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At Last

ZADELL finally plays Yoshi's

It had to happen. But though **Dave and Zoë Ellis** have been making music all their lives, neither was in any hurry to work on a group project. "If our dad was cracking the whip like [Joe] Jackson, we probably would have done this a lot sooner," Dave jokes, noting that he and his sister have "always been musical, and always musical together, just not necessarily publicly." Still, forming the group **ZADELL** (also the name of the family publishing company) was a no-brainer, because the chemistry was there from day one. The beta version of ZADELL first surfaced four years ago for a one-off show, and Dave and Zoë have recorded several demos together over the years, but the siblings' busy schedules made it impossible to further explore the idea until now. "Our life paths converged at this time," explains the saxophonist, famous for his solo work and as a member of Grateful Dead spin-off bands Ratdog and the Other Ones.

After booking a date at Yoshi's a year ago, the Ellis' put together a band that could handle both the extremely technical jazz Dave plays and the funky, soulful R&B associated with Zoë (best known for her work with the Mo'Fessionals, the Braids, and Slammin').

The sound is still being fine-tuned, but judging from a recent demo it sounds like it'll be smooth jazz of the KBLX variety, featuring Zoë's creamy vocals trading off with Dave's bluesy solos. Monday night at Yoshi's, says Dave, could be the birth of a new era. ZADELL will be playing "my originals, Zoë's originals, a couple of Stevie Wonder covers. We're trying things out." Dave estimates folks will have to wait until 2006 for a full-fledged ZADELL album, he's hopeful about what the future holds for the group: "I'm real into it. I have a lot of energy for the project."

-- Eric K. Arnold