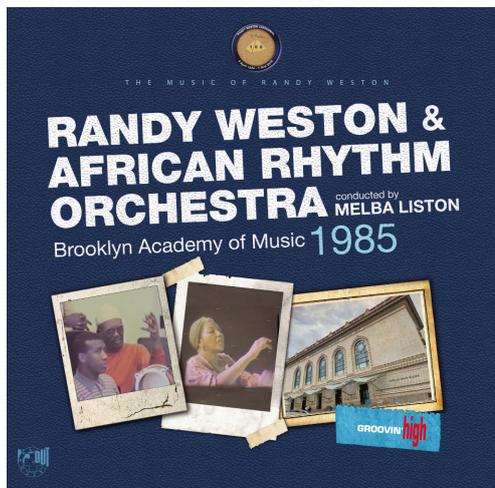




PRESS RELEASE



RANDY WESTON
& AFRICAN RHYTHM ORCHESTRA
BROOKLYN ACADEMY OF MUSIC 1985



IOR LP 77165-1



IOR CD 77165-2



1. African Sunrise (16:34)
2. The Last Day (04:30)
3. Portrait Of Vivian (07:05)
4. Blue Moses (17:53)

Randy Weston piano | **Stanton Davis, Johnny Coles, Virgil Jones, Richard Williams** trumpets
Al Grey, Benny Powell trombones | **Greg Williams** french horn | **Greg Maker** tuba | **Harold Vick** tenor sax & flute | **Talib Kibwe, Norris Turney** alto sax & flute | **Billy Harper** tenor sax & flute
Cecil Payne baritone sax | **Charlie Persip** drums | **George Duvivier** bass | **Sam Kelly** bongos
Big Black african percussions | **Shirley Steward-Farmer** vocals on „The Last Day“

RANDY WESTON & AFRICAN RHYTHM ORCHESTRA BROOKLYN ACADEMY OF MUSIC 1985

(IN+OUT Records)

IN+OUT Records is celebrating the 100th birthday of jazz piano legend Randy Weston with three albums featuring previously unreleased live material. These will be released individually on vinyl and CD, as well as together in an elegant and strictly limited collector's box set.

Randy Weston, the giant. He was said to stand 6 feet 7 inches tall, which is why he gave his most famous composition the name "Hi Fly". He once remarked that from his height, looking down at the ground felt like flying. Indeed, the towering figure born in Brooklyn in 1926 drew attention not only for his physical stature but also for his music — his titles possessed that special something: memorable, distinctive melodies with a strong sense of identity. This was due in part to the fact that Rhythm & Blues can rightly be called Weston's musical cradle, but also because, in the second half of his career, he devoted himself especially to the legacy of his African ancestors.

His father had sharpened his awareness early on. He ran a restaurant in Bedford-Stuyvesant, a New York neighborhood that was considered a focal point of the Brooklyn jazz scene. "You are an African born in America. Look in the mirror and learn who you are," he impressed upon young Randy, encouraging him to trace the roots of jazz back to its „mother continent," Africa. That Weston's playing was always edgy and rhythmically charged was due above all to Thelonious Monk — alongside Duke Ellington, his greatest role model. Monk advised Weston never to make musical compromises — advice he followed faithfully until his death in 2018 at the age of 92.

As early as 1960, Weston dedicated an entire album, „Uhuru Africa", to African sounds, followed in 1963 by „Highlife" and in 1964 by „African Cookbook". In 1961, the pianist traveled to Nigeria for the first time, and by the late 1960s, he had settled for several years in Tangier, Morocco, where he ran a jazz club. Later, he worked regularly with Gnawa musicians and, in 2017, released *The African Nubian Suite*, a sweeping exploration of human history through sounds from Egypt, Senegal, China, and Afro-America.

In honor of Randy Weston's 100th birthday on April 6, 2026, IN+OUT Records is releasing a spectacular box set featuring three previously unreleased albums. These recordings capture the pianist's performances in 1985 at the Brooklyn Academy of Music and the Montreux Jazz Festival, as well as his 1988 festival collaborations with fellow pianist Monty Alexander — all preserved for posterity by Weston's longtime friend Jacques Muyal. The collection will be available on vinyl in an exquisite leather case, complete with a commemorative medal designed by the artist himself.

Brooklyn Academy Of Music 1985

A long-overdue homecoming: In 1985, pianist Randy Weston returned to Brooklyn with his African Rhythm Orchestra and Melba Liston's radiant arrangements — merging blues, gospel, and African trance into one powerful celebration of roots and rhythm.

It was simply long overdue and meant nothing less than a homecoming for him — a return in which he brought not only his music but also stories and the soul of Africa back to his homeland. When Randy Weston came to Brooklyn in 1985, the city finally had the opportunity to pay proper tribute to one of its most important musicians. With a week-long celebration culminating in a concert on February 16 at the Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM), they sought to honor their great son, who by then stood among legends like Max Roach, Duke Jordan, and Cecil Payne.

For this occasion, Randy was allowed to assemble a dream ensemble — with dancers, singers (including Andy Bey), and an illustrious big band. The arrangements and musical direction were entrusted to his closest collaborator and musical sister, Melba Liston — a brilliant trombonist and masterful arranger. She had the gift of transforming Randy's compositions into magnificent orchestrations that captured all the magic that defined him.

Thanks to Melba Liston, he was able to trace his musical paths — beginning with blues, gospel, and spirituals, briefly detouring (but not lingering) down a side street of swing, and finally arriving at the trance-like elegies of the Gnawa, who had been brought centuries ago as slaves to the northwest coast of Africa. No one transformed time into harmony more consistently than Randy Weston, and no one cultivated the percussive dimension of the piano so deeply — an instrument that, in his hands, often sounded like a drum set with 88 skins. From groove emerged structure — enchantment at the highest level. The pieces bore

titles such as “African Sunrise,” “The Last Day,” “Portrait of Vivian,” and “Blue Moses” — heavy, dark, mystical, swaying works of art, grand and too profound ever to fit into the shallow box of so-called “world music.” Why his collaboration with Melba Liston worked so perfectly, Randy Weston explained like this: “We both knew that for a recording we wanted older musicians as the foundation. Then we brought in the younger ones. The elders have the know-how — they know all the secrets about music that we don’t. The younger ones bring in the energy. Melba always made sure we had that foundation.”

THE COMPLETE RANDY WESTON CENTENNIAL PROJECT:



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