

**Tuesday 29 January, 2019  
7.30pm, Milton Court Concert Hall**

**GUILD  
HALL  
SCHOOL**

**Rufus Reid with the  
Guildhall Jazz Orchestra  
Quiet Pride – The Elizabeth Catlett Project**

**Rufus Reid** bass  
**Scott Stroman** director



## **Guildhall Jazz Orchestra**

Directed by **Scott Stroman**

Featuring **Rufus Reid** bass

### **Saxophone**

Dan McConkey

Chris Adsett

Max Ellenberger

Kaidi Akinnibi

Jimmy Jefford

### **Clarinet**

Hannah Hever

Laurie Rothwell

### **Trumpet**

George Jefford

Harry Johnstone

Finn Bradley

Elias Atkinson

Marco Natale Miles

### **Trombone**

Jacob Cooper

Joe Bristow

William King

Sam Clough

### **French horn**

Luke Maher

Millie Lihoreau

### **Piano**

Michael Horner

### **Guitar**

Dominic Stockbridge

### **Bass**

Alastair Watson

### **Drums / Percussion**

Sam Every

Dan Hester

### **Voice**

Grace Archer

## The Programme

Rufus Reid *Elegy*

Scott Stroman *Mary's Song*

Dave Brubeck *In Your Own Sweet Way*

Rufus Reid *This I Ask Of You*

Rufus Reid *Of Regal Patience*

## Interval

Rufus Reid *Quiet Pride*

*Prelude to Recognition*

*Recognition*

*Mother and Child*

*Tapestry in the Sky*

*Singing Head*

*Glory*



## Rufus Reid



Sometimes called a chameleon, Rufus Reid is one of today's premiere bassists on the international jazz scene. His musical prowess can be found perfectly comfortable in an array of performance settings. You can find Rufus leading his own groups, which can be heard as The Rufus Reid "Out Front" Trio with Steve Allee, piano, Duduka Da Fonsca, drums, or the Rufus Reid Quartet, The Out Front Trio with Yosvany Terry on saxophones. He brings The Big Band Sound Of Rufus Reid to the stage with many of his own compositions.

His major professional career began in Chicago and continues in New York, where he has travelled, performed and recorded with most of the Jazz Masters. He was privileged to share a moment of music with some that have passed on – Booker Irving, Gene Ammons, Kenny Dorham, Sonny Stitt, Don Byas, Philly Joe Jones, Kenny Dorham, Thad Jones, Mel Lewis, Dexter Gordon, Stan Getz, and Dizzy Gillespie, Harold Land, Art Farmer, Joe Henderson and Frank Wes. He has over four hundred recordings in his discography.

Rufus is equally known as an exceptional educator. Rufus and Dr. Martin Krivin created the Jazz Studies and Performance Bachelor of Music Program at William Paterson University. Rufus has been teaching clinics since 1971 with associations with The Jamey Aebersold Summer Jazz Workshops, The Stanford University Jazz Workshop, and conducts masterclasses, workshops and residencies around the world.

His book *The Evolving Bassist* (published in 1974) continues to be

recognised as the industry standard as the definitive bass method. The Millennium Edition was published in 2000.

As if this was not enough, Rufus has become an important composer too. A very original writer, he creates charts with sensitivity and personality, his compositional prowess and vision growing with each project. Rufus was awarded the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship for Composition in 2008. This and three MacDowell Colony Grants have allowed him to explore composing for symphony orchestras. He has accepted commissions to write for symphony orchestras, concert bands, big bands, solo bass and more. He holds a Bachelor of Music Degree in Performance on the Double Bass from Northwestern University, where he studied with Warren Benfield and principal bassist, Joseph Guastefeste, both of the Chicago Symphony.

## **Quiet Pride – The Elizabeth Catlett Project**

Rufus explains how *Quiet Pride* was inspired by the sculptures of the African-American artist Elizabeth Catlett and how working with art changed him.

