

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:



Date: November 20, 2006
Contact: Jessica Fagan, Director of Communications
Phone: 614.294.5200, x 110
Email: jfagan@jazzartsgroup.org
Electronic images available upon request.

COLUMBUS JAZZ ORCHESTRA RELEASES NEW RECORDING

The Colors of Jazz CJO's first release under Artistic Director Byron Stripling

Columbus, Ohio—The Columbus Jazz Orchestra (CJO), under the direction of trumpet virtuoso Byron Stripling, has released *The Colors of Jazz*, the CJO's first recording since Stripling became Artistic Director of the orchestra in 2002. *The Colors of Jazz* is available for purchase during Columbus Jazz Orchestra performances at the Southern Theatre, online at jazzartsgroup.org, CDBaby.com, and at local retailer Stauff's Coffee Roasters. The recording will also be available in the coming weeks for purchase on iTunes and other digital music stores.

"With *The Colors of Jazz* I wanted to create an image of the big band in the 21st century," remarked Stripling. "The different moods of the CD reflect my feeling that the genre of big band jazz is constantly evolving." *The Colors of Jazz* pays tribute to the past while exploring new ground. Underlying it all remain the CJO's hallmarks: its bold sound, tight ensemble playing and accomplished soloists, all led by jazz trumpet star Byron Stripling.

Featuring timeless jazz standards and new compositions, dynamic arrangements, and even a tinge of gospel, the orchestra demonstrates with every track the art of the big band. "As we do in our live performances, we tried to embrace the styles that naturally felt good," says Stripling. "From blues and gospel to ballads and bebop, we wanted to use any vehicle that would get folks to pop their fingers and pat their feet."

The Colors of Jazz was recorded at the historic Southern Theatre in Columbus in May 2006, and produced by New York-based Grammy-winning producer Joel Moss. In his 35+ years in the music industry, Moss has worked on jazz, rock, classical and Broadway cast recordings. His recent credits include Ray Charles' Grammy-winning recording, *Genius Loves Company*, the cast recording of the Tony-nominated new musical, *The Drowsy Chaperone*, and several recordings for Tony Bennett, including the recent Grammy-winning *Playin' with My Friends: Bennett Sings the Blues* and *Bennett Sings Ellington – Hot & Cool*. Moss has also worked with Harry Connick, Jr., Herbie Hancock, Cissy Houston, Audra McDonald, Shirley Horn, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Little Richard, Rod Stewart, Boz Skaggs and Dawn Upshaw, among many others.

-more-

CJO releases new recording, page 2 of 2

Moss remarked that, upon receiving a call from Stripling to work on the CD, "...Little did I know that it would be the beginning of an enlightening and thoroughly delightful journey. The CJO is part of an endangered species, the sadly diminishing large jazz ensemble. To discover such a fine example of this rare animal...it was almost too good to be true."

The record's "title track" is the three-movement suite commissioned by the CJO from John Clayton, called "The Color of Jazz." Clayton is one of the foremost composers and arrangers in jazz today, and premiered the suite with the CJO in April 2005. "The piece that I wrote for them...has grown beyond its premiere with the band," remarked Clayton. "It now has the edge and perfection that comes from repeated playing and rehearsing. It is not often enough that I can experience that as a composer, and I am grateful to the orchestra."

Other highlights on the recording include Chad Eby's arrangement of the Wayne Shorter ballad "Infant Eyes", "Something To Live For" featuring Dwight Lenox on vocals, and "I Found A New Baby," showcasing a traditional big band sound and innovative playing from soloists.

"Our producer Joel Moss made sure that the ensemble sound on the record reflected the excitement of a live CJO performance. He also made sure that the earthy down-home feeling of our blues tunes would stand in contrast to our ballads," explained Stripling. "The result is an incredible recording that is our best work to date!"

The Columbus Jazz Orchestra has previously released four recordings, under the direction of Artistic Director Emeritus Ray Eubanks: *Big Band, Swing, Blues & All That Jazz* (2002); *Band at Work* (1999); *Night Magic: The Sounds of Big Band Jazz* (1997); and *Rodgers Roars, Porter Soars* (1995). All recordings are available for purchase at www.jazzartsgroup.org.

This recording was made possible in part through support from the Aaron Copland Fund for Music, Inc., the Greater Columbus Arts Council, the Ohio Arts Council and The Columbus Foundation.

###

The Columbus Jazz Orchestra (CJO) is the flagship ensemble of the Jazz Arts Group (JAG), America's oldest not-for-profit arts organization dedicated to producing, performing and promoting jazz. The CJO—which performs nearly 50 concerts each season—is considered one of the finest jazz orchestras in the world and consists of musicians who are nationally and internationally known as performers and educators.

The Jazz Arts Group receives ongoing support from the Ohio Arts Council, the Greater Columbus Arts Council, and The Columbus Foundation.