

Rufus Reid – Performer

An accomplished sideman, a visionary educator, and a composer of note, bassist Rufus Reid possesses one of the richest and most generous tones in jazz today. As an artist, Rufus Reid defines evolution and growth. On the double bass, he seems to have reached the pinnacle of mastery on his instrument only to push the melodic, rhythmic and harmonic envelope further each time you hear him.

“As a leader, he knows just how to pace a program to satisfy an audience and musicians. He reaches out and touches people – his playing is infectious. The fun starts with him on the bandstand and spills over to the audience,” noted Billy Taylor, describing Rufus Reid.

As an improviser, Reid is certainly a genius. His long-standing band with drummer Akira Tana, TanaReid, was one of the most exciting post-bop bands of the 90s. He continues to evolve with his “Quiet Pride” 20 piece ensemble of all-stars, his “Out Front” Trio, the sextet from the “Hues of a Different Blue” group, or his “Kennedy Center” Quintet.

With his 2014 release of “*Quiet Pride – The Elizabeth Catlett Project*,” the five movements each take their unique shape from the iconic sculptures of Elizabeth Catlett. Maria Miaoulis of The Celebrity Café.com says, “Once you finish listening to *Quiet Pride* the first time, you’ll definitely want to loop back to the beginning. This is definitely a recording that makes you think, a hallmark of all good art.” Listen to the work as a whole to truly appreciate Reid’s achievement. “*Quiet Pride ~ The Elizabeth Catlett Project*” received two GRAMMY nominations in the 57th GRAMMY Awards of 2015, “Best Large Jazz Ensemble” and “Best Instrumental Composition” for ‘Recognition’ the opening movement of this suite.

His 2011 release “*Hues of a Different Blue – Rufus Reid and Out Front*” with Steve Allee and Daduka Da Fonseca is powerful and refreshing. In addition to Reid, Allee and Da Fonseca, “*Hues of a Different Blue*” employs the substantial talents of another Brazilian, guitarist Toninho Horta, veteran alto saxophonist Bobby Watson, rising trumpeter Freddie Hendrix and the gifted J.D. Allen. Reid says, “In designing these arrangements, my goal was to feature the unique sound of the trio and the unique voice of each guest, in unexpected ways that would offer a new musical experience for each player, and an exciting new surprise for you as well.” In doing so, Reid has created an album of music that can best be described with one word, unforgettable; clearly for the musicians, but most importantly, for the listeners.

Released in March of 2010, *Out Front* is a celebration of the trio’s terrific chemistry and the immense joy shared between the musicians and their audience. Inspiration fills every crevice of the music, and the band sounds all too happy to stretch “far beyond the bebop boundaries,” as Reid observes in his liner notes. Reid is a democratic leader, and Allee and Da Fonseca respond to Reid’s music with some of their finest individual performances. Reid knows when to grab the spotlight, though, as in his powerful bass solo improvisations: Reid may be one of the few who can command extended attention in the form.

When asked about Rufus, John Pattituci’s eyes began to dance. “Rufus is a sage – kind, very gifted and wise. He helped me set my priorities about what it means to be a jazz bassist and my role as a foundational / compositional force in the music. As a jazz master, more people should be exposed to him as the artist, personality and entertainer that he is. He’s eloquent, witty, charming and a great ambassador for the art form. Even if they know nothing about jazz, people are captivated by the natural, engaging way he presents himself and the music.”

Reid’s professional career began in Chicago and continued outward to embrace the world. Having been the bassist of choice for a range of major artists, including Dexter Gordon, Stan Getz, Thad Jones & Mel Lewis, Jack DeJohnette and Nancy Wilson, Eddie Harris, Art Farmer, Hank Jones, Andrew Hill and many others, you get the sense of versatility of this man. As one of today’s premiere bassists on the international jazz scene, Reid has now taken the lead.

Please visit the web site for up-to-date information on performances by these groups.
www.rufusreid.com