

Practice makes perfect for jazz-loving doc

By **Bob Young**

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Dr. Stanley Sagov's patients should be relieved he doesn't like the traveling life. If he did, the jazz world's gain would have been their loss.

"They're my village," the pianist and family doctor said from his home in Newton. "I love them, I care about them, so as a family person and a doctor, being on the road doesn't make it for me."

Patients and fans won't have to travel far to hear the 64-year-old composer and multi-instrumentalist showcase his musical side when he leads a band featuring Bob Moses, Stan Strickland, John Lockwood and Mike Peipman on Tuesday at Scullers Jazz Club. In a rare concert appearance, he celebrates the release of two new CDs, "Looking Forward to Remembering the Future" and "African Jazz Telepathy."

For decades, Sagov has quietly pursued his twin loves of music and medicine. Chief of family medicine at Mount Auburn Hospital in Cambridge and head of his own practice in Arlington, Sagov follows a routine of spending evenings and weekends practicing and recording in his home studio.

"I've always been compelled to do both things passionately," the Capetown, South Africa, native said. "I've been unable to give up either one."

Sagov, the son of Russian-Jewish immigrants, understood at an early age the trials that life can bring and the joy that music can offer as an antidote. He

was born with Gordon's syndrome, a rare genetic disorder that forced him to wear iron leg braces in his youth. He underwent 16 surgeries to deal with two club feet.

Sagov also witnessed first-hand the ugliness of apartheid, a grim reality offset by the uplifting South African music surrounding him. Those sounds course through his piano playing and scores.

"As I've gotten older," he said, "I feel like I'm returning to some of the things I heard on the streets and on the radio when I was growing up. Any South African musician listening to my music would hear that it wasn't exactly township jazz or Afrikaners music or the kwela that buskers played on the street. But it's got all those elements, plus American jazz, in it. I love the mixture."

He also loves being able to mix it up with high-octane company on recordings and at Scullers.

"What we're doing is as close to my idea of heaven on earth as I can engineer," he said.

Stanley Sagov and the Remembering the Future Band, Tuesday night at Scullers Jazz Club at 8 and 10. Tickets: \$15; 617-562-4131.