

BILL GILLIAM

CD Review

"URBAN UNDERCURRENTS"

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Jazz Notes

GEOFF CHAPMAN

▲ Where have you been **Bill Gilliam**?

The British-born pianist was apparently a Toronto resident for almost two decades after graduating from Boston's Berklee College in jazz composition and film scoring.

But he's mostly hidden his jazz light under a bushel, concentrating on composing music for movies, dance and theatre, a career that's involved collaborations with film types **Bruce McDonald** and **Bruce Elder** and choreographers **Marie-Josée Chartier** and **Eryn Dace Trudell**.

His new indie CD, *Urban Undercurrents*, is thus something of a revelation, a sophisticated mix of future jazz and new music that illustrates truly imaginative writing and execution. It gets its first official airing at the Montreal Bistro Monday at a 9 p.m. album release party, an occasion that should be noted by anyone keen on imagistic music that packs a punch.

The album features versatile saxist **Ernie Tollar**, that most promising trumpeter **Lina Allemano**, bass giant **Dave Young** and drummer **Howard Gaul**. Bassist **Henry Heilig** replaces

Young for the live date.

Gilliam's tunes explore relatively unknown territory. He favours the dark keys, even when in meditative mood, and his front line is permanently edgy and interesting. Major labels should take a listen.