

Throughout his very productive and busy career, Red Young has covered a great deal of musical ground. While he is often associated with bluesy jazz, as an organist, pianist, arranger, composer, producer and bandleader, Red has performed jazz, blues, rock and roll, pop, r&b, soul and classical music while always sounding like himself. In recent years, after touring with Eric Burdon for the past, Red performs several nights a week in the clubs of Austin, Texas.

One of the projects dearest to his heart is Black Red Black, a grooving instrumental hard bop/soul jazz group with Red on organ that features trumpeter Ephraim Owens, drummer Brannen Temple and guests including tenor-saxophonist Shelley Carrol. "Black Red Black has allowed me to create whatever comes to mind, with the focus on a musical conversation between organ, drums and trumpet that has no rules. There is one club in Austin where we have been playing every Tuesday night for well over 5 years which is unheard of these days."

Music was a major part of Red Young's life from the beginning. He remembers, "My grandmother was a church singer who taught me some songs when I was three. I started taking classical piano lessons when I was five. My Dad was a trumpet player who stopped playing when he was in his twenties. He had a really great record collection of 78s and LPs so early on I heard Louis Armstrong, the Mills Brothers, Duke Ellington, Ella Fitzgerald, the King Cole Trio and Count Basie which was certainly unusual for a kid my age in Fort Worth, Texas at that time."

Red Young performed Chopin at his first classical recital when he was ten and had classical organ lessons but, by the time he was in junior high school, he was playing jazz. Blessed with perfect pitch, as a young teenager he could pick out whatever he heard on records. Red could play stride piano, was inspired by Oscar Peterson and Bill Evans, and worked for a period in a Benny Goodman style swing trio. He also occasionally sang and became known as a vocal accompanist. Red had backed his grandmother's singing in church when he was nine. In junior high and high school he accompanied the chorus and wrote vocal and instrumental arrangements. After a brief period attending North Texas State, he dropped out of school to accompany singers on recordings and at clubs.

During 1967 Red Young had his first major musical job, playing piano with trumpeter Clyde McCoy's band. McCoy was best known for his one hit from the 1920s, a version of "Sugar Blues." His group played Dixieland and swing and the young pianist was a perfect fit. "I had learned a lot of the Dixieland numbers from my father's record collection, played stride piano well and knew the songs from the 1920s. Clyde was 64 and I was 18, playing that music while most others my age were into the Beatles. The band was good and we traveled all over America." Young appeared with the Clyde McCoy group on Johnny Carson's Tonight show from New York. During a stay in New York, he had the opportunity to jam at the Gaslight in New York on several occasions with a group that featured veteran clarinetist Sol Yaged and the famous Duke Ellington cornetist-violinist Ray

Nance.

While serving in the Air Force during 1968-72, Young played in service bands, learned how to write for horns, and performed at many concerts. Based in Springfield, Massachusetts during his last period in the military, he traveled to New York once a month to see the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra, always being amazed and inspired by Jones' writing.

After his discharge, Red spent time living and working in Texas where he performed and recorded with such artists as Lloyd Price, Freddy Fender and Kinky Friedman. In 1977 he moved to Los Angeles to play with Sonny & Cher, tour and record with Joan Armatrading, form a band with Lon Price & Lee Thornburg and follow many directions in the diverse Los Angeles music scene. During the next seven years Red also worked in the studios with all-stars from many various genres, played in Victor Feldman's Generation Band, toured with Dolly Parton, Eric Burdon and during 1983-84 toured and recorded as an vocalist-arranger with Linda Ronstadt and the Nelson Riddle Orchestra. While he found all of this work rewarding, he eventually felt the need to create and play his own music. In 1985 he moved back to Ft. Worth where he formed Red and The Red Hots.

Red and the Red Hots, a ten-piece swing band with two female singers, featured Red Young as pianist, lead vocalist, arranger-composer and musical director. The spirited group caught on, performing more than a thousand shows all over the world and recording four albums. Their success continued after Red's return to Los Angeles in 1988. Red and The Red Hots preceded the Retro Swing movement of the 1990s. Red worked with and wrote horn parts for many of the movement's pacesetters including Royal Crown Revue and Big Bad Voodoo Daddy. "I brought the influences of Dixieland, Neal Hefti and Duke Ellington into the music and could play like Count Basie." Red also toured with Juice Newton, recorded with the legendary tenor-saxophonists Plas Johnson and Big Jay McNeely, led his organ trio Brother Red, and worked and recorded with Dan Hicks and such blues artists as Janiva Magness, Marcia Ball, Kid Ramos and Kirk Fletcher. His life was a whirlwind of activity with his playing, singing and writing abilities being in great demand.

In 2002, Red Young moved to Austin, to work with longtime friend Stephen Bruton then to Dallas, becoming part of a nightclub Django On The Parkway. While he loved the music end of it, the business side and the endless details of running a club began to wear him out. "I thought it would be great to have a nice club halfway between New York and the West Coast, but the work in taking care of the place never stopped." In 2005 when Eric Burdon of the Animals asked him to tour and play keyboards with him again, he jumped at the chance. Red had first worked with Burdon in 1982 and has enjoyed being a major part of his music. "Eric has always done amazing shows no matter what challenges being on the road brings. Before he was with the Animals, Eric sang regularly with a big band in England and was influenced by Ray Charles and Jimmy Witherspoon;

he's from that era. You never know what he's going to sing next."

In addition to going out on regular tours with Burdon, during the past decade Red Young has become a major musical force in Austin, Texas, invigorating the local jazz scene. "I play in clubs at least 15 days a month when I'm not on tour including twice a week with Black Red Black. When I left L.A. in 2002, I wanted to concentrate on jazz organ. The guys who I learned the organ from are now all gone. That is one of the reasons that I moved to Austin for there is a lot of live playing, I can encourage the younger players and help make an impact." While there were few organists in Austin when Red Young arrived, there are now many performers who have been inspired by him.

Among Red Young's current projects are an upcoming bluesy album with a horn section that will have music in the style of Percy Mayfield, Ray Charles and Jimmy Witherspoon which will have a residency at the new Antone's nightclub, Tenor Madness that teams his organ with a drummer and two tenor-saxophonists, another Black Red Black album, and occasional work with his wife the talented jazz singer Silvie Rider Young whose recordings he produces. He has solo piano & vocal recordings, an album of duets (various favorite players in Austin), is working on a CD with his originals and a string quartet and in the future has plans to compose a classical concerto for piano and orchestra. He has his own recording studio in his home in Austin and records his keyboards and arrangements for various clients all over the world. After all of this time, his potential is still endless.

Red Young's enthusiasm for music has certainly not diminished through the years. "If someone called me for a classical gig or to play Scott Joplin's music, I would do my best at that. Jazz, classical, orchestra music, the blues and many different styles flow through what I do. For the future, I want to keep on doing what I'm doing. I don't see myself ever being retired; in fact I'm just getting started."