

David Guidi on [jazzreview.com](http://www.jazzreview.com) (<http://www.jazzreview.com/cd/review-17120.html>):

Saxophonist, composer, and educator David Guidi is a rising star. His contemporary jazz compositions have earned an ASCAP award and three prestigious premiers at the Montreux, North Sea, and Ravinia Jazz Festivals. He collaborated with numerous important jazzmen while attending the elite Steans Institute for Emerging Jazz Artists in Chicago. Since then, he has performed with Dave Brubeck, Clark Terry, Dave Holland, Tito Puente, Terry Gibbs, and others. He earned undergraduate and graduate degrees in jazz studies in Florida. In 2003, Guidi moved his home base to the thriving musical city of Austin, Texas. While working on his doctorate, teaching music, and performing locally, he somehow found the time to showcase his chops on *Beachside*. He teamed up with a preexisting trio known throughout the Southeast as major jazz musicians. The resulting record is impressive.

Beachside features original compositions save one partial exception. Guidi's adapted arrangement of "It Could Happen to You" is cleverly renamed, "It Could...But it Hasn't Yet." The first and last tracks, entitled "I-10 West" and "I-10 East", refer to the storied American roadway that connects Florida to California via New Orleans, San Antonio, El Paso, Tucson, Phoenix, and Los Angeles. Guidi's compositions—simultaneously strong and serene—depict the diverse waterfronts encountered along this long highway. Jazz and the seashore share many implications: strength and danger, fun and fury, serenity and storms, majesty and mayhem, predictable tides and unpredictable squalls. Guidi is personally familiar with these beaches, as attested by the cover photos and liner notes. This type of symbolism abounds in jazz, but *Beachside* is a particularly well-integrated concept album. Unbeknownst to Guidi, Interstate 10 took on new significance for everyone in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, with images of huddles homeless masses on its broken overpasses.

On "I-10 West," Guidi races out of town at a break-neck pace, as if running for his life. His tires squeal as he solos over percussive piano chords, scorching bass lines and frenetic drum fills. Throughout *Beachside*, pianist Kevin Bales plays in a way that Cadence magazine labeled "a mid-sixties Blue Note-ish vein". Guidi's sense of humor is revealed on "It Could...But It Hasn't Yet", a slightly down-tempo track with a heavy swing rhythm. "Beachside" effectively demonstrates Guidi's range. He leaps across octaves and through difficult intervals with ease. Drummer Leon Anderson plays it slow and sexy on the delicate ballad "Winter Sunrise". His band-mates meld seamlessly in the lull of his heartbeat. The final track, "I-10 East" leads Guidi back home with another up-tempo romp. On many occasions, *Beachside* approaches post-bop bliss.

Though Guidi's compositions and technique are widely celebrated, not all listeners immediately appreciate his particular tone. He possesses a deep, barrel-chested tone with unending stamina that many people love, but it may have to grow on other listeners. His hard-blown uptempo numbers push the horn right to the breaking-point, producing some unique resonances. There can be no dispute over his ballads, however, where a confident but light touch and mature phrasings are true assets. There are isolated moments when Guidi's technical abilities somewhat overshadow his musicality, much like an over-trained classical singer or a strong but unemotional ballet dancer. Guidi's self-

consciousness is at times audible, but he is at his best when he lets himself go. With great original songs, mature phrasings, sophisticated band interplay, and many other strengths, jazz fans will easily forgive minor flaws. *Beachside* is a good document at the start of a career. David Guidi is a significant young artist, clearly committed to a long life of jazz. Fans can expect many great things through the natural fermentation process that only comes with experience.