

A phenomenally successful instrumentalist whose recordings routinely made the pop, R&B, and jazz charts during the 1980s and '90s, **Kenny G**'s sound became a staple on adult contemporary and smooth jazz radio stations. He's a fine player with an attractive sound (influenced a bit by **Grover Washington, Jr.**) who often caresses melodies, putting a lot of emotion into his solos. Because he does not improvise much (sticking mostly to predictable melody statements), his music largely falls outside of jazz. However, because he is listed at the top of "contemporary jazz" charts and is identified with jazz in the minds of the mass public, he is classified as jazz.

Kenny Gorelick started playing professionally with **Barry White**'s **Love Unlimited Orchestra** in 1976. He recorded with **Cold, Bold & Together** (a Seattle-based funk group) and freelanced locally. After graduating from the University of Washington, Kenny G worked with **Jeff Lorber Fusion**, making two albums with the group. Soon he was signed to Arista, recording his debut as a leader in 1982. His fourth album, **Duotones** (which included the very popular "Songbird"), made him into a star. Soon he was in demand for guest appearances on recordings of such famous singers as **Aretha Franklin**, **Whitney Houston**, and **Natalie Cole**. Kenny G's own records have sold remarkably well, particularly **Breathless**, which has easily topped eight million copies in the U.S.; his total album sales top 30 million copies. The holiday album **Miracles**, released in 1994, and 1996's *Moment* continued the momentum of his massive commercial success. He also recorded his own version of the **Celine Dion**/Titanic smash "My Heart Will Go On" in 1998, but the following year he released **Classics in the Key of G**, a collection of jazz standards like "Round Midnight" and "Body and Soul," possibly to reclaim some jazz credibility.

Faith: A Holiday Album was released that same year, followed by a limited-edition re-release of the 1997 **Greatest Hits** disc. In 2002 Kenny G dipped into tropical territory with *Paradise*, which featured guest appearances by **Brian McKnight** and **Chanté Moore**. This was followed by a music video collection, another holiday album, entitled **Wishes**, and, in 2003, a second greatest-hits collection, **Ultimate Kenny G**. Perhaps in a bid to shake up his discography a bit, in 2004 Kenny G released **At Last... The Duets Album**, which featured "duets" with **LeAnn Rimes** and **Chaka Khan**. Two years later, smooth jazz's king of the soprano sax returned to a purely instrumental approach on the brassy, big-band-inspired albums **Holiday Collection** and **I'm in the Mood for Love**; 2006 was also the year the artist was dubbed the best golfer in music by *Golf Digest*, beating out **Vince Gill** for the number one spot. In 2008, Kenny G released the Latin-inspired **Rhythm and Romance**. The sax player next drifted toward R&B for 2010's **Heart and Soul**, which featured guest vocals from **Robin Thicke** and **Babyface**. A collection with **Rahul Sharma** called **Namaste** followed in 2012, and in 2015 Kenny G released a tribute to bossa nova titled **Brazilian Nights**.