

TOM BRAXTON

Endless Highway



www.tombraxton.com

“Tom Braxton is a treasure . . . incredibly talented composer, producer, and musician. It’s an absolute delight, from first note to last . . . a must-have album for your Smooth Jazz collection.”

~ SmoothJazz.com ~



TOM BRAXTON

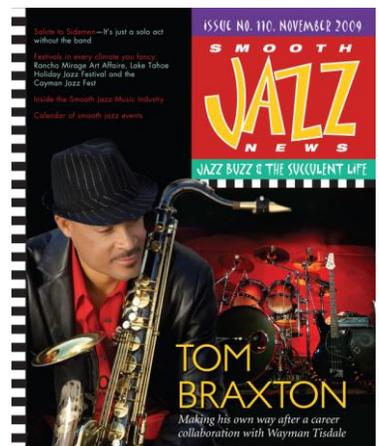
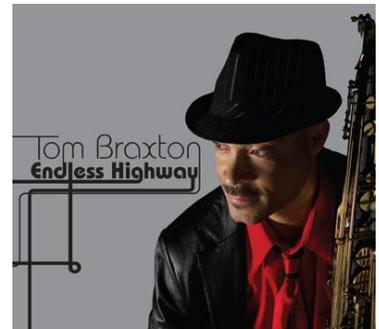
Career Highlights



- ◆ Tom was a featured headliner on the first **Smooth Jazz Europe Festival** in Hengelo, Netherlands, along with Bob Baldwin and Chieli Minucci.
- ◆ Tom was a featured performer with **Keiko Matsui** on her three-week tour of Russia and the Ukraine.
- ◆ Tom Braxton's latest CD, *Endless Highway*, reached #21 on the **Billboard Top Contemporary Jazz Album Chart**.
- ◆ *Endless Highway's* singles, "That Wayman Smile" and "Open Road," have made waves on numerous jazz charts including SmoothJazz.com, Groove Jazz Music, RadioWave, Smooth Jazz Now and Capital Jazz Radio.
- ◆ Tom was featured on the cover of the November 2009 issue of **Smooth Jazz News** magazine. (www.smoothjazznews.com)
- ◆ *Endless Highway* has been ranked #1 on the **Amazon.com Bestsellers List** for MP3 Downloads in Smooth Jazz.
- ◆ Tom has been a featured performer and fan favorite on **The Smooth Jazz Cruise** since 2005. He ranked in the top 5 for CD sales on the 2010 cruise.
- ◆ Tom toured extensively with **Wayman Tisdale** for 17 years, serving as Musical Director for 10 of those years.
- ◆ Tom has shared the stage with many well-known artists including **Dave Koz, Rick Braun, Peter White, Candy Dulfer, Bob James, George Duke, Kirk Whalum, Jonathan Butler, Jeff Golub, Marcus Miller, Keiko Matsui, Aretha Franklin, Luther Vandross and Philip Bailey.**



Photo by Walter Goyen



TOM BRAXTON

Tour Highlights



Las Vegas City of Lights Jazz Festival:
Tom with Wayman Tisdale **



94.7 The Wave Event in Los Angeles:
Tom and Brian Culbertson (on trombone)



Breast Cancer Benefit
in Sacramento **



Dave Koz Cruise:
Dave Koz, Tom, Kirk Whalum *



BB Jazz Festival in
Huntington Beach **



Dave Koz Cruise:
Jonathan Butler and Tom *



Dave Koz Cruise: Kirk Whalum, Jeffrey
Osborne, Tom, Wayman Tisdale, Dave Koz *



Smooth Jazz Cruise:
Tom and Jeff Golub *



Smooth Jazz Cruise:
Tom and Rick Braun *



Smooth Jazz Cruise:
Tom and Wayman Tisdale *



Smooth Jazz Cruise: Mindi Abair, Tom, Jeff
Golub, Jessie J, Rick Braun, Kirk Whalum *

