Michele Rosewoman and New Yor-Uba
Critical Acclaim
www.michelerosewoman.com

Michele Rosewoman's New Yoruba, 30 Years!
A Musical Celebration of Cuba in America

"Dazzling tracks...startling for its balance of unfettered improvisation and undiluted Cuban folklore within a complex and often grand structure. ...stylistic swagger and spiritual heft..."
-Larry Blumenfeld, The Wall Street Journal

"...two big cultural streams flowing simultaneously ...cultural multiplicity in sound taken to a reasonable extreme,
where a song can still be allowed to sound logical and beautiful ...ancient and experimental at the same time, and capacious enough to include more and more."
-Ben Ratliff, The New York Times

"Absolutely one of the most exceptional records of 2013 is pianist-composer Michele Rosewoman's 30th anniversary New Yor-Uba release."
-Willard Jenkins, The Independent Ear

"I'm overwhelmed by good music on new recordings right now, none better than debut disc from a 30-year-old band, Michele Rosewoman's New Yor-Uba... perhaps the most balanced presentation of jazz and Afro-Cuban folklore I've ever heard."
-Larry Blumenfeld on Michele Rosewoman-

"The best Latin jazz project in recent memory is this double-disc celebrating the 30th anniversary of pianist-vocalist Rosewoman's esoteric yet quintessentially NYC ensemble. Delightful melody, spine-tingling abstractions and a sagae sense of groove argue for Rosewoman's place among the music's brightest composer-arrangers."
-Jazz Times-

"Though it took her 30 years to document her groundbreaking New Yor-Uba band on record, it was worth the wait. Released in September, the exuberant “30 Years: A Musical Celebration of Cuba in America” is one of the standout albums of 2013...the album stands as a true Latin jazz milestone - a special gift from an artist determined to bring two great cultures together. Feliz Navidad, indeed."
-Washington Post-

"Rosewoman places vocal simplicity on par with instrumental complexity without sacrificing either...
These two traditions, however, are only the starting point for Rosewoman, whose fresh compositions send them hurtling into the future.
With New Yor-Uba, Rosewoman moves AfroCuban music another step forward"
-New York City Jazz Report-

Pianist Rosewoman has created the masterpiece she’s envisioned for 30 years, an extended, loving and fully informed evocation of the Santeria orishas, bata drums prominent with her committed jazz octet and a couple of guests. Two discs is a lot of music to absorb, and doubly rewarding. Howard Mandel-

"Rosewoman's presence on piano continues to shine as she blends the rhythmic angularites of
Thelonious Monk with the jolting harmonic suspense of Jaki Byard and Don Pullen...from gentle melody and hypnotic bata rhythms to...intriguing, loping blues figure and sumptuous harmonies, the music transports as well as transcends in ways, opening various gateways for pleasurable listening without the need to be fully immersed in Afro-Cuban folklore...mesmerizing choral work and serrated funk...the compositions have the potential of becoming new modern jazz standards.

One hopes that a follow-up to this transfixing set will come sooner than later.".

- Downbeat Magazine- ****1/2

"...One word for you-genius! That CD is amazing! I don't know when was the last time I heard a cd that moved me and touched me in this way. The writing is so personal, imaginative, and cliche' free as you're playing always is. The musicians seem to dig the music and interpret the music so well. The arranging is brilliant and the engineer did a great job of recording and mixing it. I've been a big fan and promoter of your writing and playing and this is the total package, not to mention the lyrics and vocal arrangements. I will continue to sing your praises...Love you, Donald." -Legendary pianist Donald Brown

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-New York City Jazz Report-

"On most pieces, Rosewoman wraps her compositions around Yoruban or Dahomeyan devotional chants and drum patterns. They give the music a spiritual resonance across centuries and continents. Rosewoman treats those materials with care — the sung prayers appear in the prescribed order, and have their own integrity within the band's performance. Michele Rosewoman is mindful of the fact that the traditions she bridges have different goals... Rosewoman and her very aware musicians layer jazz phrasing and harmony over those ancient rhythms, and do justice to both traditions. It's like inventing Afro-Cuban jazz and sacred concerts all over again."

-Kevin Whitehead, NPR Fresh Air-

"Rosewoman plays lush piano; congas often serve as counterpoints to the horns and there are many memorable interactions between the vocalists and other musicians. What is remarkable about the set is the lush, voluptuous layering of sounds, as if one were interred in a gilded mansion of sound."

-Allaboutjazz-

"Pianist Michele Rosewoman celebrates three decades of blending folkloric Cuban music with modern jazz in a joyous, supremely listenable two-disc set. It's a large band but the feeling is very friendly and intimate, like a family, perhaps because Rosewoman's lyrical piano is front and center throughout. Really fine performances from all."

