



Jon Irabagon Wins Thelonious Monk Jazz Competition

BY NATE CHINEN *OCTOBER 27, 2008 5:04 PM* *October 27, 2008 5:04 pm*

Jon Irabagon, an alto saxophonist based in Astoria, Queens, won the 21st annual Thelonious Monk International Jazz Competition in Los Angeles on Sunday, securing the most prestigious honor available to a young jazz musician. Finishing in second place was Tim Green, of Baltimore, Md.; Quamon Fowler, of Fort Worth, Texas, was third.

The panel of judges for the competition, which focuses on a different instrument each year, consisted of heavyweight saxophonists like Jimmy Heath, Wayne Shorter and Jane Ira Bloom. They selected the three winners from a pool of a dozen semifinalists. All three finalists performed alongside the jazz singer Dee Dee Bridgewater on Sunday night at the Kodak Theater, in a concert that doubled as a salute to the blues legend B.B. King.

Mr. Irabagon, who will receive \$20,000 and a contract with the Concord Music Group, has one album out as a leader, "Outright!" (Innova). He can also be heard on the new release by the pugnacious post-bop group Mostly Other People Do the Killing, which will appear at [Zebulon in Williamsburg, Brooklyn on Saturday](#).