* Photos courtesy of Jazz Cruises, LLC

** Photos by ©PicByBarb.com

TOM BRAXTON

Biography



Short Version

Saxophonist Tom Braxton is a versatile instrumentalist, charismatic performer and gifted composer whose distinct, melodic sound thrills audiences of all ages. SmoothJazz.com calls Braxton "*one of the most respected and loved sax men in Smooth Jazz.*" This native Texan has recorded seven albums including ***Endless Highway*** (2009) and ***Imagine This*** (2007) on the Pacific Coast Jazz label and ***Bounce*** (2005) on the Rendezvous label. His music can be heard on radio and television airwaves nationwide, and his albums have hit numerous jazz charts including Billboard, RadioWave and Amazon.com. Tom toured extensively with **Wayman Tisdale** for 17 years, also serving as Musical Director. He has been a featured performer and fan favorite on the Smooth Jazz Cruise since 2005. He has also garnered rave reviews overseas, performing as a headliner for the first Smooth Jazz Europe Festival in the Netherlands and touring with **Keiko Matsui** in Russia. Braxton has shared the stage with many great artists including **Dave Koz, Rick Braun, Peter White, Candy Dulfer, Bob James, George Duke, Kirk Whalum, Jonathan Butler, Jeff Golub, Norman Brown, Aretha Franklin, Luther Vandross and Phillip Bailey**. He has been featured in media and publications such as JAZZIZ, Smooth Jazz News, CBS's The Saturday Early Show and Daystar Television Network.

Long Version

Saxophonist and composer Tom Braxton understands his purpose on earth is to create music that touches our hearts. That's why Jazz Review calls Braxton "*one of smooth jazz's most prolific saxophonists . . . with all the required tools to become a major force.*" A seasoned performer, who knows how to charm audiences of all ages, Braxton has his own distinctive and recognizable sound which incorporates elements of Jazz, Latin, Funk and R&B and leaves listeners spellbound, filled with a sense of joy as his music swirls through your soul.

But jazz didn't always come easy growing up in the dusty plains of Lubbock, Texas where it all began for Tom Braxton. As unlikely an environment as it was for a boy to dream of being a jazz musician, Tom fortunately had a direct link to this creative art form through his dad, James ("J.T.") Braxton. "*I have to credit my dad with connecting me to jazz at an early age. He introduced me to all the jazz legends: Lester Young, Miles, Coltrane, Charlie Parker, Stitt, Getz, Ben Webster, Coleman Hawkins and many more. He would share how he had heard Count Basie and Duke's original bands and the great Ella Fitzgerald. He put the alto sax in my hands in the 6th grade, after I had been playing piano for two years. At the age of 90, my dad still plays his tenor sax and violin everyday, and he's still gigging!*" After graduating valedictorian from high school, Tom attended Texas Tech University on track and music scholarships. "*I love to run, and the 200, 400 and 1600-meter relay were my best events.*" This fact explains his driving energy and stamina on stage today.

During his college years, Braxton formed the jazz-fusion band "No Compromise" which toured the southwest and opened concerts for **Joe Sample, Stanley Clarke, George Howard** and many others. The band performed many of Tom's original compositions, which helped to fine-tune his writing style. Tom decided to launch his solo career after graduating summa cum laude with a Bachelor of Music/Performance degree. His first act of business was to join forces with keyboardist and producer **Bernard Wright** to release his solo debut album, **Your Move**. *"The highlight of my first release was having the opportunity to record a duet with long-time friend Kirk Whalum on the song 'Peacemaker.'" Bernard Wright not only produced Braxton's first CD, but also was instrumental in connecting him to a gifted musician/producer who would elevate Tom to the national touring circuit, **Wayman Tisdale**. "I have to credit Bernard Wright with getting me the gig with Wayman. I flew to Sacramento and played with Wayman where we opened a concert for the **Yellowjackets**. I'll never forget it . . . it was 1992!"*



Tom with dad, James ("J.T.") Braxton

Tom then toured extensively with Wayman Tisdale for 17 years, serving as Musical Director for 10 of those years. Wayman was quoted saying, *"When I'm on the road, Tom is the saxophonist I want to have with me. I love that sweet sound he gets on the horn."*