-KZSU Stanford-

"...the first recording in 30 years from this astonishing Latin-Jazz “big band” of sorts ,a fantastic collective that shuffles together with masterful ingenuity Rosewoman’s expertise in both modern jazz and Cuban folkloric music... With a band this versatile, the options are myriad, and Rosewoman doesn’t ignore any of them in 14 tracks spread across two generous and kaleidoscopic compact discs. Almost all the material was composed and arranged by the leader (with traditional materials throughout) and many tracks weave the traditional and the modern brilliantly..Michele Rosewoman refuses to see any boundaries that can contain Afro-Cuban music and its rich fusion with jazz.

-Pop Matters-

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"The clarity of the devotional intent, well-crafted arrangements, and the superior musicianship all around
A Musical Celebration of Cuba in America is a very special recording. Particularly bright moments include Rosewoman’s energetic and imaginative piano solo on Dance For Agayu, her eccentrically flowing piano solo and the ensuing percussion workout on Por Ahora y Para Siempre, the vocal harmonies that open Old Calabar, another gorgeous Rosewoman solo on In Praise of Spiritual Guides, Freddie Hendrix’s tasty trumpet solo on Perdon, and the fractured horn charts on Where Water Meets Sky. I’m sure you’ll find many more of your own over the course of two discs of heart-stirringly beautiful music. Fantastico!

-Stewart Kremsky-

The repertoire consists mostly of original compositions (penned and arranged by Ms. Rosewoman) and merges two distinct streams of consciousness, Cuban folkloric music and Jazz into one – without compromising the fundamental essence of either. If you’ve never experienced New Yor-Uba live, it’s the equivalent of partaking in an authentic Cuban rumba, a sacred ceremony, a jazz concert and Sunday mass at a Gospel Church, simultaneously.

The soul stirring harmonies and chants the deep, hypnotic rhythms of the (sacred) Batá drums and the jazzy, free flowing solos combined with the divine nature of the music are a testament to Ms. Rosewoman’s vision.

-Latin Jazz Network-

"Ouch, it’s time once again to discover one of those records that so good it hurts... this is about killer playing that goes down so smoothly and well interwoven that you just have to gasp for air. This double cd, stocked with playing by some of New York’s finest jazzbos, qualifies as a landmark recording that will continue to tower no matter how much passes behind it. A must for Afro-Cuban jazz fans, this is a set they will not want to be without. Get on board.

-Midwest Records-

More from Larry Blumenfeld

"Rosewoman has conceived of large ensemble music that unites great musicians with distinct personalities into a communal voice—much like Mingus or Ellington did—even as she adheres to Afro-Cuban traditions. It sounds bold, swinging, ceremonial and formal—all at once, in many cases. It strives for and mostly achieves a unity that few musicians could even imagine, and that would be impossible without such diverse and developed players in her band."

"Rosewoman’s concept sounded every bit as fresh as it did three decades ago, and yet more developed and exalted...Rosewoman is a gifted musician whose jazz pianism draws equal influence from, say, Randy Weston and Cecil Taylor, and whose grasp of Afro-Cuban tradition enables her, when she chooses, to make her instrument function like a set of tuned drums. At times on Friday, she traded phrases with percussionists as if one of them."

"Ms. Rosewoman’s music—dissonant melodies, brass chorales, chromatic ballads and orchestrated vamps...as the groove shifted from the flow of the Santeria chants to the swing of a jazz band—was jazz that didn't simply use Afro-Cuban rhythms as decoration, but layered melodies and rhythms with equal force and weight."

-THE NEW YORK TIMES-

"New Yor-Uba is soulful evidence that Rosewoman is on to something significant. The music was energetic, propulsive and especially noteworthy largely because it did not use either jazz melodies or Cuban rhythms as mere embellishments. Rosewoman's concept fully integrated orchestrated brasses, saxophones, and a jazz back line, with traditional Yoruban chants sung to the heavy rhythmic accompaniment of congas and bata drums, ceremoniously arriving at sumptuous Ellington-like orchestrations."

-DOWN BEAT MAGAZINE-
“Michele led the band through a set of charts that gave insight into her imagination and talent…. Rosewoman gave a state-of-the-art performance that is rooted in tradition but searching for new ideas to further this sanctified circle and pay homage to the black spiritual music of two worlds for a joyous energized experience."

**LATIN BEAT MAGAZINE**

**From LATIN JAZZ: The First of the Fusions a book by John Storm Roberts**

“Pianist Michele Rosewoman represents the most consistently interesting wing of Latin-jazz within the general jazz world…. Rosewoman’s technical chops are considerable and her range of influences even more so. While showing obvious signs of the usual post-bop enthusiasms (Thelonious Monk of course, but also touches of more expressionist players like McCoy Tyner) she is heavily influenced melodically and harmonically by Billy Strayhorn. But from the start she has integrated into her work both Afro-Cuban elements and the African elements from which they derive, most notably with her…big band, New Yo-Uba. Rosewoman seems to like working outward from a beguiling theme, and is not interested in building a jazz/Latin synthesis by the very common method of mixing Cuban and jazz elements in a solo. [She has a] dual dedication to Afro/Latin roots and the more exploratory zones of jazz.”