

CARRBILL

The Carr Center Performance Studio

April 27, 2023



BRANDON ROSE

WITH A TRIBUTE TO RODNEY WHITAKER



When the Arts League of Michigan launched a Jazz Education program in the early 2000's, Ben Williams was one of the first student mentors involved in teaching the youngsters of the region about the world of jazz.

A few years later, Endea Owens was a student in the Carr Center's Summert Jazz Program under the tutelage of the great Marcus Belgrave. When Endea graduated from Detroit School of Arts, she enrolled in Michigan State University's Jazz Studies Program.

In 2019, Brandon Rose auditioned and was accepted into the Gathering Orchestra as a Geri Allen Fellow. For what turned out to be the next four years (thanks Covid!), Brandon studied and performed in this professional development program. Ultimately he turned out the house when he performed a spoken word duet in a newly commissioned work by Patrice Rushen.

For several years, the MSU Professors of Jazz served as the "house band" for the Arts League/Carr Center Jazz @the Center series. Great concerts, great artists, great music!

There were a few common denominators in all of these programs:

- › The Arts League of Michigan/Carr Center;
- › The bass and
- › Rodney Whitaker.

Endea, Ben and Brandon will showcase their incredible, God given talent, creativity and leadership as they lead their bands through an evening of great music in the Carr Center Performance Studio. They will bring cheers from you, the audience (part of the Carr Center money back guarantee of a great experience!). Heads will bob. Fingers will snap! And feet will tap.

In the back of the room, there will be two men smiling. Me and Rodney Whitaker. I will be smiling because of whatever small contribution the Carr Center has made to the development of these incredible young talents. I am grateful we could provide the opportunities.

Rodney will smile as he listens to each artist showcase their mastery on the bass. He will smile as he listens to the stories they will tell of the experiences they have had as working musicians over the last couple of decades as recording and touring artists, as the member of the house band of a popular TV show or just starting to explode as they meld the church house and the concert hall.

And Endea, Ben, Brandon and me...and oh so many more will smile back saluting *the Man, the Mentor and his Music* for all that Rodney has given to each of us, to Detroit and to the World.

On behalf of EVERYONE, I say THANK YOU RODNEY!

Our heartfelt Congratulations to Rodney Whitaker on being named 2023 Detroit Jazz Hero...You are OUR Hero too!

Please consider a gift to our special campaign honoring Rodney Whitaker. Donations will help support The Gathering Orchestra and our Geri Allen Fellows. Just visit our website: thecarrcenter.org

Your Artistic Collaborator for more than 20 years,



Oliver Ragsdale, Jr.
President
The Carr Center



the **CARR**center
PERFORMANCE STUDIO



RODNEY WHITAKER

THE MAN / THE MENTOR / THE MUSIC

3 Tribute Concerts Featuring:

Endea Owens	March 25 th
Brandon Rose	April 27 th
Ben Williams	April 29 th

thecarrcenter.org

BRANDON ROSE

April 27, 2023



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“Professor Whitaker is my bass dad, no if ands or buts about it. I never knew when first meeting Professor Whitaker that I would be introduced to a whole new world of music and way of life that I was previously ignorant to. Everything I know on upright bass - fundamentally, harmonically, melodically, etc. - is in huge part inspired and derived from Rodney Whitaker. Prof took a chance on me in admitting me into Michigan State University’s Jazz Studies program in 2016 allowing me to pursue my undergraduate degree, and where I would later complete my masters degree in Jazz Studies as well. Since then, I have embarked on a unique musical journey that has shaped me into the musician, artist, and human that I am today. Professor Whitaker is one of the most knowledgeable, genuine, motivating, and caring individuals I have ever encountered and I am honored to call him my teacher, mentor, friend, and bass pops. I love you prof!”

— Brandon Rose, MSU Jazz Studies Alum ‘23

BRANDON ROSE

Meet the Artist

The protégé of legends Marcus Miller and Rodney Whitaker, contemporary jazz musician Brandon Rose harnesses gospel roots to create rhythm and blues, soul-inspired compositions. His music seamlessly and effortlessly incorporates elements of jazz, funk, hip hop, and R&B into a full-bodied musical experience.

Brandon Rose began playing the bass guitar at the age of 5. He asked his father to buy him a bass guitar for Christmas while on stage at Word of Faith Christian Church in Southfield, Michigan. Brandon began working with Henry Roberson, the church bass player and after one lesson Mr. Roberson proclaimed, “this kid is a natural !” Brandon continued his studies and eventually honed his skills playing bass for the youth choir at Word of Faith. In the early 2000s, Rose achieved early notoriety on Michigan-based television programs.

Brandon is a recent graduate of the prestigious Jazz Education program of Michigan State and for the past two years, he was a member of The Gathering Orchestra, the Carr Center’s professional development ensemble, both under the musical direction of Rodney Whitaker.

