



2008 was the year James Barela introduced his band, BLu7, to the world. Their debut outing, *Cultural Instigator*, is hailed as a fresh new voice of jazz in the new millennium. James Barela now takes his group (sans the BLu7 name) even higher into the stratosphere with his next project: an all electric and genre bending style that will exemplify the versatility of what BLu7 was to be. This style can only be summed up as old meets new. "I have always wanted to stay true to my traditional jazz beliefs, but I realized a long time ago that jazz is a living art form and must constantly progress. Not unlike that of the human condition", says Barela. "We can't rely on the success and greatness of our predecessors to carry us forever. It's up to my generation and the younger generations of jazz musicians to take jazz to the next great plateau." James Barela does just that by integrating the complexities of jazz improvisational history with sounds of contemporary music. James Barela, a trumpeter who has played with many jazz greats young and old, now focuses on the electric valve instrument (EVI) in hopes of connecting with an audience not normally interested in jazz. James explains that, "the EVI gives me a larger palette to work with. The technology is fascinating to me and I have really come to love playing the EVI. It isn't anything like a trumpet. It's a totally unique instrument."

Fans of the more traditional jazz styles appreciate the James Barela's sound while more and more fans, new to jazz, are introduced to music that opens the door to further exploration of the jazz idiom. Look for James Barela's new project to be available at all online music retailers worldwide in the near future. In the meantime, pick up a copy of *Cultural Instigator* and hear where it all begins.