

## **GERI ALLEN**

### **Biography**

Geri Allen is a celebrated, award-winning pianist/composer who performs for enthusiastic audiences worldwide. Since 1982, she has recorded or performed with artists as diverse as Charles Lloyd (with whom she has toured for several years), Mal Waldron, Sir Simon Rattle and the Birmingham Symphony, Vernon Reid, Tony Williams, Clark Terry, George Shirley, Ron Carter, Lee Konitz, Me'Shell Ndegelocello, Marian McPartland, Dewey Redman, Dave Holland, Mary Wilson and The Supremes, Jack De Johnette, Betty Carter, Bill Cosby, Charlie Haden, Hal Wilner, Mino Cinelu, Ruth Brown, Oliver Lake, Marianne Faithful, Wayne Shorter, Joan Rivers, Charlie Haden, Paul Motian, Bobby Hutcherson, Chico Hamilton, and Kenny Clarke among many others.

She has released a number of major recordings under her own name some of which include, *Twenty One*, *Eyes in the Back Of Your Head*, *Maroons*, *The Gathering* and most recently, the ambitious, critically acclaimed Telarc double cd *Geri Allen: Timeless Portraits and Dreams*.

Ms. Allen has been the recipient of numerous recent honors, including but not limited to the Keys to the City of Detroit and the City of Cleveland, the Benny Golson Award from Howard University, and the African American Classical Music Award from Spelman College. Ms. Allen also distinguished herself as the first woman and youngest person to win the Danish Jazzpar Prize.

A Detroit native, and a graduate of Detroit's famous Magnet Music School, Cass Technical High School. Allen graduated from Howard University, where she also served as Assistant Professor of Music. During that period the University honored her with both the Distinguished Alumni and Distinguished Professor Awards.

Geri Allen, who is presently Associate Professor of Jazz and Contemporary Improvisation at the University of Michigan holds a Master's Degree in Ethnomusicology from the University of Pittsburgh, where she studied with Dr. Nathan Davis, Dr. K. Nketia, John Blacking, and Dr. Bell Yung.

She came to the School of Music, Theatre & Dance after teaching at the New England Conservatory, The New School in NYC, and spending 25 years actively participating as a performing and recording artist who continues to be part of the Who's Who in Jazz on the NYC Jazz Scene today.

In addition to her individual performances and recordings, Ms. Allen has also participated in a number of notable collaborations including performances on Miles: Cool and Collected, a CD anthology of Miles Davis' work from 1956 to 1984, tenure in the Ornette Coleman Quartet from 1991-1995, culminating in the celebrated Sound Museum CD, and The Mary Lou Williams Collective, for which she serves as musical director. Allen played the role of Mary Lou Williams under the direction of Robert Altman in his celebrated film Jazz, Kansas City, and continues to perform and collaborate with her husband Jazz Master, Wallace Roney.

Ms. Allen's work as a composer has garnered numerous awards from SESAC as well as commissions from Lincoln Center, Music Theatre Group, American Music Theatre Festival, Stanford University and most recently from the Walt Whitman Arts Center and Meet The Composer who commissioned "For The Healing Of The Nations", a Sacred Jazz Work, which was composed in tribute to the victims and survivors of the 9/11 tragedy, premiered September 10th, 2006.

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