

Elan Trotman

Complete Biography

For those who live and work in New England, and especially for those who are Boston Red Sox baseball fans, the name Elan Trotman is well known. This saxophonist, flutist, bassist, vocalist, keyboardist, educator, composer and producer has recorded with *Boston Globe*, *Sports Illustrated* and ESPN baseball insider Peter Gammons (himself a fine guitarist as well as supporter and performer of indie rock). And with guitarist and major league pitcher, currently with the Cincinnati Reds but formerly with the Red Sox, Bronson Arroyo.

Born on January 7, 1979 on the island of Barbados, Trotman first played the piano, starting at the age of seven, then brass instruments before settling on the saxophone at the age of 12 in the Queen's College Secondary School band. Following in the footsteps of his mentor and native countryman Arturo Tappin, Trotman came to states to study at the Berklee College of Music as a recipient of a full National Scholarship in the Arts from the Barbadian government

Since graduating with a degree in Music Education, Trotman has become not just a fulltime music teacher, but also has his own studio of private students, and a burgeoning performance career that has led him to performances at not just jazz festivals but, perhaps because of his love of sports, performances of the National Anthem at ballparks like Fenway Park, Dodger Stadium and Cincinnati's Great American Ball Park. Along the way artists like fellow saxophonist Kirk Whalum have joined him on recordings. Trotman has worked with other artists like Nathan East, Roberta Flack, Brian Simpson, Cindy Bradley, Don Grusin, Brian McKnight, and put together the band that played for Boston Celtic star Ray Allen's wedding. Trotman is a three-time winner of the Best Jazz Male award at the New England



Urban Music Awards, and plays, when he has time, in the wedding band Flipside. He is also received national awards and nominations in his homeland as Best New Act and Gospel Act of the Year.

As a leader his solo recordings have received not just praise but charting success. His single, *Heaven in Your Eyes* featuring Brian Simpson, debuted at number 21 on the *Billboard* National Smooth Jazz Radio Chart, and is just one of his many chart successes. Another of his many charting songs include *Lovely*

Day, which debuted at number 38 on *Jazz Week's* Smooth Jazz Chart and peaked at number 6 on the Smooth Jazz Indie Star Chart and at number 48 on Smoothjazz.com's Top 50 Chart.

But even with all of this success he can't seem to leave his job as a public school elementary music teacher, his love for the kids and the process of education is just too strong and today Trotman works to balance both careers. Perhaps this grounding in the needs of community, as well as his love of God, is why you can also find him playing many Sunday's in churches throughout New England. Covering a wide variety of styles on his five solo albums, in addition to his smooth jazz recordings, Trotman's *Let's Have A Good Old Time* is a gospel jazz album that showcases his jazz influences and improvisations on church songs along with modern harmonies, and his *A Reggae Christmas*, is, as the title suggests, influenced by the music and rhythms of his native homeland. His latest release, *Love and Sax*, is, at the time of this interview, a charting rocket. §

Dr. Thomas Erdmann's complete interview with Elan Trotman is in the Sept/Oct 2011 (Vol. 35, No. 6) issue of *Saxophone Journal*.