



## RICHARD ELLIOT *IN THE ZONE*

The reigning merchant of Soul Jazz, **Richard Elliot** invites loyal fans and newcomers alike to celebrate 25 years since the release of his debut album *Trolltown*. Where's the party? Where else—*In the Zone*, a grooving, funk-ed up, horn-splashed collection that finds the energized-as-ever tenor saxophonist paying homage to the pioneering instrumental artists of his formative years ('70s-early '80s) whose brilliance and musical innovations inspired his own.

Drawing on the influences of legends like **Grover Washington, Jr.**, **Bob James** and **David Sanborn**, Elliot fashions the perfect contemporary jazz complement to *Rock Steady*, his 2009 recording that was inspired by the great R&B artists he grew up listening to; that collection debuted at #5 on the *Billboard* jazz album chart and remained on the list for over 40 weeks.

*In The Zone* includes a simmering, hypnotic retro-soul cover of "Inner City Blues (Makes Me Wanna Holler)," a **Marvin Gaye** staple whose original instrumental version marked Washington's first session as a leader. Beyond that, the collection is driven by nine powerful retro-flavored original songs penned by Elliot and co-producer **Jeff Lorber**, who share a colorful collaborative history over the past 10 years. The two played numerous shows in the early 2000s as part of the all-star *Groovin' For Grover* tour (with **Gerald Albright** and **Paul Taylor**) and have worked together on various tracks on Elliot's recordings *Crush* (2001), *Ricochet* (2003), *Metro Blue* (2005), *RnR* (Elliot's 2007 hit recording with trumpet great **Rick Braun**) and *Rock Steady*.

Lorber, who began recording as leader of **The Jeff Lorber Fusion** in the late '70s, brings his unique dual history as a Jazz Fusion pioneer and R&B producer/re-mixer to the session. In addition to his array of keyboards, including the Fender Rhodes, *In The Zone* features the input of longtime Elliot associates **Nate Phillips** (bass), **Tony Moore** and **Lil' John Roberts** (drums), **Dwight Sills** and **Michael Thompson** (guitar), and percussionist **Lenny Castro**. The same way that **Bob James'** horn arrangements created a powerful sonic magic behind Washington's early recordings like "Mister Magic," arranger **David Mann** creates dreamy retro-atmospheres with a subtle mix of muted trumpets, flute and bass clarinet that transport Elliot deeper *In The Zone*.

"The interesting thing about my desire to pay homage to the wonderful array of R&B and jazz I grew up with on these last two recordings is that I actually wanted to do it as far back as *Metro Blue*," said Elliot of the album whose key single, a cover of **The Stylistics'** "People Make The World Go Round," spent an unprecedented 11 weeks at #1 on the *Radio & Records* airplay chart. "The music of the '70s carved out a lot of where I wanted to go musically, and I felt this need to express some musical gratitude, not by doing a cover record, but by incorporating a few familiar songs among originals that had references to my influences. Compared to *Rock Steady*, the vibe is definitely subtler on *In The Zone*, especially with David's wonderfully sophisticated low-key horn arrangements, but the same love of that time is there. The vibe is the '70s forerunner to the contemporary instrumental music that became popular in my own era as an artist."

The first single, "Boom Town" has an exuberant and aggressive, in-the-pocket tenor hook that does Sanborn proud—it's intense yet has a smooth, poppy finish. Elliot launches the set with the playful and lilting tropical chill vacation "Island Style," then gets back to the city on the moody and atmospheric mid-tempo ballad "Metropolis," which as it evolves includes Elliot's rich sense of improvisation and emotional power. The same type of sensuous atmospheres caressing that track play behind the lighthearted funk of the drive time tune "The Lower Road." With Lorber providing the percussive synth blasts and Fender Rhodes harmonies, Elliot gets down to bluesy business with his muscular playing on the horn-drenched funk of "Bring It!"

"Just a Taste" takes the groove down a notch into romantic chill territory, while the vibrant, in-the-pocket title track lives up to its name with a swirl of percussive synth accents, brassy vamps and bubbling-over retro keyboard flavors. Elliot saves some of his most expressive, in your face tenor playing for another horn-fired jam "Panamera" before wrapping *In The Zone* on the wistful, candlelit ballad "Golden Triangle."

Taking the concept of *In The Zone* to another metaphoric place, Elliot has been on one of the most incredible rolls of his career since *Metro Blue*, which debuted at #2 on *Billboard's* contemporary jazz chart. In addition to the incredible chart success of "People Make The World Go Round," "RnR" (the title track from the album Elliot recorded with Braun) stayed at #1 on the chart for over two months. Elliot and Braun crisscrossed the U.S. as part of **Jazz Attack** (with **Peter White** and **Jonathan Butler**) in 2005, 2007 and 2009; and spent 2008 touring as **RnR**. The saxman also did media appearances and performed in South Africa for the first time, and played his first ever shows in Russia and St. Petersburg in January 2009. Elliot is currently headlining on tour with Grammy® award-winning guitarist **Norman Brown**.

The Scotland-born, L.A.-raised saxman was still on the road with **Tower of Power** when he released his debut album *Trolltown* in 1986. Embarking upon one of instrumental music's most dynamic and multifaceted careers, he has scored four #1 albums (***On The Town***, ***Soul Embrace***, ***After Dark*** and ***Jumpin' Off***) and a growing number of #1 airplay singles. In addition to his participation in all-star tours like *Groovin' For Grover* and *Jazz Attack*, in the mid-'90s he helped launch another of the genre's annual franchises, the **Guitars & Saxes** tours, which he has participated in on and off ever since. At his peak, Elliot was doing over 100 tour dates a year, but he has scaled it back as his family has grown to include five children over the years.

"My original motivation for doing an album like *In The Zone* was the opportunity to reconnect with my earlier self, the musician I was when I first started out," Elliot explained. "The songs remind me of listening to my heroes in those days and seeing them perform live, feeling incredible joy and enthusiasm about the possibility of following in their footsteps. The wonderful thing is, so many years after I began performing professionally, I still feel that excitement. I love to play live more than anything. Under certain circumstances, the recording process can be arduous, but when you can tap into the kind of inspiration I draw from here, it's a whole different, joyous experience. It's all about feeling the same way I did back when I was 18 and dreaming that this could someday be my life."

**RICHARD ELLIOT**  
**IN THE ZONE**

Artistry Music • Release Date: **October 11, 2011**

For more information on Richard Elliot, visit [richardelliott.com](http://richardelliott.com)

For more information, please contact:  
**Rick Scott • Great Scott P.R.roductions**  
310.306.0375 • [greatscottproductions@earthlink.net](mailto:greatscottproductions@earthlink.net)

For press materials on Richard Elliot, Artistry Music artists or Mack Avenue Record labels in general (including album covers, promotional photos and logos) please visit [media.mackavenue.com](http://media.mackavenue.com)

**MACK AVENUE** • the road to great music • [mackavenue.com](http://mackavenue.com)

# # #