

# Jazz Beyond Borders

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## High Charting Smooth Jazz Saxophonist Kenney Polson Hits Hawaii

Sailing high on the success of his latest album, *For Lovers Only*, Portland based smooth jazz saxophonist Kenney Polson returns to Hawaii in July. His new sound merges the best of jazz and rhythm and blues into one cool and captivating blend.

The 2019 release includes leading players such as guitarist Bruce Conte and keyboardist Roger Smith (Tower of Power), trumpeter Larry Gittens (Kool & The Gang), guitarist Phil Upchurch (Donny Hathaway and George Benson), and smooth jazz pioneer – pianist Tom Grant. Trombonist Fred Wesley (Parliament Funkadelic) and bassist/vocalist Michael Henderson (Miles Davis, Stevie Wonder) are also featured.

The album includes brilliant takes on favorites like “Valentine Love” by Michael Henderson and “La La (Means I love You)” by Tom Bell and William Hart. Noteworthy Polson originals include tunes like “Blessed” and “Black Swan,” a tribute to the first Black owned record company.

Critics have been kind. Geannine Reid of *All About Jazz* says, “*For Lovers Only* invites you to sit back, relax and grab a glass of wine...enough substance to catch your ears and enough smooth to soothe your mind.” Susan Frances of “Jazz 2 Love” calls the music “sonically smooth and emotively sublime.” In praise of Polson’s musicianship, George W. Harris of *Jazz Weekly* says “Kenney Polson displays a mastery of many reeds.” (For music and more visit <http://www.kenneypolson.com>.)

Kenney Polson has appeared on U.S. television with jazz greats Kenny Burrell, Jimmy Heath, Phil Woods, David Sanborn and Wynton Marsalis. He has performed live with genre giants Joe Williams, Gil Scott-Heron, Michael Henderson, Norman Connors, Bettye Swan, and Lee Garrett.

Polson’s career has taken him to Japan, Korea, Hawaii, Colombia, Brazil, and the Caribbean. Traveling to more than 50 countries, he shared his own music while picking up the nuances of style that inform his current work. He toured extensively with Rick James’s Original Stone City Band and led his own ensembles to the Capital City Jazz Festival, Orange County Funk Fest, the Stockton Smooth Jazz Festival, PDX Jazz Festival and Vanport Jazz Festival. His smooth tones are well known in Pacific Northwest jazz haunts in Eugene, Portland and Seattle.

An accomplished composer and educator, Polson hails from a music loving family in Kansas City, Missouri. His grandfather, “Chubby Wayne” Harshaw played with jazz royalty such as Count Basie and Cab Calloway. His Uncle Charles sang with the legendary Coasters. Polson holds a master’s degree in jazz composition and arranging from Howard University in Washington, D.C., a jazz mecca for young musicians.

Kenney Polson’s band on Oahu includes Michael Grande (keyboards), George Coppedge (bass), and Konrad Kendrick (drums). On July 27, he heads to Gertrude’s Jazz Bar on the Big Island to play straight ahead jazz standards with Jocelyn Michelle on keys, Greg Shirley on bass and Nick Wong

(drums). On July 28 he returns to Jazz Minds Honolulu to play a special gig with Raw Sugar Jazz Quintet. The tour ends with an August 1 concert at Blue Note Hawaii. Visit <http://www.jazzbeyondborders.com> for more dates and information.

### **Kenney Polson Hawaii Tour Dates**

**Thursday, July 25, 7 – 10 PM**

Jazz Minds Honolulu  
1661 Kapiolani Blvd  
Honolulu, HI 96814  
(808) 485-9264, Admission \$15

**Friday, July 26, 7:30 – 10 PM**

Medici's in Manoa Market Place  
2754 Woodlawn Drive  
Unit 7-103  
Honolulu, HI 96822  
(808) 779-5363, Admission \$20  
[www.honolulumusicatmedicis.com](http://www.honolulumusicatmedicis.com)

**Saturday, July 27, 7-10 PM**

Gertrude's Jazz Bar (straight ahead show with Greg Shirley, Jocelyn Michelle and Nick Wong)  
75-5699 Ali'i Drive  
Kailua-Kona, HI 96740  
(808) 327-5299, Admission: \$5  
<https://www.gertrudesjazzbar.com>

**Sunday, July 28, 7 – 10 PM**

Kenney Polson with the Raw Sugar Jazz Quintet  
Jazz Minds Honolulu  
1661 Kapiolani Blvd  
Honolulu, HI 96814  
(808) 485-9264  
[www.jazzhonolulu.com](http://www.jazzhonolulu.com)

**Monday, July 29, Private Party noon – 3 PM**

Hilton Hawaiian Village Beach Resort in Honolulu

**Thursday, August 1 Shows: 6:30 & 9 PM**

Blue Note, Hawaii  
2335 Kalakaua Avenue  
Honolulu, HI 96815  
(808) 777-4890  
[www.bluenotehawaii.com](http://www.bluenotehawaii.com)

\* See Facebook group Hawaii Smooth Jazz Lovers (Smooth Jazz in Paradise).

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P. O. Box 172 Davidsonville, MD 21035 USA [www.jazzbeyondborders.com](http://www.jazzbeyondborders.com)