



## ***Your Songs – The Music of Elton John* releases on ObliqSound; Master Jazz Musicians Pietro Tonolo, Steve Swallow, Gil Goldstein and Paul Motian Collaborate On Surprising and Delightful Homage to Elton John**

New York, NY (May 7, 2007) - *Your Songs – The Music of Elton John* (OS 506) will surprise you. The new album of jazz renditions of Elton John classics could only work in the right hands, and with Italian saxophonist **Pietro Tonolo** corralling the likes of bassist **Steve Swallow**, drummer **Paul Motian** and pianist/accordionist/arranger **Gil Goldstein**, the project most definitely is. In stores now in France, the United Kingdom, Germany, Austria and Switzerland, and hitting the USA on July 17, the 9-song CD on independent music label **ObliqSound** makes an incredible show of the close relationship that jazz has with pop music.

Just as John Coltrane took Rodgers and Hammerstein's *My Favourite Things* and turned its waltz inside out, or the way Miles Davis stole *Someday My Prince Will Come* from Walt Disney's *Sleeping Beauty*, these four artists turn on its head the music of Elton John, one of the greatest craftsmen of pop music. The seven Elton John songs performed here are some of the pianist's most lovely and memorable melodies, to which Tonolo has added two of his own compositions inspired by Elton – *White Street* and *Epilogue: Semifonte* – that sit perfectly in this company.

Eight years ago, when Italian saxophonist Pietro Tonolo had made *Portrait of Duke*, a tribute to Duke Ellington with pianist/accordionist/arranger Gil Goldstein and the extraordinary rhythm section of bassist Steve Swallow and drummer Paul Motian. It was too good an experience to be just a one-off and all of them hoped to play together again. When ObliqSound's producer Michele Locatelli suggested the idea of tackling some of Elton John's best known tunes, all four knew instinctively they'd found the right project.

*Your Songs* is an album of great poise and genuine beauty, produced by four flawlessly matched musicians. Pianist Gil Goldstein has an authentic pop sensibility, while his accordion has a wonderful rhapsodic quality. Electric bassist Steve Swallow is a musician compelled to create beauty whether it is in the lovely singing tone of his instrument or the perfect melodies in his solos. Drummer Paul Motian, on the other hand, is a true scientist of rhythm, immensely subtle in the way he creates patterns that shift and coalesce within the music. And then there is saxophonist Pietro Tonolo. Though in no way a reserved player, Pietro never over-emotes. Like the most rare of jazz musicians he knows how to make the melody and harmony within a song speak anew.

So, *Goodbye Yellow Brick Road* is here given a jaunty bebop interpretation, while *Sorry Seems To Be The Hardest Word*, arranged by Goldstein, is taken even more slowly than in its original reading. Before it might have cried but now it aches with unusual pathos and loss. Many may fall in love again to *Your Song* in this gorgeous new performance or to the gentle and pretty *Tiny Dancer*. As for Tonolo's own tunes, *White Street* with its muscular tenor solo and cascading piano and *Epilogue*, a charming, affectionate ballad, bring the kind of closure to the project that provides a final transformation. Will Elton John hear these two numbers and perhaps ask lyricist Bernie Taupin to put words to them? You'll end up hoping so. But best of all is *The One*, perhaps the most abstract and unusual piece here, yet also the record's triumphant centerpiece.

A few centuries ago, men of vision toiled in the twilight between science, religion and magic seeking to turn base metal into gold. Tonolo, Goldstein, Swallow and Motian are merely trying to create great jazz from great pop. The listener, however, may feel they have actually done more than that. They may feel that *Your Songs* is truly the product of alchemy.

For one-sheet, artist & album cover photos and additional press information, see [www.obliqsound.com/press](http://www.obliqsound.com/press)

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