

Michele Rosewoman

Quintessence Bio

www.michelerosewoman.com

"Pianist Michele Rosewoman's fusion of Afro-Cuban folkloric music and post-bop jazz avoids the obvious without being obscure . . . she's an original thinker making uncompromising and forward-looking jazz—which just happens to be accessible and viscerally exciting." JAZZIZ

Quintessence is the main vehicle showcasing the evolution of pianist, composer and bandleader **Michele Rosewoman**. In 1986, Rosewoman formed her Quintessence ensemble, which debuted at Cooper Union Great Hall in New York City. The seminal recording on Enja was hailed by critics and polled as one of the best jazz releases of the year, and later as one of the best of the decade.

Following its debut, Quintessence continued to record on the Enja label, and toured major U.S., European and Canadian festivals, as well as concert halls and clubs including prestigious New York venues. Rosewoman explains, *"I am drawn to conversational and energy-inspired musical explorations where the sophisticated and the spiritual intersect and where groove and abstract strike a balance. From there, the music seems to have a surprising way of connecting authentically with the listener."*

Guardians of the Light, (Enja 2000), recorded live at Sweet Basil, was hailed by National Public Radio as *"spontaneous, serious and mysterious. Rosewoman, and her band, are jazz believers, jazz devotees...keepers of the flame."* This ensemble included Steve Wilson, Craig Handy, Kenny Davis and Gene Jackson. Rosewoman's 2006 release, *The In Side Out* (Advance Dance Disques AD 0353) made numerous "Best of 2006" critics' polls and received rave reviews in respected jazz publications—earning 4 stars in Downbeat magazine—and rich on-air rotation throughout the U.S. and Canada. Here, Rosewoman included core members, saxophonists Mark Shim and Miguel Zenon, with guest collaborators guitarist Dave Fiuczynski, Josh Roseman on trombone and Pedro Martinez on percussion.

Rosewoman has consistently assembled dynamic line-ups and nurtured talent, thereby enabling the ensemble to evolve while remaining true to its distinctive sound. A fearless bandleader and mentor, she has brought together some of the most creative voices in contemporary jazz. Past and current ensemble members include Terri Lyne Carrington (drums), Steve Coleman (alto saxophone), Kenny Davis (bass), Gene Jackson (drums), Greg Osby (alto/soprano saxophones), Lonnie Plaxico (bass), David Sanchez (tenor saxophone), Tyshawn Sorey (drums), Gary Thomas (tenor and flute), Steve Wilson and Miguel Zenon (alto/soprano saxophones), among others.

Writer and jazz critic Howard Mandel states *"Michele Rosewoman is a distinctively original and engaging pianist/composer, whose ensemble Quintessence has introduced her music and the contributions of many later-established star instrumentalists over the course of almost 25 years...provocative, multi-dimensional performances that extend ancient Yoruba rhythms and chants to a realm that is utterly modern and open-ended. Rosewoman has kept the faith with the jazz imperative to come up with fresh ideas while maintaining connection with traditions and remaining always interactive."*

Ms. Rosewoman's acclaimed Quintessence projects have enjoyed the support of coveted awards and grants including a 2006 Chamber Music America *Encore* Grant; a 2008 and 2002 Chamber Music America *New Works: Creation and Presentation* Grant; a CMA Community Projects grant in partnership with the Newark Office of Visual and Performing Arts; and a CMA-sponsored Residency Partnership in conjunction with A.R.T.S. Inc. Quintessence presentations at major jazz destinations include the Chicago, Ravinia, Toronto Vancouver, Leverkusen, KOOL, Earshot and Vision NYC jazz festivals; Merkin and Cooper Union concert halls; New York University and the University of Pennsylvania; The Blue Note, Birdland and The Jazz Standard, NYC; Yoshi's, Oakland CA; Jazz Bakery, Los Angeles; and The Outpost, Albuquerque NM; among many others.