

LA's Hottest New Swing Band Release Debut Album to Rave Reviews and Happy Feet!

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LOS ANGELES, CA - FEBRUARY 17th – Los Angeles' hottest new swing band, Jonathan Stout and his Campus Five featuring Hilary Alexander, have released their debut CD, "Jammin' the Blues", to rave reviews. The album features the best of the signature Campus Five sound, classic small group swing ala the Benny Goodman Sextet, or Count Basie's Kansas City Six and Seven. The band covers several nonstandard swing tunes, such as Coleman Hawkins' "Stuffy", and the 1945 Benny Goodman Sextet Tune "Oomph Fa Fa," as well as several straight-ahead tunes like "Cottontail", "Flying Home", and "Lester Leaps In". Vocalist and Co-leader Hilary Alexander shines on 40's gems such as "Shoo Fly Pie", "Mister 5x5", and "Down the Road a Piece", while Leader and Guitarist Jonathan Stout burns on tracks such as Django Reinhardt's "Minor Swing", and Charlie Christian's "Seven Come Eleven". Of course, the peak of album is reached with the title track, "Jammin' the Blues", which finds the band hitting on all cylinders. The album was recorded by vintage-jazz extraordinaire Dick Hamilton at his studio, the Doing, using vintage RCA 44 microphones to capture the traditional sound of classic small group swing. "Jammin' the Blues" featured Los Angeles' best swing musicians, including Tenor Saxophonist and Clarinetist Albert Alva, Trumpeter and Vocalist Jim Ziegler, Pianist Christopher Dawson, Bassist Jim Garafolo, and Vintage-Jazz drumming prodigy Josh Collazo.

The Campus Five is a septet dedicated to preserving the classic and often overlooked small group swing from the late 1930's and early 1940's. Founded by two dedicated swing dancers and vintage lifestyle enthusiasts, and using only the best of LA's jazz community, the Campus Five was a way to expose many dancers and listeners alike to some of the more interesting and under appreciated tunes from the swing era, while still being one of the most danceable bands playing swing today. Picking tunes from the books of notable small groups as the Benny Goodman Sextet, Count Basie's Kansas City Six/Seven, Artie Shaw and his Gramercy Five, as well as Lester Young, Django Reinhardt, Illinois Jacquet, Duke Ellington, and Coleman Hawkins, and featuring vocal numbers from Ella Mae Morse, Anita O'Day, and the young Ella Fitzgerald.

Over the past 8 months, the Campus Five has played to packed dance clubs from San Diego (Champion Ballroom) to Santa Barbara (Carrillo Rec. Center) and everywhere in between. They have packed many of LA's premier swing dance venues, including Suzy Q's, Rusty's Rhythm Club, Memories, Maxwell's at the Argyle, the Swing Addiction Speak Easy (Ventura) and One O'Clock Jump. The Campus Five have upcoming gigs co-headlining the April Satin Ballroom ("America's Largest Monthly Swing Event"), being a featured band at this May's San Diego Lindy Prom (along with Barbara Morrison, Cool Blue and Jump Jones) and this summer's Camp Hollywood (along with the Swing Session, the Bill Elliot Swing Orchestra, Mora's Modern Rhythmists, and Josh Collazo and his Feetwarmers). The "Jammin' the Blues" album was released on Valentine's Day to rave reviews from dancers. The album and an interview with leader Jonathan Stout was also recently featured on the KCBX radio program "Swing Cat's Ball."

Noted Reviews:

"In a small world of Swing dominated by a few Big Bands, and small groups playing the same old standards, the Campus Five are a welcome change and compliment to the other groups out there. With this CD ("Jammin' the Blues"), the Campus Five have given us some great Jazz, Swing and Dance tunes that we might not otherwise get to hear, apart from the originals."

– Jesse Gearhart, Dancer, Radio Host of "Swing Cat's Ball" on KCBX, FM90.

"As soon as she opened her mouth on her first number, "Cow Cow Boogie", I thought "Wow!" No other singer on the current scene has such a perfect grasp of all the elements of great '40s singing: the phrasing, the right way to use vibrato, the smile in the sound, and the total absence of vocal mannerisms that were invented later.... Keep your eye on Hilary, folks - we've got a big, big talent in our midst!"

– Bill Elliott, bandleader of the Bill Elliott Swing Orchestra