger Steve Allee is a veteran of more than 35 years on the music scene, working principally in jazz, writing and performing for syndicated radio programs, network television and motion pictures, and as a music educator.

All of his career facets have blended into a distinct musical style that has a very strong visual, almost cinematic flavor because of his skill in capturing or reinforcing important moods or visual elements that inspire his projects.



Steve has released six CDs as a leader, the two most recent being his trio recordings, *Dragonfly* (June 2008) and *Colors* (April 2007) on the Owl Studios label that are artful collaborations with bassist Bill Moring and drummer Tim Horner. Saxophonists Rich Perry and Rob Dixon appear on select tracks. In his liner notes for *Dragonfly*, jazz journalist Ken Franckling noted that “From start to finish, *Dragonfly* makes it clear that this is a band in which each of the players finds their interaction to be exhilarating.... this trio is all about making the most of the journey – as the best jazz should.”

A native son and longtime resident of Indianapolis, Indiana, Steve was fortunate to grow up in the hometown of many jazz greats, including brothers Wes, Buddy and Monk Montgomery, Slide Hampton, J.J. Johnson, David Baker, Freddie Hubbard and Melvin Rhyne, among others.

His playing style has a touch, sparkling clarity and improvisational variations reminiscent of the late Bill Evans, as well as a very strong blues influence that Steve credits to his exposure to Buddy Montgomery and Horace Silver.

Steve began his professional career at age 19 with the Buddy Rich Orchestra before he was drafted into military service during the Vietnam War. Through the years, he has worked with a veritable “Who’s Who” of major jazz artists across the United States and abroad. Recent performances include the Rufus Reid Trio, The Randy Brecker Quartet, David “Fathead” Newman, John Clayton and The Rich Perry Quartet. He also leads a big band that performs regularly in Indianapolis.

Steve's big band CD, *Downtown Blues*, with bassist John Clayton and drummer John VonOhlen, was nominated for a Grammy® award. Allee's first national solo CD, *The Magic Hour*, released on Noteworthy Records, landed at No. 14 on the Gavin national radio poll.

His other musical accomplishments included being commissioned to write and conduct a four-movement work for the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra to celebrate the 100th anniversary of The Indianapolis Museum of Art. His score for the film, "New York in the Fifties," was performed live at Switzerland's acclaimed Montreux Jazz Festival. Steve was co-director and arranger for a J.J. Johnson Tribute Concert featuring trombonist Slide Hampton at the Indy Jazz Fest in 2001.

His writing credits include soundtracks for "New York In The Fifties," the film inspired by the Dan Wakefield book of the same title, as well as "Something To Cheer About," a documentary starring Halle Berry and Oscar Robertson that focused on the 1954-55 Crispus Attucks Tigers basketball team on which NBA legend Robertson played in high school in Indianapolis. It was the first all-black high school team ever to win a state championship – and the team that changed the face of basketball forever.

Steve's performance and network television writing credits with Los Angeles Post Music® include music for "Chicago Hope," "Mad About You," "Martha Stewart," "Friends," "Nash Bridges," "NYPD Blue," "Dharma and Greg," and "Touched by an Angel."

This busy artist also is the music director for the nationally syndicated, Indianapolis-based comedy-variety radio show, "The Bob and Tom Show," with which he has co-produced more than 50 albums over the past 25 years.

As an educator, Steve has taught or lectured at several college and university music programs over the years, including the University of Cincinnati, University of Louisville, University of Illinois, Morehead College, Purdue University, Butler University, University of Indianapolis, Indiana State University, Drury College, and Florida International University. He now teaches at the Jamey Aebersold Summer Jazz Workshops and other master classes and workshops during the year.