

BACKSTORY

# BRYAN ANTHONY

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*The Big Band Vocalist*

Born Bryan Anthony Montemarano in Santa Rosa, California, on August 28, 1977, Anthony grew up outside Houston, Texas, where he sang in church choir and grade school vocal ensembles. In high school he got involved in musical theater, but experienced an epiphany when a friend gave him a copy of Sinatra's greatest hits from his Reprise years. While seeking out more Sinatra recordings, he got turned on to the jazz vocal pantheon, from Joe Williams, Tony Bennett, and Chet Baker to Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, and Carmen McRae. In 1995 he enrolled at Manhattan School of Music to study classical voice, then went on to earn a master's at NYU in jazz and studio music.

Anthony hadn't gotten far in his academic career before he landed his first major gig in 1997 when the Glenn Miller Orchestra hired him for a tour. He ended up taking a leave of absence from school that allowed him to keep his schol-



arship, and spent a year on the road crooning some of the best-loved standards in the American Songbook, including "At Last" and "The Nearness of You."

As his reputation spread, Anthony became a first-call big band vocalist. He sang with the Tommy Dorsey Orchestra under the direction of trombone legend Buddy Morrow, who shared stories of going out on the road with Dorsey in 1938. Anthony released his first album in 2000, "Look at Me Now," an impressive session he expanded and re-released in 2006 as "Songs for Dreamers." In between, the Nelson Riddle Orchestra came calling, a plum gig that offered Anthony the best showcase yet, with its treasure trove of arrangements written for Sinatra, Nat "King" Cole, and Dean Martin. He continues to work with the Riddle Orchestra, where his gift for putting his own stamp on classics prevails.

Listening to his newest album, *A Night Like This*, there's no mistaking Anthony for anyone else. He's clearly imbibed the jazz/pop vocal tradition, and he's succeeded in his mission to find himself in the music. Whether backed by a brass-laden big band or an intimate piano trio, Anthony knows that like America itself the American Songbook thrives when it's constantly being reinvented.

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