He released his debut album, Transition, in June of 2020. Of his deep-pocketed debut, Brandon offers, “The concept behind the album was finding a positive way to use the quarantine time to be creative, drawing on musical influences from my mentors and my love for R&B, soul, hip hop, and straightahead jazz.” As a writer, Brandon’s compositions are inspired by his experiences with love and love lost, and by the social protests of the Black Lives Matter movement and other efforts for equality.

SOULTHERAPY

Meet the Band



JOSHUA WATKINS

Joshua Watkins is a brilliant, young professional drummer who hails from the great city of Detroit, Michigan. Being born into a vast family of musicians, it was only natural for him to be musically inclined. His musical roots started in the church and he has developed into a highly versatile drummer, musician, producer, and bandleader. He currently attends Michigan State University under the direction of Rodney Whitaker and drum instructor Randy Gelispie.



WYATT FORHAN

Bass Trombonist Wyatt Forhan is an aspiring young musician from St. Louis, MO. Wyatt began his musical career at the age of three when he learned drums progressing to discover jazz and classical piano at the age of 8. Wyatt started playing Trombone in 4th grade and added the Bass Trombone to his studies a year later. Now a highly accomplished musician Wyatt has performed with Michael Dease, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Diego Rivera, Terell Stafford, Rodney Whitaker, Steve Wilson, Dianne Reeves, and many other world-class musicians.

SOUL THERAPY

Meet the Band



LUKE SITTARD

Luke Sittard has set a lofty mission for himself, to be a torchbearer for the bebop and jazz guitar traditions, his music draws upon the influences of Charlie Parker, Wes Montgomery, and Thelonious Monk while also embracing stylistic elements from R&B and Neo-Soul. A 2nd place winner in the 2020 Wilson Center International Guitar Competition, Luke has shared the stage with incredible musicians such as Rodney Whitaker, Michael Dease, Sachal Vasandani, John Webber, Sean Dobbins, and Brandon Rose.



SAM COREY

Sam Corey is a versatile musician, skilled in playing saxophone, bass, composing, and arranging music. With extensive experience performing in the local music scene, Sam developed his craft at Michigan State University, where he studied under acclaimed bassist and educator Rodney Whitaker. Sam has collaborated with numerous musical groups and artists, including Root Doctor, Bradley Sinclair and the Corey Sound, The Gathering Nonet, Caleb Robinson and Reaching, Brandon Rose and Soul Therapy, Redwood, and many others.

SOUL THERAPY

Meet the Band



JAURON PERRY

Jauron Perry, is a rising Detroit-Native Jazz Trumpeter, Composer, and Bandleader, currently studying jazz performance at Michigan State University's College of Music. Selected as the Next Generation of Talent award recipient, Jauron has quickly gained much experience working with Detroit jazz masters such as Rodney Whitaker, Dwight Adams, James Carter, Diego Rivera, Sean Dobbins, Marion Hayden, Regina Carter, and many others. He is currently writing original compositions and aspires to lead bands of varying styles and sizes.



SEQUOIA SNYDER

Sequoia "REDWOOD" Snyder is a musician, composer, producer, recording artist, and DJ native to Washington D.C. She is currently completing her graduate studies at Michigan State University's Jazz Studies program, where she has been mentored by jazz legends such as Rodney Whitaker, Dee Dee Bridgewater, and Jason Moran. Most recently she has performed with the New York City Ballet as well as Teri Lynne Carrington, Patrice Rushen, and Jazzmeia Horn as a Geri Allen Gathering Orchestra Fellow. Already distinguished as a musician, she went beyond the keys in her debut album, "Red 2 Go," showcasing her vocal and production abilities.

BRANDON ROSE

Concert Set

Caught up in the Rapture

Anita Baker

Secluded

Brandon Rose

Intro

Brandon Rose

Maestro

Brandon Rose

Mastery Through Love

Rodney Whitaker

What's Going On

Marvin Gaye

Perigon

Brandon Rose

If Tomorrow Comes

Brandon Rose

Outcry

Brandon Rose

RODNEY WHITAKER

Meet the Artist



Internationally renowned bassist and Origin Records recording artist, Rodney Whitaker, started his relationship with the Carr Center over 20 years ago. He founded our Jazz Education program and the MSU Professors of Jazz ensemble was our resident Jazz ensemble during the formative years. Rodney himself has been the Resident Artist at the Carr Center for more than 13 years now. Currently, he also serves as artistic director for The Gathering Orchestra, our Geri Allen Fellows, a professional development program for gifted, early career musicians.

A lifelong and dedicated educator, Rodney holds the titles of Professor of Jazz Bass and Director of Jazz Studies at Michigan State University where he has built one of the leading jazz degree programs and performing faculty in the world. For over 25 years, he has taught jazz at Michigan State University so it comes as no surprise that he also uses the stage to educate his audiences about the music he loves so dearly.

Rodney Whitaker is considered one of the leading performers and teachers of the jazz double bass in the world. He has performed and toured more than 100 legendary performing jazz artists, and is featured on over 100 recordings. He is also a former member of the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra.

