



## Musician Profile: Flutist and GPFS Member David Griffith and an Introduction to VoxaNova Trio

By BJ Nicoletti

Voxanova Trio will be one of the GPFS member performers for the 39<sup>th</sup> Annual GPFS Flute Fair this April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023. The event is at Clackamas Community College in Oregon City. Learn more and stay tuned to register at: <https://gpfs.org/Flute-Fair>



VoxaNova Trio plays light-Jazz and Bossa Nova emphasizing beautiful melodies, lush harmonies, exotic rhythms, and original arrangements. Enjoy an evening of creative music in a relaxed setting with Dave, Steve, and Al.

Dave Griffith: alto flute  
Steve Funk: baritone guitar  
Al Martin: percussion & flute

### Tell us a little bit about yourself.

David describes himself as primarily a jazz musician. He plays the alto and C-flutes and has been a member of GPFS for many years. He recently retired from a decades-long career in Information Technology and management. He worked for Disney, Fred Meyer, Nike and the State of Oregon.

On the topic of flute, he describes himself as largely “self-taught and not from a traditional flute or musical background.” As a child he played the trumpet and then took up the flute in his senior year after he busted his lips and couldn’t play the trumpet any longer. The legacy rock artist and flutist Jethro Tull was very popular at that time in his life so he was “naturally drawn in.” He used a flute he bought from “a guy on the street” who just happened to be hanging about hocking a flute – for \$20! One might say this sounds a bit like destiny in full force. He took that flute to college soon after and “drove the roommates crazy.” Since retirement, he has enjoyed playing with his group VoxaNova Trio and some mates at church. He has also been busy studying music theory.

**(continued on next page – what inspires David, who he has studied with, what flutes he plays and more on VoxaNova)**

### **What has inspired your playing?**

From early on, David has been inspired by the sounds of [Jethro Tull](#) and [Rahsson Roland Kirk](#). “Back in that day, I listened to FM not AM channels and I would go into the record store. I really dug into flute playing.” Over time, he became attracted to [Hubert Laws](#) and [Joe Farrell](#) (sax and flute). Joe was on the first two Chick Corea albums. “They had a tone and articulation that resonated with me, more fullness, clarity, richness.” Both of these musicians inspired David to pursue a more traditional sound. Henceforth, he was “hooked on the sound of flute and jazz.” For many years, David played trumpet, sax and flute, but he eventually gave up trumpet and is now 95% flute and some sax.

### **Who have you studied with?**

David is clearly an avid and independent learner of the flute and jazz music. He did take a few lessons with the Portland-based and famed flutists [Cheryl Alex](#) and [John Savage](#) and studied some jazz theory with Catarina Martin.

**[David has quite a list of his favorite jazz musicians, particularly jazz flutists. We'll be sharing more of his listening recommendations down the road!](#)**

### **Who do you play with now?**

David primarily plays with the VoxaNova Trio. He also plays at his church with musicians of a similar background - a piano, bass and guitar player. They call themselves “Kind of Gray.” These guys also enjoy getting together to just jam and “coach each other a little bit.” I also played with Gentle Rain for a few years.

### **Tell us more about Voxanova.**

“We started in the mid-90’s. The group was co-founded by David and Steve Funk who David describes as the real inspiration for the group. He is an extraordinary guitar player and into composition.” Al Martin is the other musician in Voxanova joined around 2001. He is a flutist and

percussionist from the LA area. The group played until 2007. In 2002, they recorded two CD's - Vista Del Mar and a holiday CD (different bass and percussionists than now). These are distributed through CD Baby. I listened to both through Apple Music. The group recently got together again! Their sound is similar to the past Voxanova sound but now about 85% of the songs they play are new originals by Steve and David. Steve is inspired by David's melodies and sound. There is "good chemistry" between them. They are now doing more for guitar and two flutes. Steve on guitar, on alto flute and Al on the C-flute.

### **What flutes do you play on?**

David plays on two Miyazawa flutes – one with a heavier wall than the other. He has been playing the alto flute since 1972 and has a Gemeinhardt alto with a solid silver head. This year he also bought the Trevor James copper alloy alto. He also has Pearl closed hole flute he uses for playing in some outdoor settings.

### **What gigs have you played recently?**

Al and David played at the Woodburn Outlet Mall for Christmas. Their first formal gig back as Voxanova Trio happened this past January 29<sup>th</sup> when they [played at the Cork Screw Wine Bar](#).

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