Braxton's solo career continued with his second album, **Katallasso**, that mixed memorable, easy funk melodies with some unique production touches. In April 1998, the CD was released internationally on Positive Music Records and featured the talents of Kirk Whalum, Paul Jackson Jr., Bill Maxwell and Bill Cantos. The next two albums took a brief departure from mainstream smooth jazz by connecting with Tom's spiritual side. In 1999, he released an instrumental praise and worship CD entitled **Face to Face** followed two years later with the release of a Christmas album, **Comfort and Joy**, that presented Braxton's fresh arrangements of traditional and contemporary holiday favorites. His friend and mentor, Wayman Tisdale, produced his fifth release, **Bounce**, for Dave Koz's label, Rendezvous Entertainment. *"I remember Wayman approached me with the idea of doing a recording together," said Braxton. "I was very excited about the project and the creative juices began to flow. We had a lot of fun in the studio playing with grooves and melodies and as a result the CD, 'Bounce,' was born."*



In 2007, Tom added a new CD to his discography, **Imagine This**, on the Pacific Coast Jazz label. *"The album kicks off with one of my favorite songs, 'Peg,' by Steely Dan which is a band I've always admired. I wanted to cover that song for years and when I finally got the opportunity, I was thrilled to include the unique vocal work of Kevin Whalum." SmoothJazz.com wrote, "(Tom Braxton) . . . absolutely blows me away with his album 'Imagine This.' I'm imagining that this will be the big breakout release for a career that is really kicking into high gear."*

Through the years, Tom has shared the stage with many well-known artists including **Dave Koz, Rick Braun, Peter White, Candy Dulfer, Bob James, George Duke, Earl Klugh, Kirk Whalum, Jonathan Butler, Jeff Golub, Marcus Miller, Keiko Matsui, Aretha Franklin,**

Luther Vandross and Phillip Bailey. Tom has opened concerts for numerous jazz greats including **Norman Brown, Boney James, Najee, Dave Brubeck, Cab Calloway, Spyro Gyra, The Rippingtons, David Benoit, Pieces of a Dream, Michael Franks and The Crusaders**. Tom has also garnered rave reviews for his performances overseas in the Netherlands, Russia and the Ukraine. Over the years, Braxton has been featured or appeared in media and publications such as JAZZIZ, Smooth Jazz News, CBS's The Saturday Early Show, BET's Jazz Central, TBS, TNT, ESPN, CNN, NBC's Inside Stuff, ABC's Good Morning Texas, the Fox Network's Good Day Dallas, ABC's Sacramento & Co. and Daystar Television Network.

In 2009, on the heels of finishing his next Pacific Coast Jazz label CD release, shocking news hit Braxton when Wayman Tisdale lost his battle with cancer. *"Wayman was a gifted musician and a great friend that I will always miss. I stood on his right side for 17 years and it was my goal to make him sound great every night. Through the*

Tom Braxton Biography (cont'd)

years, I became good at blending my sound with his, a valued skill I learned while in his band. Wayman's passing is a reminder of our mortality and it has made me even more determined to live my life to fulfill the purpose God has for me."

Tom's latest project, ***Endless Highway***, highlights Braxton as a composer, producer and arranger along with six of his original compositions that feature his effortless transition from soprano, alto and tenor saxophones to showcasing his versatility on piano, keyboards and flute. Bursting with exhilarating grooves and sizzling hot horn arrangements, *Endless Highway* manages to lift Braxton to a new level of artistry and is a testament to the many challenges Tom has faced along his highway of life. He hopes it will help others as they continue down their own road. *"We are all on this road of life, moving at our own pace, experiencing the smooth places where you can relax and the rough roads that can challenge and discourage you. But we must never forget how important it is to enjoy the ride!"* And Braxton definitely takes us on a memorable ride on this sensational soundtrack. Joined by an outstanding array of instrumentalists and vocalists, this recording is a toe-tapping, colorful, groove-oriented excursion with a sophisticated urban flavor that will make you feel like dancing and singing all day long. From the first and title track, "Endless Highway," which signifies the beginning of this rhythmic ride, to the final track, "Home Sweet Home," that transports us to the end of the CD that chronicles the many experiences we face in life, Braxton creatively completes the full circle of a smooth jazz journey.