RODNEY WHITAKER

2023 Jazz Hero



One of bassist Rodney Whitaker's many Detroit mentors, pianist Kenn Cox, had a motto: "Each one, teach one". Rodney Whitaker has more than lived up to this motto, as he has taught multitudes in incalculable manners. For this reason, along with recognizing his innate musical brilliance, a resounding "yes!" arose from the Detroit jazz community when Rodney Whitaker was designated the 2023 Detroit Jazz Hero. He is the embodiment of his mentors: Donald Walden, Marcus Belgrave, Roy Brooks, Robert Gladstone, Donald Washington, Ralphie Armstrong, Herbie Williams, and Alma Smith along with Kenn Cox. He studied at Wayne State University, but it was the early experiences on the bandstand with mentors that shaped Rodney into the musical leader he is today.

Rodney Whitaker represents Detroit and East Lansing worldwide with his recordings, his Bebop Spartans Big Band, and his appearances. Ever since he burst out nationally with Terence Blanchard and Donald Harrison in 1991, Rodney has been a Detroit jazz ambassador. His resounding bass tone, rock-steady time sense, and dedicated work ethic earned him the bass chair in the esteemed Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra. New York experiences also included teaching master classes at the Julliard Institute of Jazz, The New School, Duke University, Howard University, and more.

RODNEY WHITAKER

2023 Jazz Hero

After fruitful years in New York with Jazz at Lincoln Center, Rodney joined Michigan State University in East Lansing, first as professor of jazz double bass and now as Director of Jazz Studies at MSU where the program attracts students from all global regions. Students come to study with Rodney's stellar team of jazz educators. Students receive a meaningful experience playing in Detroit through MSU outreach programs. Aspiring musicians know that studying with Rodney Whitaker is more than notes. It is about attitude and life. Says Rodney: "I want to raise 1,000 mentors. Those 1,000 mentors are obligated to raise 1,000 mentors. People pattern what they see. They pattern themselves after you when they experience you extending yourself. My first life mission is to be a good parent, and my second mission is to raise the next generation of committed and concerned musicians."

Today Rodney extends his Detroit jazz legacy to The Gathering Orchestra through Detroit's Carr Center, an orchestra established in memory of Detroit pianist Geri Allen. Under his direction, the orchestra tackles challenging repertoire, raising the bar of excellence and improvisation ever higher. Rodney's Detroit jazz memories run deep, but Rodney assures us that Detroit has a bright jazz future. Rodney knows to give back to the community: "Detroiters still support me. Detroiters are very loyal. They have my back". We are glad to have Rodney back in Michigan and are delighted that he is our 2023 Jazz Hero.

**GIVE TO A SPECIAL CAMPAIGN
HONORING RODNEY WHITAKER**

Support The Gathering Orchestra and a Geri Allen Fellow

Visit: thecarrcenter.org

BEN WILLIAMS

April 29, 2023



For more than a decade, Ben Williams has steadily become one of the most acclaimed and versatile bassists in modern jazz. In 2009, he won the Thelonious Monk International Jazz Competition. He has performed/recorded with such giants as Pat Metheny, George Benson, Lauryn Hill, Wynton Marsalis, Robert Glasper and Maxwell. In 2013 and 2015 Williams received the DownBeat Magazine Critics Poll Rising Star Award for Bass. In 2009 the Thelonious Monk International Jazz Bass Competition landed him his first record-deal with Concord Records, where he recorded and released *State of Art* in 2011 and *Coming of Age* in 2015.

In 2020 Williams released, I AM A MAN. Sonically, the new album departs from the mostly acoustic instrumental settings of his previous albums. Williams imbues his love for modern R&B and hip-hop and his socio-political awareness with mesmerizing vocal-centric songs that will surely raise his profile higher in modern soul and rap circles.

ENDEA OWENS

March 25, 2023



Endea Owens is a Detroit-raised Recording Artist, Bassist, and Composer. She was once a student in the Carr Center Arts Academy and she has been mentored by Jazz Icons the likes of Marcus Belgrave, Rodney Whitaker, and Ron Carter. Endea has toured and performed with Wynton Marsalis, Jennifer Holli-day, Diana Ross, Rhonda Ross, Solange, Jon Batiste, Jazzmeia Horn, Dee Dee Bridgewater, and Steve Turre to name a few.

In 2018, Endea graduated from The Juilliard School, and joined the Late Show with Stephen Colbert as a member of the house band, Stay Human. Since then, Endea has won an Emmy, Grammy Award, and a George Foster Pea-body Award. Endea's work has appeared on Jon Batiste's Grammy Award-win-ning album "We Are", Oscar-nominated film Judas and the Black Messiah, and H.E.R's widely acclaimed Super Bowl LV performance. nt Artist at the Carr Center for more than 10 years now. Currently, he also serves as artistic director for The Gathering Orchestra, our Geri Allen Fellows, a professional development pro-gram for gifted,early career musicians.