



**TOTS TOLENTINO, *saxophone***

Tolentino was born on July 2, 1959. Having heard the great Charlie Parker at the age of 16, Tots decided that the saxophone was to be his chosen instrument. He studied flute under Prof. Eric Barcelo at the University of the Philippines Conservatory of Music in 1977 to 1978. He continued his studies on soprano, alto and tenor saxophones under Joseph Viola at the Berklee College of Music in Boston, Massachusetts. Graduated magna cum

laude in 1982, Tolentino has been a leading session musician on the Philippine concert scene from 1984 to 1990.

Tolentino also worked with several popular Philippine artists like Lea Salonga, Martin Nievera, Janno Gibbs and Gary Valenciano. Although his musical origin was in the field of pop music and pop ballads, Tolentino pursued his passion for Jazz and emerged as a formidable solo artist. He release three albums between 1990 and 1993: namely; Tots Tolentino (1990), Inah (1991) and Color Real (1993) which highlight his saxophone skills.

His albums were critically-acclaimed. Tots Tolentino bagged a Gold Record Award and Ina won Best Jazz Recording in the 1991 Awit Awards. He also fronted for the Jazz group Buhay, which were composed of Wowee Posadas, Mar Dizon and Meong Pacana. The group has toured Asia and the US. His sound, described by critics as "passionate and energetic" as well as "articulate and authoritative" was strong enough to catch the ear of Asia's premiere jazzman, Terumasa Hino, who invited Tots to join the Asian Jazz Allstars.