

# POMPASELLO INC.

Joseph Carter's Straight Ahead Backwards is a blockbuster. In fact, there are aspects of this work that make it groundbreaking. Carter is well-versed and totally fluent in the "Joe Pass" style of jazz guitar. He could stand alone with the best of them with his mastery of this jazz technique. However, what also stands out about Carter is his total immersion in authentic urban blues traditions as well the jazz idiom. As a producer and writer, I have heard and been involved in many so-called "fusion" projects -- too many, in fact; and so many that the word "fusion" no longer seems like the compliment it was once intended to be.

I have heard blues guitarists who crank it out à la the avant-garde; and I have heard jazz guitarists who know all of Bird's blues modes frontwards and backwards. But what Joe Carter has done on this CD, his maiden voyage, has been to fuse an authentic rootsy jazz guitar style with a very savvy urban blues-shuffle sensibility, and he at times emerges with change-ups and musical segues, that I, quite frankly have never heard or witnessed before. All that on a first album.

So ... what you gonna do next, Joe?

--Tom Pomposello  
Producer  
New York City  
28 March 1997

*Pomposello*