

**For Immediate Release:**

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**New Label BFM JAZZ Releases Bob Sheppard's *Close Your Eyes*,  
A Masterful Effort by the Saxophone**

**LOS ANGELES – November 23, 2010** – Bob Sheppard has long been one of the top reed players based in Southern California. Constantly in demand for record sessions, club dates, concerts, soundtracks, and an enormous amount of projects, he has the ability to sound both creative and comfortable on a variety of instruments, no matter what the setting. Now, Sheppard moves onto the next chapter in his long career, with the release of *Close Your Eyes* on BFM JAZZ. The album will be available everywhere on November 23, 2010.

*Close Your Eyes* gives Bob Sheppard an opportunity to present his own music with some of his favorite musicians. Not only is Sheppard featured on tenor and soprano (in addition to playing flute, alto flute, piccolo, clarinet and bass clarinet), but he also contributed two songs and arranged all nine performances. The music is spontaneous and swinging yet purposeful, modern and personal. It is Sheppard's most significant recording as a leader.

Bob Sheppard is joined by either Alan Pasqua or John Beasley doubling on piano and organ, bassist Gabe Noel, drummer Antonio Sanchez, and percussionist Walter Rodriguez with two guest appearances apiece by trumpeter Alex Sipiagen and guitarist Larry Koonse.

*Close Your Eyes* begins with the title cut, a veteran standard that Sheppard's inventive arrangement and restrained yet often-explosive solo make sound brand new. "Surface Tension," which has a major role for Koonse's guitar, is a well disguised reworking of "What's New." Another swing era ballad, "Goodbye" (which was Benny Goodman's closing theme song), is given an introspective yet emotional treatment by Sheppard.

The other selections include the complex yet catchy "Brain Fog," the playful "Fast Company" (a perfect showcase for Sheppard's soprano), the quietly spooky "Phantoms," "Lightness" (which is full of inner heat), Joe Henderson's "Gazelle" which sounds like the soundtrack to an African adventure, and the brooding strut "All In A Row." The musicians excel at exploring unusual song structures and creating original ideas. Sheppard's mellow tone establishes the mood for these thoughtful pieces, and his solos set a high bar for his sidemen to match.

***About Bob Sheppard***

Ever since earning a Masters degree from the Eastman School of Music and moving to Los Angeles, Sheppard has been constantly in demand. He has appeared on more than hundred movie and television soundtracks and worked with the who's who of music. Among his most important associations have been Billy Childs, Chick Corea's Origin, the Peter Erskine Trio, Herbie Hancock, Joni Mitchell, James Taylor, Natalie Cole, Queen Latifah, Freddie Hubbard, Mike Stern, Randy Brecker, Horace Silver, Lyle Mays, Toshiko Akiyoshi/Lew Tabackin Big Band, Nat Adderley, Rickie Lee Jones, Manhattan Transfer, Burt Bacharach, Elvis Costello, Randy Newman, Scott Henderson, Michael Franks, Otmaro Ruiz, Terry Trotter, Kurt Elling, George Duke, Bill Cunliffe, Marilyn Scott, and Diane Reeves. In recent times he has toured with Billy Childs, Boz Scaggs, Steely Dan and Peter Erskine. But since Sheppard is constantly busy and his

phone never stops ringing, this is only a partial list, and one that grows every day. In addition, he is a part-time faculty member at the USC Thornton School of Music and frequently conducts clinics at colleges.

Bob Sheppard's *Close Your Eyes* serves as a perfect debut for the new BFM Jazz label. His playing is thoughtful and passionate, there are many subtle surprises, and the music is a perfect example of creative 21st century jazz.

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