### **How did the Elizabeth Catlett Project come about?**

In 2006 I was made aware of the Raymond and Beverly Sackler Music Composition Prize, which was worth \$20,000. It was quite a lot of money and I had nothing to lose—I just had to propose a subject that had substance. I had a coffee-table book about Elizabeth Catlett and her work – I'd had it for 15 years, collecting dust as most coffee table books do, but I looked at the book and the images just jumped out at me. So that became my proposal – to write something inspired by this woman's art. I got the commission. It took me a year to write the work, and it premiered in 2007. Unfortunately,

Elizabeth died before we got to make the professional recording, but she did hear the debut.

### **What was Elizabeth Catlett like?**

She was laid back and down to earth – outspoken, but also humorous. She reminded me of my grandmother. She invited my wife and me to Mexico to spend the week in her home, which was very relaxed. It was the first time I'd had an opportunity to get to know an established artist of that stature and to see how she lived on a daily basis – which is no different from you or me. She liked what I'd written and said she'd never had anyone writing anything that ambitious about her art.

Globally, she probably has a bigger reputation now than when she was alive, but she was quite well known. Her pieces have been auctioned for thousands of dollars and featured in newspaper art sections. More and more people are becoming aware of her art. I didn't know who she was and there are many black people who don't know who she was. I continue to hope it will help art people learn more about jazz music and its creators and jazz people learn more about the important artists and their art. It's been exciting to watch how this awareness unfolds when I travel playing this music, in particular.

### **How did your reaction to the art feed your music?**

The mahogany sculpture of mother and child is very abstract, but it's clearly a mother and child. The lines are smooth, flowing and beautiful, so I tried to depict the flowing of melody lines that are pretty, warm sounding and not angular. With *The Bust of Glory* there is angst in the woman's face – power, anger, confidence. It's angular,

so musically I wrote something that's not linear, but more vertical in terms of notes: not something immediately singable but that had a little more angst to it, and unusual harmonic movement. I just do not put the pictures on the piano and see how it goes. When it comes to writing music, you can't wait for the divine lightning bolt to hit you. There must be a thought process or routine to get started.

### **What are the benefits of working across different art forms?**

I have been enriched by looking at art and working on this project. Everything became heightened when I looked at the pictures and thought about them musically. When you go to a university, they have an art programme, a music programme, a sociology programme, but generally students don't mingle. When I was in college 200 per cent of all my energy was spent in the music building and I wasn't aware of anything else. Generally, art and music students don't even talk to each other. They're in different buildings, so they have to make a conscious effort. There's a history of people reciting poetry while music is improvised but other than that, in schools, people don't interact at all, and they should.

### **How do you divide yourself between being a performer and a composer?**

It's becoming more and more difficult, because I love composition so much, but I'm a player as well and performing is what I do best. Being able to play this music is wonderful but the bass and the composition are fighting each other for time. Each one requires a great deal of time once you get in the zone. Once I start composing I might not see the bass for two weeks, and the bass doesn't like that. And vice versa, if I'm playing a lot – if I'm busy doing things and don't have the time to put something down. You can't turn composition on like a water faucet.

## **How do you work with students?**

I've been playing almost 50 years, so I think I can bring some help to the table that they haven't thought about, however well they play. Many students don't know what they don't know. This will be my third time at Guildhall in nearly 15 years and the level is good. Many of the students are already at a professional standard, so it will be interesting just to work with them and play with them. Scott Stroman is an amazing musician and conductor and I know from experience that he will prepare them well. I'm going to be driving the band from the bass, which is unusual, but I know how I want the music to go, what I want it to sound like and where I want it to go emotionally, and that makes it exciting.

## **What advice do you have for music students?**

Listen to all kinds of music. Don't be judgemental. It's not as bad as it used to be when I was younger when jazz musicians were just as stubborn as classical musicians – 'my music is better than your music'. If it's played well and people understand it, it's good music. Period. Study not only the skills of reading music but also to appreciate other forms of music. Nowadays the world has become smaller because of the internet and music from other parts of the world is so easily accessible. You can hear authentic Cuban, Brazilian or African music right away and study it. If you want it, it's there for you. That's truly healthy as far as I am concerned. However, it requires time and a strong work ethic. In my opinion, if you apply those attributes, you will be successful.