

Cutting Loose

The Matt Savage Trio | Savage Records *Cutting Loose* is the fourth album by the Matt Savage Trio, which was formed about three years ago. Since that time, Savage has been featured on NBC's *Today* show (twice, with the trio) and ABC's *20/20* and *The View*; he has been interviewed twice by Montel Williams; and he has appeared on the Discovery and Lifetime channels and in a number of documentaries overseas. The trio was warmly received at New York's Blue Note and the New Orleans Jazz Festival, among other venues, while Savage was profiled in *People*, *Time* and *Jazziz* magazines. He has been described by fellow pianist Dave Brubeck as “amazing” and “another Mozart,” and by Chick Corea as “delightful and inspiring.” What's so unusual about that?

Brace yourselves, dear readers—in May '04, Matt Savage celebrated his twelfth birthday.

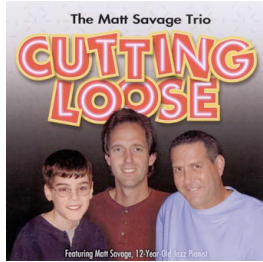
One question naturally arises: is Matt Savage really that good? Does he deserve the hype and hoopla? In a word, yes. For one thing, he's not only an admirable jazz pianist, one whose age seems largely irrelevant, but he wrote every one of the fourteen selections on *Cutting Loose*, and they reveal a notable flair for jazz composition. Technically, Savage can't yet match Brubeck, Corea or, say, Kenny Barron, but again, his forward progress since the trio's debut album, *All Jazzed Up*, was recorded (when Savage was nine) is remarkable.

Savage and his “rhythm section” (bassist John Funkhouser, drummer Steve Silverstein) came together at a performance, not a rehearsal, three years ago, and in fact they never rehearsed, they simply started gigging and have been doing so ever since. So far, so good.

Among Savage's songs are a blues in 5/4 (“The New Sensation”), an elegant “Waltz for Mom,” a flag-waver in 7/4 (“Seven Up”), a feature for Silverstein's “Ride Cymbal,” two shapely ballads (“Nine at Night,” “The Wild Rose”), a groover whose rhythmic pattern is “Stop and Go,” a “Ramble” for his grandpa, and a flat-out burner (“Wow!”) whose tempo marking, Savage says, reads “Call the paramedics!” The opener, “Infected with Hemiola,” he explains, doesn't refer to a disease—“It's just a musical term meaning that you play phrases from one time signature when you're actually in another.” Of course, we all knew that, didn't we?

If you are concerned about the future of jazz and need some reassurance, here it is, waiting for you to reach out and grasp it. As is the case with each of Savage's albums, a part of the proceeds is donated to autism research and support.

~ [Jack Bowers](#)



Track Listing: Infected with Hemiola; The New Sensation; Plain Old Rhythm Changes; Sneaking Up; Waltz for Mom; Nine at Night; The Ride Cymbal; House Cat; Seven Up; Stop and Go; The Wild Rose; Wow!; Grandpa's Ramble; Ladybug Bounce (53:02).

Personnel: Matt Savage, piano; John Funkhouser, bass; Steve Silverstein, drums.

Style: Mainstream

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