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TOMMY GEARHART (short bio)

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“Everything that comes from Tommy Gearhart’s mouth and heart is the truth.”

- JON HENDRICKS, NEA Jazz Master & multi-Grammy Award Winner

“Tommy Gearhart is one of the strongest jazz singers I have heard...and his interpretations make each song performed a musical gem”

- DR. LEE BERK, President Emeritus Berklee College of Music

“In my thirty-plus years in the music business, I have come across few people with Tommy’s skill and devotion as a performer ... Tommy is a formidable representative of jazz and The American Songbook”

- DOUG LAWRENCE, Lead Tenor Sax, The Count Basie Orchestra

Tommy Gearhart, jazz crooning vocalist, originally hails from the Greater Detroit area via Toledo, Ohio. Tommy has learned his trade at the feet of legends in the jazz scene. Called an emerging “young lion” by those in his industry, Tommy is young and creative, with unique spins on an age-old tradition. Deeply rooted in the blues and Detroit swing feel, he effectively interjects that great foundation into a modern day approach. Though Tommy's performances cannot escape comparisons to the belting bluesman *Joe Williams*, *Mark Murphy's* wonderful tone, and *Mel Torme's* sophisticated musicianship, he has developed his own unique style - It integrates an honest, traditional approach with utmost respect to the melody and lyrics, along with tasteful, heartfelt phrasing that is best summed up by legendary jazz vocalist/lyricist, **Jon Hendricks** - ***“Everything that comes from Tommy Gearhart's mouth and heart is the truth.”*** From Gershwin and the Great American Songbook, to jazz standards, to penning original lyrics to some not-so-standard jazz tunes - Tommy is quite a versatile, soulful, and talented vocalist.

Gearhart has performed at venues in music festivals and jazz clubs around the US, Canada, and has performed and/or recorded with many fantastic musicians such as the legendary father of Vocalese and 8 time *Grammy Award* winner & NEA Jazz Master **JON HENDRICKS**, trombonist **DELFEAYO MARSALIS**, trumpeter **BOBBY SHEW**, late tenor saxophonist **DONALD WALDEN**, guitarist **PETER BERNSTEIN**, tenor saxman **DOUG LAWRENCE**, trumpeter **MARCUS BELGRAVE**, tenor saxophonist **LLEW TABACKIN**, trumpeter **JOE MAGNARELLI**, alto saxophonist **LARRY SMITH**, drummer **RODNEY GREENE**, bassist **PAUL GILL**, *members of*

Harry Connick, Jr.'s Big Band (saxophonist **JERRY WELDON**, trumpeter **DERRICK GARDNER**, baritone saxophonist **DAVE SCHUMACHER**, bassist **NEIL CAINE**), and many more.

Standing at six feet, five inches tall adds an even greater presence to his already dynamic, and charming personality.

In 2009, Tommy Gearhart received the prestigious honor of being appointed by *Governor Bill Richardson* as a Commissioner on the *New Mexico Music Commission* which preserves, cultivates, and grows music in New Mexico. A few fellow notable commissioners are Dr. Lee Berk who is the President Emeritus of *Berklee College of Music* in Boston (1979-2004), and country music star, Randy Travis. In addition, Tommy is also very passionate about giving back to the community, and serves on the Leadership Board on the *National Multiple Sclerosis Society*, and he donates his time and talent to other causes such as the *Cystic Fibrosis Foundation*. *Healing, Harmony, & Heart* is an annual jazz benefit concert that raises money and awareness for those with MS -- It features world-class performers and was founded by Tommy.

www.healingharmonyheart.org

By Robert Eldred