Without a doubt, *Endless Highway* will drive Tom Braxton to the top of the charts while we take a trip with his inspiring tunes at home or on the road. So get ready to pack your bags, roll down the windows and crank up the volume in the "Braxton tradition." *"Creating music that brings people joy is my mission in life,"* says Tom. Looks like he has accomplished his mission on *Endless Highway*.

TOM BRAXTON

About "Endless Highway"

(in his own words)

1) **Endless Highway** ~ The title track was the first song and theme written specifically for this project. The horn arrangement and groove signify moving down life's busy road with optimistic anticipation on life's musical journey.

2) **Just in Time** ~ Chicago producer and songwriter Tim Gant brought an urban sophisticated sound to this track.

3) **Soul Purpose** ~ I wrote this song to provide a lyrical melody that I could envision being sung long after the song fades.

4) **That Wayman Smile!** ~ Jay Rowe and I put our heads together to pay tribute to my great friend, bass player and basketball player, Wayman Tisdale. Bassist Braylon Lacy succeeded in keeping the spirit of the "big guy" who will be missed by all.

5) **Detour Ahead** ~ Tim Gant and I collaborated on this tune that starts grooving at the downbeat and reminds us that we must be prepared in life to take another road to reach our destination.

6) **The Journey** ~ The journey is the most important part of the ride, and producer Eric Willis captures the essence of enjoying each moment in this flowing arrangement that highlights the soprano saxophone.

7) **Ventura Highway** ~ I grew up listening to this song by America. Grammy winner Arthur Dyer contributed a fantastic lead vocal to my arrangement of this classic.

8) **Open Road** ~ When I wrote this, I imagined a long stretch of interstate with cruise control and the windows down. Settle in for a long drive and keep your hands on the wheel!

9) **Distant Skies** ~ I was inspired by one of those picturesque sunsets as I was driving home one day. This is my sonic description of the hues of yellow, orange and magenta through the voices of the piano, flute, soprano sax and cello.

10) **Home Sweet Home** ~ As the journey started on the "Endless Highway," this is where it ends, back at home. I wanted the final climax of the journey to end with a captivating alto sax solo featuring a beautiful melody written by Eric Willis.



Discography

<u>Album</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Label</u>
Endless Highway	2009	Pacific Coast Jazz
Imagine This	2007	Pacific Coast Jazz
Bounce	2005	Rendezvous
Comfort and Joy	2001	Braxtonian Music
Face to Face	1999	Braxtonian Music
Katallasso	1998	Positive Music
Your Move	1992	Braxtonian Music



TOM BRAXTON

Buzz Quotes



"I was looking forward to performing with Tom Braxton on the Smooth Jazz Cruise because I had heard so many great things about him. But he exceeded even my high expectations and challenged me with his soulful heartfelt playing. He is my kind of musician! Whether interpreting my music, or performing his own originals with his band on the ship, he nailed everything and projected what seemed like unlimited energy! I can't wait to play with him again. I'm a fan!!"

~ Bob James ~

Jazz Legend and Grammy Award-Winning Keyboardist

". . . one of the most respected and loved sax men in Smooth Jazz, and it's absolutely his best album to date! Tom Braxton is a treasure, both as a musician and as a human being . . . ENDLESS HIGHWAY is filled with that 'sweet sound' and positive energy we've come to expect from this incredibly talented composer, producer, and musician. It's an absolute delight, from first note to last . . . a must-have album for your Smooth Jazz collection."

~ SmoothJazz.com ~

"Endless Highway . . . is packed with superior sax work that epitomizes the very essence and spirit of smooth jazz. Braxton has an affinity for the whole spectrum of jazz . . . some of the silky runs, scale work, and feel often found in the world of straight-ahead jazz artists while keeping that smooth bounce prominently displayed. Tom Braxton . . . clearly is a student of the 'fine china' of good jazz, and it's on full display here."

