

Jim Snidero

Grammy award-winning alto saxophonist, composer and author Jim Snidero encapsulates what is both unique and compelling about jazz. Hailed as an “alto sax virtuoso” (Downbeat) with “mind-boggling” improvisation skills (The Guardian), and “an alto saxophone sound that is one of the richest and purest on the planet” (Stereophile), he has amassed over 16 million streams on Spotify and Apple music presenting acoustic jazz of the highest caliber, including his 2021 album *Live at the Deer Head Inn*, (Savant) receiving a 5-star masterpiece review in Downbeat magazine. In 2024, Jim Snidero reached the pinnacle of the jazz world, placing top 5, alto saxophone, in the preeminent Downbeat Magazine International Critics Poll.

Growing up in Camp Springs, Maryland, just outside of Washington, DC, Snidero immediately fell in love with jazz as a teenager, studying with jazz giants Phil Woods and David Liebman, then attending the U of North Texas, becoming a member of the famed One O’Clock Lab Band. After arriving in New York in 1981 at age 23, Snidero first appeared on the jazz radar when he joined Brother Jack McDuff’s band, recording two albums with a jazz great. That proved to be the first of many notable sideman stints including The Mingus Big Band, Eddie Palmieri, Toshiko Akiyoshi, Frank Wess, Sting, Frank Sinatra and Brian Lynch (garnering a Grammy as featured soloist), among many.

Snidero became a leader on record with *On Time* (Toshiba/EMI 1984), the first of 25 notable dates that he would record under his own name. An early highlight was *Blue Afternoon* (Criss Cross, 1989), deemed one of the best jazz records in history in *The Penguin Jazz Guide: The History Of The Music In The 1001 Best Albums*. And his album *Strings* (Milestone, 2003/Savant 2022), which he both composed and arranged for a string ensemble and hailed a “masterpiece” (San Francisco Guardian), is considered one of the very best of the genre.

Over the past 15 years, Snidero has been with the highly-regarded Highnote/Savant label, resulting in multi-year placement in the preeminent Downbeat Magazine International Critics Poll. Highlights from his Savant catalog include the critically-acclaimed *Far Far Away* with Kurt Rosenwinkel, *Project K* with Dave Douglas and the above mentioned *Live at the Deer Head Inn*.

In 1996, Jim Snidero revolutionized jazz education by penning the first of three *Jazz Conception* book series (Advance), cementing his place as the best-selling jazz author of his generation, then continued his contributions with *The Essence of the Blues* (2018) and *The Essence of Bebop* (2020), considered a masterwork in jazz education. He is on the faculty at The New School, and was a visiting professor at both Indiana University and Princeton University.