

Chip Stephens

Jazz pianist Chip Stephens has performed on Grammy and Emmy Award winning recordings. In the aggregate, Stephens' collaborative, recording and world-wide touring with some of the legendary figures in the history of jazz, would compile a dissertation. He is sought after for his hard-swinging, powerful and lyrical pianism. Since starting at the University of Illinois at Urbana/Champaign in 2004, Stephens has consistently been ranked in the top 10% of University of Illinois Professors. He was recognized by the Provost, Vice Chancellor and the Committee on Tenure and Promotion as being "Extraordinary for the level of his Teaching and Collaborative Artistry." Recent reviews of Stephens' work show his national and international reach, quote: "Chip Stephens is an impeccable technician, a clever, even daring composer, and a restless explorer of melody. Adept at swing and complexity, he unfurls piano lines with a restless authority that marries brawn to delicacy." "Chip Stephens, who first caught my attention in 1996 when he appeared in London with Arturo Sandoval, and his poised, intelligent pianism throughout the (Charles McPherson) album is an absolute joy." "...jazz pianist Chip Stephens grabs you immediately." "...and Stephens is a propulsive and harmonically deep pianist whose CDs with his own trio and with the legendary Curtis Fuller are well worth checking out." "Chip Stephens is not 'bar room' – he is a big inventive theatre, improvising time and space; swing, swept into verse and chorus with everything to play for." "...especially Stephens, who's a joy on every track." "Chip Stephens is a hard-charging pianist that may just be scratching the surface of what may well be an untapped reservoir of creativity for our listening pleasure." "...and Stephens, a hardbop wizard who's "C Hips Blues," with its stop-time routines and tags, is the joyous highlight of this (Curtis Fuller) CD." "Stephens is like Gaudi architecture, all riffs and adornments straight from nature - from music that you know." "Stephens displays great fluency on the fast numbers and a deep introspective eloquence on the ballads." "Breathe it in! Some real, muscular, no apologies hard bop piano! Stephens is a real deal, head-spinning jazz pianist!" "The tunes are in the deep catalog and are pulled off in a masterful fashion, creating lasting musical images long after the final notes die out."

