

# Mark McKnight

Mark McKnight's "singing, high-energy" (Journal of Music in Ireland) improvisational approach has led to him being described in terms such as "an exceptional talent" and "the future of Irish Jazz guitar" (Irish Times).

Still in his 20's, McKnight, a graduate of Boston's Berklee College of Music, has toured throughout Europe (Austria, Germany, Czech Rep., Denmark, Germany, Poland, Norway, Slovenia, Slovakia, Switzerland), performed and/or recorded with such internationally recognised musicians as Seamus Blake, Terell Stafford, Tim Warfield, Jason Rebello, Bill Carrothers, Sam Yahel, Will Vinson and Mark Ferber and appeared at major jazz Festivals including London, Cork, Glasgow, Edinburgh, 12 Points and Montreux, being awarded 3rd place in the Montreux International Jazz Guitar Competition 2008.

Since then McKnight's profile has continued to rise rapidly both at home and on an international level with awards including Best Young Irish Musician Award from the Cork Jazz Festival and being chosen to represent Ireland (North and South) in the 12 Points Festival (Norway) and also the UK in the European Jazz Orchestra.

In 2009 Mark released his debut album as a leader. Entitled Overnight, it was recorded in NYC and features some of the city's leading jazz musicians including Sam Yahel, Will Vinson and Mark Ferber. Since then McKnight has toured his music throughout the UK, Ireland and Europe and, in doing so, developed his working band, the Mark McKnight Organ Group. In addition to Mark this group features two of the UK's foremost young jazz musicians, Ross Stanley (organ) and James Maddren (drums). Having toured to critical acclaim as a quartet with renowned NYC based alto saxophonist Will Vinson in 2009 the group again hit the road in 2010, this time in the company of modern tenor saxophone icon Seamus Blake. This tour, which saw the group play across the UK and Ireland, including sell out performances at the Belfast Festival and the Cork Jazz Festival, was rounded off by the recording of McKnight's second studio album as a leader. The record, entitled Do or Die, will be released by exciting new label Whirlwind Recordings mid 2011.

[www.markmcknight.co.uk](http://www.markmcknight.co.uk)