~ The Smooth Jazz Ride ~

"With an outstanding array of instrumentalists and vocalists in support, Braxton uses the ten superb tracks of 'Endless Highway' to take the listener on a groove-oriented excursion that, consistent with the best of the genre's current offerings, shimmers with a delightful urban sophistication . . . The CD is another significant step on Tom Braxton's 'endless highway' and comes highly recommended."

~ Smooth Jazz Therapy ~

". . . Braxton is clearly destined for major solo success."

~ Smooth Jazz Vibes ~

". . . one of smooth jazz's most prolific saxophonists . . . he has all the required tools to become a major force."

~ JazzReview.com ~

"The album draws attention to Braxton's mellifluous tonality and easy flowing narrations as he displays multiple tiers to his talent as a composer, producer and arranger . . . When Braxton puts himself into his music he does so with everything he has. His jovial mood in the tracks pumps positive vibes into the listener's ears and puts one in a very bright state of being . . . Endless Highway radiates happiness in every track."

~ JazzTimes ~

"Tom Braxton is one of my favorite sax players."

~ Kirk Whalum ~

Grammy Award-Winning Saxophonist

"When I'm on the road, Tom is the saxophonist I want to have with me . . . I love that sweet sound he gets on the horn."

~ Wayman Tisdale ~

Bass Guitarist and Oklahoma Jazz Hall of Famer

"Once you've heard the sweet sound of Tom Braxton's horn, you'll never forget it! That's why he has a standing invitation to play for Tulsa's Jazz on Greenwood!"

~ Barbara Swiggart, President ~

Bok/Williams Jazz on Greenwood Celebration

Tulsa, Oklahoma

"Tom is a favorite of our audiences every year here at the Texas Jazz Festival in Corpus Christi. He plays great music and is a wonderful person. We love him!"

~ Dr. Jeff Stannard ~

Texas Jazz Festival Society

Corpus Christi, Texas

"After Tom Braxton performed at our Cactus Jazz & Blues Festival, fans lined up for two hours to get his autograph. He was also excellent at the school workshops."

~ Nancy Loving, Executive Director ~

San Angelo Cultural Affairs Council

San Angelo, Texas

TOM BRAXTON

Music Workshops and Clinics



*Dunbar Middle School
in Lubbock, Texas*

National jazz recording artist, Tom Braxton, is a seasoned music educator and clinician with more than 20 years of teaching experience in the public and private school systems. For the past 25 years, Tom has dazzled audiences of all ages with his exciting and exhilarating stage performances that showcase his exceptional skill on alto, tenor and soprano saxophones as well as keyboards and flute. In like fashion, students from pre-school through the college level have been mesmerized and inspired by Tom's hands-on approach and interactive teaching style which are key elements of his music workshops and clinics.

Tom completed his early education in the Lubbock Independent School District. After graduating valedictorian of his high school class, he attended Texas Tech University on music and track scholarships. In 1983, the summa cum laude graduate received a Bachelor of Music/Performance degree from Tech and later relocated to Austin, Texas where he worked as a substitute teacher at both the primary and secondary levels. In 1989, Tom moved to Dallas, Texas and joined the staff of Tyler Street Christian Academy as band director. In his second year at Tyler Street Christian Academy, Tom was invited to also join the staff of Gospel Lighthouse Christian Academy to start a band program. Tom supervised and directed both music departments until 1992. Over the next 7 years, he served as the principal woodwind instructor at Christ for the Nations Institute and worked as a substitute music teacher in the Carrollton/Farmer's Branch School District. In the fall of 1999, Tom was invited to serve as the band director at American Heritage Academy in Carrollton, Texas.

The following year, Tom was appointed Fine Arts Director, and he functioned in that capacity for the next 10 years. Under his leadership, the music department won numerous awards at the district and state levels in band, choir, art and theater. Tom is currently a woodwind instructor at the Lone Star Music Academy in Flower Mound, Texas.

