



**Saxophonist Kamasi Washington Revolutionizes
Modern Perception of Jazz with Highly Anticipated
3-Volume Set, *The Epic* - May 5 via Brainfeeder**

**Album Features 32-Piece Orchestra, 20-Person Choir,
and Washington's Long Running 10-Piece Band:
The Next Step/The West Coast Get Down**

"These young guys remind me of why I love music." - Common

*"He just plays the craziest shit, man. I mean, everything - the past, present, the future...
What I am hearing is a leader among artists." - Flying Lotus*

The story begins with a man on high. He is an old man, a warrior, and the guardian to the gates of a city. Two miles below his mountainous perch, he observes a dojo, where a group of young men train night and day. Eventually, the old man expects a challenger to emerge. He hopes for the day of his destruction, for this is the cycle of life.

Finally the doors fly open and three young men burst forth to challenge the old master. The first man is quick, but not strong enough. The second is quick, and strong, but not wise enough. The third stands tall, and overtakes the master. The changing of the guard has at long last been achieved.

But then the old man wakes up. He looks down at the dojo and realizes he's been daydreaming. The dojo below exists, but everyone in training is yet a child. By the time they grow old enough to challenge the old man, he has disappeared.

This is, in essence, a true story and a carefully constructed musical daydream, one that will further unfold on May 5, 2015 in a brazen release from young Los Angeles jazz giant, composer, bandleader, and saxophonist **Kamasi Washington**. *The Epic* is unlike anything jazz has seen, and not just because it emanates from the boundary-defying **Brainfeeder**, which isn't so much a label in the traditional sense as it is an unfurling experiment conducted by the underground producer Flying Lotus, who features Washington on his recent releases *Cosmogramma* and *You're Dead!*.

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"He just plays the craziest shit, man. I mean, everything - the past, present, the future," **Flying Lotus** says, whose family lineage includes one of Washington's direct musical forebears, John Coltrane. "It's hard to find unique voices in this music. Especially in jazz, more so lately, everybody is trying to do the same shit. I don't want to hear 'My Favorite Things' anymore. What I am hearing is a leader among artists."

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The Epic is a 172-minute, three-record set that includes a 32-piece orchestra, a 20-person choir, and 17 songs overlaid with a compositional score written by Washington. Pulsing underneath is an otherworldly ten-piece band, each member of which is individually regarded as among the best young musicians on the planet - including bassist **Thundercat** and his brother, drummer **Ronald Bruner Jr.**, bassist (yes, there are two) **Miles Mosley**, drummer **Tony Austin** (of course there are two), keyboard player **Brandon**

Coleman, pianist **Cameron Graves**, and trombonist **Ryan Porter**. **Patrice Quinn's** ethereal vocals round out the ensemble.

The band are all from Los Angeles, mostly South Central, and its members -- who call themselves variously "**The Next Step**" and the "**The West Coast Get Down**" -- have been congregating since they were barely teenagers in a backyard shack in Inglewood. Washington, 32, has known Bruner since he was two. The rest met, at various stages, by the time they were in high school. The hours they have put into the music, playing together and practicing alone, total cumulatively in the tens of thousands.

"Nothing compares to these guys," says Barbara Sealy, the former West Coast director of the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz, who has championed Washington and his compatriots since they were barely teenagers. "Nobody. I challenge any group to go out on stage with them and see if they can keep up with it...Kamasi is at the top of his game, and only getting better."

And the story ***The Epic*** tells, without words but rather through some combination of magic, mastery, and sheer force of imagination, is the story of **Kamasi Washington**, the Next Step, and their collective mission: to remove jazz from the shelf of relics and make it new, unexpected, and dangerous again. They seek to both honor and alter tradition: as *The Epic's* opening track announces, they are the "Changing of the Guard." The sound can be felt like flames, sometimes waving in the coziness of a fireplace, in other moments sweeping everything around like a backdraft. But Washington is always in control of the burning.

Kamasi Washington · *The Epic*
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For more information on **Kamasi Washington**, please visit: KamasiWashington.com

For more information on **Brainfeeder**, please visit: Brainfeedersite.com

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