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[Steve Gadd Band, 70 Strong, BFM Jazz *** \(/reviews/2650-steve-gadd-band-70-strong-bfm-jazz\)](/reviews/2650-steve-gadd-band-70-strong-bfm-jazz/)**



Last reviewed in these pages back in the autumn ripping it up live in the boisterous company of saxist/flautist Michael Blicher, and Hammond organist Dan Hemmer (</reviews/2141-ye-gadds>), Steve Gadd, one of the greatest jazz and session drummers on the planet (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pGmB7Jksl5k>), celebrates his seventieth birthday on 9 April just four days before the UK/Irish release of this album.

Business as usual working it joined by fellow James Taylor (<http://www.jamestaylor.com/life-on-the-road/meet-the-band/>) band members trumpeter/flugel player Walt Fowler, keyboardist Larry Goldings swapping between Hammond B3, Wurlitzer, Rhodes and accordion, acoustic/electric guitarist Michael Landau and the five-string bass guitar of Jimmy Johnson a follow-up to 2013's *Gadditude* (no vocals this time) tunes include the band-written opener, a simmeringly immersive take on Eddie Harris' 'Freedom Jazz Dance' and originals by Goldings, Landau, Johnson and Fowler including the trumpeter's gorgeous tribute to George Duke (</news/877-george-duke-dies>). Brazilian flavours jostle with jazz-rock and groove at various turns particularly on Chico Buarque's 'De Volta Ao Samba' (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0AXeKI8TV6U>). And sultry grooving and bluesy explorations can't help but peek through particularly when Landau breaks free (for instance on Goldings' 'Elegant Squares' and most obviously on the slow blues at the end) the sense of unforced release even more important than the tension say on the rolling river of the Milesian 'Sly Boots,' sheer magic from the pen of Goldings: everyone responding.

70 Strong was recorded in a California studio over several days in April 2014, and it's a trip, just rhythm section heaven. Beyond the beat and the groove all the rest might be conversation. But you won't want to forget a single word. *Stephen Graham*

Details

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marlbank.net (/)
contact: stephen@marlbank.net (/archive)

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