

# RONNY SMITH



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*Contemporary  
Jazz Guitarist*

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# ABOUT ME

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Born in Baltimore Maryland, guitarist Ronny Smith is certainly one of the most underrated guitarists in music history. Smith's playing is not dissimilar from Nick Colionne but with touches of Benson/ Norman Brown and even 70's Johnny Guitar Watson, however still owns his significant unique style.

“Guitarist Ronny Smith's mellow tone, subtle creativity, and ability to groove over catchy rhythms have made him an increasingly popular force in contemporary jazz”. *Scott Yanow, Author (The Jazz Singers, Bebop, Trumpeter Kings, Jazz On Film and Jazz.*

Smith credits his desire to showcase a more expansive palette of musical tastes to the 35 years he performed in U.S. Army bands, including four years of active duty and 31 years of part time service. He explains that in the military band system, soldiers can be assigned (even at the same time) to play in jazz combos, rock bands and country groups, and have to learn all types of repertoire for ceremonies, concerts, banquets, embassy receptions and any events involving military associated dignitaries. In addition to playing guitar for small ensembles, pop and jazz groups, Smith also displayed his clarinet skills in the Army's symphonic concert and ceremonial bands. His first stop was the Army's school of music. He stayed there four months and then immediately played with bands all over Germany (Frankfurt, Stuttgart, Heidelberg). Throughout his career, Smith played everywhere from Nijmegen, Holland to La Paz, Bolivia.



# THE EARLY YEARS

Ronny Smith's earliest musical memories find him in his family basement listening to, learning from and emulating George Benson's iconic hit "Breezin'." From there, he got into Larry Carlton, Earl Klugh, Brecker Brothers and Joe Pass. Smith cites one of his greatest influences as two-time Grammy nominated guitar legend Pat Martino, whom Smith was able to take private lessons from upon an introduction by his jazz guitar teacher Larry Waldridge while attending Morgan State University (Baltimore). While studying there for his Music Education degree, Smith also had the opportunity to play in the jazzband at the University of Maryland. Dr. George Ross, one of the instructors at the U of Maryland, had been a guest soloist with the Commodores in the U.S. Navy Jazz Band, and suggested that Smith audition for a military band. The guitarist auditioned for the Army band during his senior year at the University of Maryland (where he had transferred) and joined immediately prior to graduation. The rest began his history

# ON STAGE



For many years as a popular regional performer, Ronny Smith's energetic vibe and traditional meets contemporary, blues and gospel spiced approach to standards and original composition have instantly captivated audiences and helped him form a powerful connection to them. Smith has played everywhere from, Twins Jazz Club (DC), and Jazz at Meade Memorial Episcopa (Alexandria VA) to popular series like Appalachian Regional Commission Concert Series (DC), The Hill Chapel Jazz Concerts Series (New Market, MD), Downtown Baltimore Harbor Concert Series, Crown Plaza Hampton Jazz Series (Hampton VA), Milburn Theater (Cecil MD), Bradford Jazz Festival (Bradford CT), Jazz & Blues Festival the Harve de Grace (MD).



# PORTFOLIO

Ronny has recorded with some of the top session musicians of the Nashville and California scene, to include, Gary Lunn (Peter Cetera), Pat Coil (Michael McDonald), Craig Nelson (Ben Tankard), and Dan Needham (Euge Groove), Scott Martin and Stan Martin (Quincy Jones) and Andy Martin (Gordon Goodwin's Big Phat band). A premier Jazz guitarist. His energetic and modern approach to standards and original compositions mesmerizes audiences and makes it impossible not to feel happy after listening. He is a master at creating atmospheres which makes people eager to bury themselves in, and happy to stay submerged in for long lengths of time.



His unique style appeals the audience, and shows in his number of releases which commenced in 2001 with 'Long Time Comin' and continued with 'Laid Back', 'Got Groove', 'Simply Stated', 'Just Groovin' and his highly acclaimed 2013 project 'Can't Stop Now'. 'Can't Stop Now' is his sixth release and features the fantastic singles, "Slim Pickin" and, "City Groove". City Groove, quickly became #1 on Billboards' BDS New & Active SMOOTH JAZZ chart listing. Shortly thereafter, rose to become #25 on Billboards' BDS radio SMOOTH JAZZ NATIONAL AIRPLAY top 30 charts. 'Shake It Up' followed four years later and in January 2020 he expands his discography yet further with 'Raise the Roof' and Coastal Sunset (2021) with his essential return with a special twist. In addition, Struttin (2024) #98 Top Smooth Jazz 100 Albums of 2024 (Smooth Jazz. Com). His current release, Cruisin (2025) currently #54 Smooth jazz Network top 100.



[www.ronnysmith.com](http://www.ronnysmith.com)

# REVIEW

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“If you’re a fan of all styles of instrumental music and admire musicians who are true innovators and adventurers –and if you feel there’s more to musical success than simply hitting big on the smooth jazz charts – then Ronny Smith is your kind of guy”. –  
Jonathan Widran, The JW Vibe

## MEDIA AND BOOKING

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