

Lemon City Rhythm Section Releases Album to Benefit Miami Lighthouse for the Blind

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The Lemon City Rhythm Section.

Photo Courtesy of Trinity Group PR

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Anyone who knows even the slightest bit about the history of the South Florida music scene knows that the late Henry Stone was a visionary. For those that don't know, Stone launched TK Records, a hugely successful independent label that became a worldwide sensation. More importantly, the company launched the careers of several future superstars: KC & The Sunshine Band, Betty Wright, Timmy Thomas and a number of other artists that continue to call Miami home.

For guitarist, composer, and producer Aaron Fishbein, Stone was not only a legend, but also a source of personal inspiration. Having laid claim to a notable career of his own — Fishbein's name has appeared in the credits of albums by Beyoncé, Christina Aguilera, Pitbull, and Sly and Robbie, among others. He continues to follow in the footsteps of the man he came to know both personally and professionally.

“It was a special privilege to be asked to score filmmaker Mark Moormann’s documentary about Henry,” Fishbein recalls. “While working on the movie, I became friends with Henry’s son, Joe, and I got to know the family as well. Henry went blind later in life, and the Lighthouse for the Blind gave him his freedom back through special training... Many years ago, Henry put together an instrumental album to benefit the Lighthouse, and recently, Joe approached me about doing a new one.”

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[The Miami Lighthouse for the Blind](#) is an organization that offers rehabilitation services and other resources for Miami's blind community. They also have a music program, where they teach and train visually impaired musicians. Proceeds from Fishbein's upcoming album, entitled *Instrumental Magic 2*, will go to the Lighthouse. The album itself was built around an unusual concept: every track became a cover of a song originally recorded by a blind musician, including Stevie Wonder, Ray Charles, Jose Feliciano and Ronnie Milsap. “Joe Stone and I picked the songs,” Fishbein explains. “Then we got everyone in the room, and the magic just happened.”

And "everyone" was not just anyone. To bring the idea to its natural conclusion, Fishbein recruited saxophone player Jeff Zavač, a University of Miami Music School grad who was born blind. “Jeff is a killer sax guy and he’s hilarious too,” Fishbein insists. “We all had fun working with him. Being blind definitely doesn’t hold him back. He’s taught music at the college level. He plays shows and makes recordings and he’s just a really good guy.”

Fishbein and Zavač became the genesis of a band they dubbed the Lemon City Rhythm Section, named for the place where the group got its start.

"The original *Instrumental Magic* album was recorded with programmed drum machines and synths, but I wanted to get some of our great local musicians involved and have some fun keeping it organic," Fishbein says. "Keyboard player/arranger Jerald Dorsett had recently moved back from Georgia and I wanted to work with him, so I gave him a shout... Jerald kept telling me about Jodi Hill's son, David Hill. Jodi had played drums with KC & The Sunshine Band. David isn't really that old, and so I had my doubts. But it turns out that David is also a great drummer."

Not surprisingly, the younger Hill felt a special connection to the project. "Growing up in a musical family has been such a blessing for me," he explains. "Seeing my father play drums for KC & the Sunshine Band was amazing... Working on the Lighthouse for the Blind project was monumental, because it was my first time recording. And it just so happens to be with Henry Stone's son Joe, whose father actually found and groomed KC and so many other timeless artists."