Skin Deep – the jazz drummer in the spotlight

In the 1960s, the precociously talented drummer Tony Williams – who at 17 performed with Miles Davis – redefined the role of the rhythm section in jazz ensembles with his wildly inventive playing. From background time-keeper, the jazz drummer was suddenly thrust into the spotlight as a virtuoso performer.

Widely regarded as the greatest jazz drummer of his era, Williams has had a profound influence on countless young drummers.

One of those is Perth drummer Michael Perkins, who cites Williams as just one of many brilliant musicians – along with Art Blakey, Elvin Jones, Ed Thigpen and Philly Joe Jones, among many others – who have provided the inspiration for his upcoming concert as part of the Jazz Windows Series at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts.

Skin Deep, performed by Perkins and his six-piece jazz ensemble on August 20 at 7.30pm in WAAPA’s Music Auditorium, will celebrate the role of the jazz drummer from the rhythm explorers and swing kings of the past to the modern subtle style.

With vocalist Bronwyn Sprogowski, saxophonist Carl Mackey, trumpeter Ricki Malet, pianist Glyn MacDonald and bassist Pete Jeavons, Perkins will showcase the influence the world’s seminal drummers have had on drum set performances.

Performing memorable jazz standards such as ‘Green Dolphin Street’ and ‘These Foolish Things (Remind Me of You)’, ‘Passion Dance’ and Horace Silver’s ‘Nutville’, Perkins will also explore approaches to playing behind a soloist, soloing on the drum set and trading solos.

“This is not so much an attempt at imitating the great players of yesteryear, as they are mostly inimitable,” says Perkins. “It’s more an attempt to capture on stage how certain aspects of their playing have influenced me personally.”

Perkins, a 2001 WAAPA graduate, has toured both nationally and internationally, highlights which include the 2006 Villa Celimontana Jazz Festival in Rome and the 2009 Fortitude Valley Jazz Festival, and has performed with jazz legends such as Gary Bartz, Christoff Spendel, Don Burrows and James Morrison.

Performance Information: Skin Deep
Thursday 20 August at 7.30pm.
Music Auditorium, WAAPA, Edith Cowan University, 2 Bradford St, Mt Lawley.
Tickets are $20 full/$15 concession. Bookings through WAAPA Box Office on 9370 6636.

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For complimentary tickets to this concert or for further information, interviews or photo opportunities, please contact:
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