

STEVE KOVALCHECK BIOGRAPHY

Guitarist/composer/educator Steve Kovalcheck has a diverse musical background. Hailing from Nashville, Tennessee, Kovalcheck grew up in a rich musical environment. While his roots are in hard rock, he became interested in jazz in his late teens, and has gone on to work with well known artists including Jeff Hamilton, Joey DeFrancesco, Terrell Stafford, Grammy Award winner Howard Levy, Jeff Coffin, Pat Bianchi, Lewis Nash, Danny Gottlieb, Adam Nussbaum, Chris Potter, Nicholas Payton, and Ingrid Jensen, to name a few. Outside of the jazz world, Kovalcheck has worked with artists including Robinella and the C.C. String Band, Carrie Rodriguez, Tommy Sims, Charles “Wigg” Walker, and many others. While Kovalcheck’s main focus has been on jazz guitar and jazz education, he maintains an active involvement in rock, blues, funk, pop, country, and bluegrass styles on the guitar.

While having worked professionally in Nashville and New York, Kovalcheck has called Colorado home since 2007. He is active as a performer in Colorado, across the US, and internationally, having performed in China, Sweden, France, and Romania. While in Colorado, Kovalcheck serves on the faculty for the DownBeat award-winning jazz studies department at the University of Northern Colorado where he teaches guitar, jazz improvisation, small jazz ensembles, jazz composition, and rhythm section master class. He is also active giving clinics nationally and internationally.

Kovalcheck has a number of exciting creative projects to look out for in the coming months (planned releases in late 2020/early 2021). He has two recordings under his own name that will be released shortly including Ghost Orchid, a swinging quartet recording of all original music performed by some of Colorado’s finest jazz musicians; Paul Romaine on drums, Peter Sommer on tenor sax, and Ken Walker on bass. At the same time, he has a new trio recording that is a step in a different artistic direction. This recording, Nine Mile Hill, is a musical homage to Kovalcheck’s roots in Nashville. Blending country, blues, rock, and jazz influences, this recording features the drummer Danny Gottlieb (Pat Metheny Group, Gary Burton) and bassist Jon Hamar (Jeff Hamilton trio/Clayton-Hamilton Jazz Orchestra).

While excited about sharing his original music, Kovalcheck is proud to be a part of a number of group projects including Infinite Kinship, a quartet featuring some of Nashville’s finest jazz musicians; Don Aliquo on tenor sax, Jim Ferguson on bass and vocals, and Jim White on drums. This group just released their debut album, The Un-Evangelical Blues, this past summer. Along with White on drums, Kovalcheck has also recorded a two guitar project with guitarist Dave Devine (Brian Blade Fellowship, Ron Miles) and bassist Greg Garrison (Leftover Salmon, Punch Brothers). This recording includes original compositions from both guitarists as well a number of unique covers. This record is expected to be released in early 2021. Finally, Kovalcheck has been playing with the funky Denver-based jazz group Free Bear; a collective of some of the younger stars of the Denver jazz scene. Their first recording is expected to be released in early 2021 as well.