

Benni Chawes biography

Born in Denmark into a musical family Benni Chawes was surrounded by music from a very early age. His grandparents played piano and mandolin and his mother attended The Royal Danish Academy of Music as a singer. Benni Chawes went on studying music and graduated in 1995 with a Magna Cum Laude Degree in piano performance from Berklee College of Music in Boston. Chawes' professional career started to take off however not as a piano player but as *InstrumentalVoice*...

InstrumentalVoice a concept he developed using his voice to push the boundaries of musician-as-instrument. He demonstrated his virtuosity with vocal instrumental sounds: bass, drums, percussion, horn, guitar etc. -- sounding like the true instruments. He was awarded "Outstanding Musicianship" ⁽¹⁾ and won three recording awards: *Artist of the Year*, *Best Jazz Album*, and *Best Jazz Song* ⁽²⁾ and got the remark "You made my night" from no less than Ray Charles. Benni Chawes is featured on a total of 16 albums, has toured and appeared on a number of national radio- and television shows in US, Canada and Europe and has performed with a variety of groups from boy-band to Boston Symphony Orchestra.

After living in the US for more than 6 years Benni Chawes moved back to Denmark and pursued songwriting. He began writing simple melodic songs mixing jazz, soul, and pop. This is what became Benni Chawes' new style: Soft and intimate music that brings a warm feel-good atmosphere. And with his warm crooner voice, Chawes and his unplugged band sends ones thoughts drifting to contemplative conversation and stolen kisses. Chawes' catchy songs and cool grooves open up the road to a rare live experience, inviting the audience to embrace the vibe...!

Benni Chawes signed a record deal with STUNT Records in 2006 and released *Benni Chawes, Up Close* in October that same year. The album was produced by the renowned producer, Chris Minh Doky and includes duets with Malene Mortensen. *Up Close* is played on a regular basis on the Danish national radio stations and in heavy rotation on a number of radio stations in Thailand. The album received great reviews and to name just a few: "Up Close is vocal jazz/soul/pop of international class. He is by far the best Danish vocal jazz artist this year" ★★★★★ (5 of 6 star review) GAFFA (Danish national music magazine). "Benni Chawes makes everything sound new. If *Up Close* doesn't 'make it big' there is something wrong with the music market" (Jazznyt, Norway). The album is selling in Europe, Japan, Thailand, and the US.

Bang & Olufsen the Danish makers of high-end audio and video systems, found Chawes' unique voice and style of music to be in a class by itself and decided to sponsor him. This makes Chawes the very first artist to be sponsored by Bang & Olufsen. Chawes produced an album exclusively for them with his songs, recorded with his band, including his favorite bass player Niels-Henning Ørsted Pedersen. The album, *Bang & Olufsen proudly presents: Benni Chawes* was released January 2007. Chawes has toured for Bang & Olufsen in Scandinavia, Poland, Israel, Thailand, USA and Canada.

Live Chawes' audiences get a taste of his InstrumentalVoice. Being fascinated by his complete mastering of the technique to produce the sounds of various instruments with his voice - a sure showstopper - and on a number of his songs, these "special effects" blend in with his singing and the instruments of the band to a great and pleasant surprise to the listener.

⁽¹⁾ International Association of Jazz Educators ⁽²⁾ CARA Recording Awards (with vox one)