



THE APTLY TITLED SOUL LOUNGE HELPS EXPAND THE GENRE OF smooth-jazz-meets-chill-out music with an inspired collection of all-original songs. Though the group may share elements with its chill-music brethren, what takes Bona Fide to the next level is the simple fact that the band plays live instruments, which brings warmth and personality to songs while still offering the all-important groove. The result is the first truly spectacular CD that combines the two musical genres.

"I've spent a lot of time in Europe, and lounge/downtempo/chill music is very popular," says Tim Camponeschi, the band's leader who also records jazz-vocal CDs under the name Slim Man. "Smooth jazz tends to be pop songs done instrumentally, but chill is more ambient with a

## > Bona-Fide

### *Soul Lounge* [Heads Up]

strong groove to it. It doesn't surprise me that it's finally becoming more popular in The U.S. "

Soul Lounge may be cosmopolitan, but it seems you can't take the boys out of Baltimore: The CD has numerous references to the band member's hometown. On "Girard's" they pay homage to a popular nightclub that eventually burned down. "Funk Box" is also named after a local club, featuring dancing sax by Kevin Levi and some retro Wurlitzer organ by George Hazelrigg. Original Bona Fide keyboardist Joe Ercole wrote and played keyboards on "B. More Knights," which the band envisions as an aural soundscape of Baltimore. "Rosebank Gang" gets its name from the street on which Camponeschi grew up and reflects the bond he feels with his band as well as with his neighborhood buddies. And "Bromo Tower" is the popular name for the high-profile landmark that can be seen from just about every seat at Camden Yards, the home of the Baltimore Orioles. Yet the most impressive track on Soul Lounge has nothing to do with Baltimore: The involving "Deep Chill" throws out bubbling-water sounds and some great sax playing in a 13-minute song-audience surveys be damned. BRIAN SOERGER