

Dave Stryker

FULL BIOGRAPHY

Jazz guitarist

Whether you've heard guitarist Dave Stryker leading his own group (with 37 CD's as a leader to date), or as a featured sideman with Stanley Turrentine, Jack McDuff, and many others, you know why the *Village Voice* calls him “one of the most distinctive guitarists to come along in recent years.”

Hot House magazine awarded him Best Guitarist – Fans Decision for 2017. He was recently voted once again as one of the top Jazz Guitarists in the 2025 Downbeat Critics and Readers Polls for the 15th time.

“I have followed Dave Stryker's playing since his early days in Omaha through his long stay with Stanley Turrentine... and he just gets better and better with one of the most joyous feels around.”

— Pat Metheny

Recent releases

Dave's last 6 CD's have all gone to #1 on the JazzWeek Radio chart. *Stryker with Strings Goes to the Movies* is Dave's 2025 recording featuring him in front of a 30 piece studio orchestra. In 2024 *Groove Street* was Dave's #1 recording featuring Bob Mintzer and Stryker's working trio of Jared Gold on organ and McClenty Hunter on drums. The trio recently opened up for Steely Dan's 2002 summer tour. *As We Are* features John Patitucci, Brian Blade, Julian Shore and a string quartet led by violinist Sara Caswell. It received one of the Top Album of the Year honors in the Downbeat Readers Poll and Jazz Times magazine.

Eight Track III stayed at #1 on JazzWeek Radio chart for 6 straight weeks. *Messin' with Mister T*, is a celebration of the man he worked with for over a decade — Stanley Turrentine, “Mister T” — with ten of the greatest tenor sax

players on the scene today. It went to #1 on JazzWeek Radio and stayed in the Top 50 for 20 weeks and has received great reviews including 4 1/2 stars in Downbeat magazine.

“Guitarist / composer Dave Stryker possesses golden tone, urgent style, and the kind of heated technique that can blow the roof off any gig. Stryker cut his teeth with organist Jack McDuff and tenor saxophonist Stanley Turrentine, and that grits-n-gravy goodness seemed to mark his music: an urban tale spinner, a sharp stylist able to improve any bandstand, a storyteller in sound of the highest degree.”

— Ken Micallef / Jazz Times, Jan. 2022

Journeyman

Dave Stryker grew up in Omaha, Nebraska and moved to New York City in 1980.

After establishing himself in the local music scene, he joined organist Jack McDuff's group for two years 1984-85. When McDuff wasn't on the road (literally traveling by van all over the country) they worked a steady four-night a week gig at Dude's Lounge in Harlem. His first break, this turned out to be an invaluable experience, paying his dues night after night with the soulful jazz organist.

It was at Dude's Lounge that Stryker met tenor saxophonist Stanley Turrentine, who would occasionally sit in. After leaving McDuff, Turrentine asked Stryker to join his quintet. From 1986-1995 he played with the legendary saxophonist at all the major festivals, concert halls, and clubs throughout the world. He is featured on two Turrentine CD's (Stanley recorded Stryker's tune “Sidesteppin”).

With Turrentine, Stryker was able to play with such jazz greats as Dizzy Gillespie and Freddie Hubbard. The ten years playing alongside the tenor legend helped Stryker realize the importance of having his own sound. Dave continued to work with Stanley and was with him during his final week at the Blue Note in NYC, when he passed in Sept. 2000. Stryker has also performed with James Moody, Jimmy Smith, Dr. Lonnie Smith, Jimmy Heath, Kevin Mahogany, Eliane Elias, Joe Lovano, Steve Slagle and many others.

Composer and publisher

Early on Stryker realized that as much as he loved playing standards and the jazz repertoire he had to have something of his own to give to the music. He feels that his writing combined with his playing is what shapes his musical expression. He has recorded and published over 150 of his own compositions and has released *The Dave Stryker Songbook* with most of his original music. Also 18 of the compositions (from the first five SteepleChase CD's) are compiled in the book: *The Music of Dave Stryker* (SteepleChase Music).

Some of the other artists who have recorded Dave's music are: Stanley Turrentine, Kevin Mahogany, Victor Lewis, and Steve Slagle. Dave continues to perform with The Dave Stryker Organ Trio, Dave Stryker Eight Track Band, and his Blue to the Bone Band. Dave Stryker's Trio opened for Steely Dan's 2022 Summer tour "Earth After Hours".

Recent gigs

Recent gigs have included Birdland, the Blue Note, Dizzy's Club Coca Cola at Jazz at Lincoln Center, the Monterey Jazz Festival, The Newport Jazz Festival, The Keystone Korner in Baltimore MD, The Jazz Bakery in LA, and tours of Europe, Canada and Japan.

Dave co-led The Stryker/Slagle Band for 30 years with saxophonist Steve Slagle.

He has appeared on over 75 CD's as a sideman. Past sideman work has included vocalist Kevin Mahogany's group, with Dave writing and arranging music for Kevin's Telarc release *Pride and Joy* and *Another Time, Another Place* on Warner Bros and tours of Europe, Japan, Brazil, Poland and Carnegie Hall.

Producer

As a producer, Stryker compiled the CD *The Guitar Artistry of Billy Rogers* which is the only existing record of the brilliant jazz playing of the late underground legend who was his friend, former teacher and member of the Crusaders. Dave has also produced *A Tribute to Grant Green* on Evidence Music and has produced many other artists.

Educator

Dave is Adjunct Professor of Jazz Guitar at the Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers University, William Paterson University, and the John J. Cali School of Music at Montclair State University. Dave recently launched his online teaching school at www.artistworks.com. His book *Dave Stryker's Jazz Guitar Improvisation Method Vol III* is available [on his Bandcamp site](#).