

# Playtime aims to have the music off Pat this Thursday

The popular Playtime jazz sessions in the Outhouse in Broughton Street Lane's latest project turns the spotlight on global superstar guitarist Pat Metheny this Thursday, 5 July.

A talent who, while still in his teens, switched from student to teacher at Berklee School of Music in Boston, Metheny toured with vibes master Gary Burton's group before launching a series of albums under his own name for the leading European jazz label ECM Records.



Graeme Stephen

Early recording partners included bass guitar revolutionary Jaco Pastorius and when Metheny met keyboards player Lyle Mays the two forged a sound that took the Pat Metheny Group to stadium-filling status around the world.

"Pat's been a big influence on me since I first heard his music when I was at school," says guitarist Graeme Stephen, one of the founders of Playtime. "We've paid tribute to a lot of jazz's

great figures, quite a lot of them pianists, which is quite strange as there's no pianist in the core Playtime group. So it's a thrill for me, if also at the same time quite a challenge, to be playing some of the tunes I've been listening to and enjoying all that time."

Stephen will be leading a trio comprising fellow Playtime founders, bassist Mario Caribe and drummer Tom Bancroft in paying tribute to one of his musical heroes.

"One of the things I like most about Pat is that, even when he was playing these huge tours of massive venues that are more in keeping with rock music, he would be working on side projects with people who were important to him but not necessarily household names themselves.

He'd finish a tour and make an album with Ornette Coleman or go straight from a stadium tour to playing in a jazz trio with bassist Dave Holland and drummer Roy Haynes."

For many years Metheny was also notorious for avoiding nights off while on tour, and once took his group into the back room of well-known London music pub the Half Moon in Putney to play for the door takings rather than sit bored in an hotel room the night before he was due to play a three-night run at the Hammersmith Odeon.

"He's certainly been productive and there's a lot of music to choose from in playing a tribute gig," says Stephen. "The Pat Metheny catalogue ranges from solo acoustic guitar recordings to orchestrated performances and from jazz and pop standards through a very recognisable and accessible style as a composer to freely improvised music.

We haven't made a final decision on what we'll play but we'll be looking to honour the key elements of his music, which are strong melodies and the kind of grooves that draw people in and keep them hooked. I'm really looking forward to the gig."

Tickets for the concert, which starts at 8pm, are priced £9 (£7 concessions) and will be available at the door.