Tom has been a featured clinician and performer at Kirk Whalum's Gospel According to Jazz workshops in Memphis, Tennessee and Kansas City, Missouri. He has instructed worship leaders and musicians in churches in Seattle, Washington and northern California. Tom has also conducted seminars at the Oklahoma Jazz Hall of Fame. Alongside Everett Harp and Kirk Whalum, he was a featured guest speaker on "Sax Chat," a panel discussion hosted by Gerald Albright for the Smooth Jazz Cruise. Prior to his performance at the Smooth Jazz at South Shore Festival in Michigan City, Indiana, Tom hosted a forum for an enthusiastic crowd of young, budding musicians. While on tour in the Netherlands, Braxton conducted a special master class at the Pop Academy in Leeuwarden. Tom has conducted workshops and performed at a variety of colleges and universities including Texas Tech University, Del Mar College, Cedar Valley College, Midland College, University of Texas at Dallas, San Angelo State University, Prairie View A&M and Tuskegee Institute, to name a few.

Tom's music workshops and clinics are specifically designed to fit the needs and experience level of the student. His lectures and presentations can be adapted for students ranging from the pre-school level through college. The subject matter of the workshops encompasses a wide range of topics including a review of general music skills, growth and development of the musician, tips to improve technique, jazz improvisation, music industry tips and a "History of Jazz" PowerPoint presentation.



*Smooth Jazz at South Shore Music Forum
in Michigan City, Indiana*



*Master Class at Pop Academy
in Leeuwarden, Netherlands*

General Workshop Overview

The objectives for the students in the workshop fall into three main areas: growth and development of the musician, a review of general music skills, and the importance of the proper equipment for music production.

In the area of growth and development, the student will learn about the pursuit of the craft of music. The student will see the importance of the history of their particular genre of music and the priority of music education if they are to attain success. The business of music is also an integral portion of this segment. Character issues such as dependability, responsibility and preparedness round out the picture of what a professional musician should be. They will be given insight into the world of the working musician.

General music skills are critical and will be discussed. Tone production, scales, chord recognition and sight-reading are some of the topics to be covered. Practice regimens and method books play a key part and the student will receive practical instruction in these areas. Working on weaknesses will be stressed.

Proper equipment can't be overlooked and is a staple of the workshop. Students will learn what to look for when they are buying instruments, mouthpieces etc. They will also learn the proper care and maintenance of their instrument.

Clear instruction in this workshop will give the student practical information that they can take home and use immediately.

Corporate and Non-Profit Events



*Tiffany's 25-Year Celebration
in Dallas, Texas*

Tom Braxton's extensive experience as a national recording and touring artist makes him the ideal choice for quality entertainment in a variety of corporate settings. Whether he's performing solo or with his trio or quartet, Tom's exceptional arrangements provide the perfect backdrop for receptions, banquets or dinners, and award ceremonies.

Tom's exciting stage presence is an asset for those events designed to showcase the artist. His skill on soprano, alto and tenor saxophones as well as flute and keyboards thrills audiences of all ages and ethnic backgrounds. His live band blends elements of jazz, Latin, funk and R&B to create a sound that is distinctive, innovative and appealing. In these settings, Tom's show ranges from a performance for a captive audience to a repertoire of "oldies," grooves and R&B favorites sure to get the crowd up dancing.

Tom has performed at numerous corporate events for a variety of clients including Tiffany's, Saks Fifth Avenue, Ford Motor Company, Verizon, Time Warner, MBNA, Doubletree Hotels, The Dallas Zoo, the Dallas Museum of Art and the American Jazz Museum. He has also been a featured guest for various social, civic, service and non-profit organizations such as The Links, the National Association of Black MBA's, Jack and Jill, Operation Oasis and Dare to Dream.

TOM BRAXTON

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Record Label

Pacific Coast Jazz
www.pacificcoastjazz.com

Official Facebook Page

www.facebook.com/tombraxtonmusic

Official Twitter Page

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