

# THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC

## Sons of famous jazz players come together in blended trio

by Larry Rodgers - Apr. 5, 2009  
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Being the offspring of a famous musician and trying to follow in his or her footsteps can be a challenge - just ask Ziggy Marley, John Carter Cash or Jason Bonham.

Bringing three sons of top progressive-jazz players together into a group would seem to multiply that challenge, but the sons of guitarist Larry Coryell, keyboardist Brian Auger and pianist Joe Sample have pulled it off.

The Coryell Auger Sample Trio, featuring Julian Coryell on guitar, Karma Auger on drums and Nicklas Sample on bass, has crafted a modern sound that draws from fusion, classic jazz and funk.

The 2-year-old trio will perform songs from its debut CD, "Coolidge Returns," today at the Gibson Jazz & Blues Festival in Glendale.

The three honed their chops early on performing with their famous fathers, and they still find time for that. But the trio has let them take their talents a step further.



"This thing is kind of a spinoff of what all our dads have been up to, getting back to what music was all about at some point - having a good time and trying to play some good tunes," says Auger, whose father's Oblivion Express has produced adventurous jazz-rock for nearly four decades.

Auger, 39, says the three quickly agreed to get past their pedigrees and focus on creating music when the project came together in 2007.

"What we really wanted to do was let the songs be the stars," he says.

They decided to record their initial four-hour jam session and were surprised to find they had created enough material to spawn an album.

"We jammed (on) an idea, and that idea was turned into a 10- or 12-minute song," Auger recalls. "We then consolidated what we had done into (shorter) song forms."

The result spotlights an array of rhythms by Auger and guitar and bass work by Coryell and Sample that ranges from driving to funky to smooth.

"It's exciting to see a new generation come up and follow in their parents' footsteps," says Martin Dickey of the Glendale festival, which also will feature the Oblivion Express, with Brian, Karma and Savannah Auger (Karma's sister) onstage together.

"I was a fan of all their parents, so it's really neat to see (their children) get together and do their own version of contemporary jazz."

Karma Auger acknowledges that the three players' backgrounds formed the foundation of their musical skills, but he contends that passion and drive allowed them to turn their talent into successful careers.

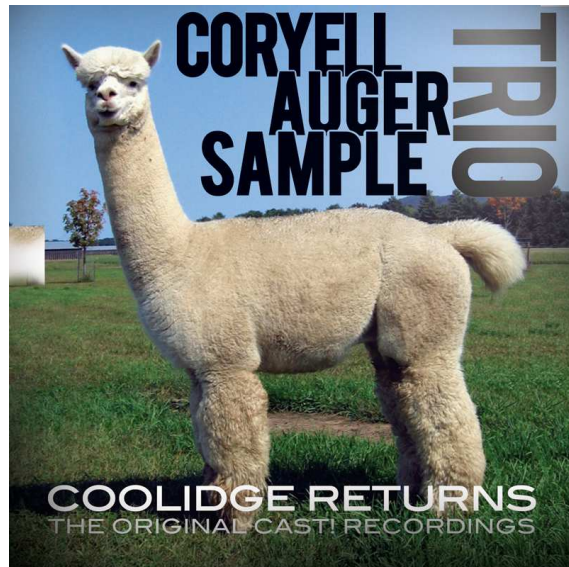
"It's kind of an exclusive little club we're in. There's not many of us," says Auger, who played piano until switching to drums at age 20.

"And then there's not many of us (with famous parents) who actually take their instrument seriously. This is what we do for a living."

Because of their shared experience, he adds, "there's no drama at all among us."

Auger is no newcomer to earning his living through music.

Since he was 21, he has toured and recorded with his father, classic rockers Eric Burdon and Robby Krieger, and jazz great Billy Cobham.



Auger calls a worldwide tour in 1991-94 with the Eric Burdon-Brian Auger Band "the most amazing education that I could ask for."

Coryell has been in demand for rock projects by such artists as Jewel, Aimee Mann and Carole King but also has performed with jazz greats Dave Brubeck and Herbie Hancock.

Sample also has ventured into rock and pop, with such artists as Jakob Dylan, Nikka Costa and Zoo Story. He plays bass in the latest version of the Crusaders, which his father co-founded in 1960.

Like their fathers, the members of the Coryell Auger Sample Trio embrace their myriad influences.

"We bring all that stuff into the music we're playing, which harks back to all our dads," Auger says.

"That's what the music scene was about (in the '60s and '70s) - whatever inspires you, put it all together and see what comes out."

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