

Joe Locke

Biography / full length

Joe Locke is widely considered to be one of the major voices of his instrument. He has performed and recorded with a diverse range of notable musicians, including Grover Washington Jr, Kenny Barron, Eddie Henderson, Cecil Taylor, Dianne Reeves, Ron Carter, The Beastie Boys, the Münster Symphony Orchestra and the Lincoln, Nebraska Symphony.

Long known to be a soloist capable of stunning physical power and broad emotional range, it was not until the last decade that he emerged as the composer, bandleader and conceptualist that he is considered today. This is in no small part due to his recent solo projects. *Four Walls of Freedom*, a six-movement suite based on the writing of the monk Thomas Merton, which he composed as a vehicle for tenor saxophonist Bob Berg, garnered high praise from the critical community as a major work and won several international polls. *Live in Seattle*, by The Joe Locke / Geoffrey Keezer Group, won the 2006 Ear Shot award for "Concert of the Year". This group is well loved and emulated by younger musicians looking for direction and inspiration. The overwhelming success of the quartet, *Force of Four*, can be attributed to the talents of his young cohorts and to the leader's musical philosophy, which is to honour tradition while keeping both feet planted in the present and future. His 2011 album, the captivating, immersive album *VIA*, is the result of a reunion of Storms/Nocturnes, the transatlantic trio with Geoffrey Keezer and Tim Garland, about which Chick Corea said "This trio is unique, a chamber jazz form that truly sizzles with virtuosity and creativity. Tim, Geoff and Joe make an amazing trio".

In 2011 Joe joined the Motéma label for four intrinsically different albums bearing witness of his immense stylistic versatility and ability to create artistic depth in a variety of contexts:

After *Signing*, the long-awaited follow-up studio album of *Live In Seattle*, 2012 also saw the release of Joe Locke's first ever symphonic project, *Wish Upon A Star*, featuring Locke's Quartet with the Lincoln Symphony Orchestra (NE), and the Jazz radio charts #1 Blues & Ballads album *Lay Down My Heart* in 2013. In 2015 Locke released *Love Is A Pendulum* - a suite based on a poem by Barbara Sfraga - is already being hailed the most important work of his career.

Locke's latest album, *Subtle Disguise* (2018) represents "the total expression of who I am as a musician and human being." (JL) and is very much a happy continuation of his search to unite his love of composition with the connective qualities of melody and groove. *Subtle Disguise* features Jim Ridl, Lorin Cohen and Samvel Sarkisyan as part of the core quartet, plus guests Raul Midón, David Binney, Adam Rogers and Alina Engibaryan.

Locke is a five-time recipient of the Jazz Journalists Association's "Mallet Instrumentalist of the Year" Award, has received two Earshot Golden Ear Awards for "Concert of the Year" and the 2013 Hot House NYC Jazz Awards for Best Vibes Player, and keeps topping critics and readers polls. In 2016 he was honoured with the induction into the Music Hall of Fame of his hometown Rochester, NY. He is an active clinician and educator in the United States and in Europe and has been the International Vibraphone Consultant at the Royal Academy Of Music, London, on a visiting basis since 2008, holding the title of Honorary Associate of the Royal Academy Of Music (Hon ARAM) since 2013.

Biography / shorter

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This is in no small part due to his recent solo projects, notably *Four Walls of Freedom*, a 6 movement suite featuring the late tenor saxophonist Bob Berg; *Live in Seattle (Origin)* by The Joe Locke / Geoffrey Keezer Group which won the 2006 Ear Shot award for Concert of the Year and his eloquent and vibrant quartet *Force Of Four (Origin)*.

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Locke is a five-time recipient of the Jazz Journalists Association's "Mallet Instrumentalist of the Year" Award and has won numerous further awards and polls. In 2016 he was honoured with the induction into the Music Hall of Fame of his hometown Rochester, NY. He is an active clinician and educator in the United States and in Europe and is holding the title of Honorary Associate of London's Royal Academy Of Music (Hon ARAM) since 2013.

Quotes

"One of jazz's greatest vibes players."

— The Rochester Democrat and Chronicle, Jack Garner

"Charismatically skilful"

— The Guardian, UK

"Joe Locke's playing and writing have been an absolute joy to this vibist's ears that have been starving to hear a player who challenges himself on every tune. Joe is constantly pushing the envelope musically. The cat is going into orbit soon I love it!"

— Mike Mainieri

"A player with a pristine tone and delightful ideas no matter what musical setting he selects."

— All About Jazz

"Joe Locke is a wonderful young man who's all about the music, all the time! You can hear it in every note he plays."

— Bobby Hutcherson

"Not only has he mastered an instrument that has catapulted only a handful of players to the forefront of modern jazz - but he has done so in a way that transcends mere technique and establishes him as a unique and adventurous musical voice."

— Derk Richardson, San Francisco Bay Guardian

"His lines have flash and pizzazz, but also an unforced lyricism, bubbling just under that force-of-nature enthusiasm"

— Chicago Jazz Music Examiner

"In the select group of contemporary vibes players, Locke has claims to head the list."

— Penguin Encyclopedia of Jazz

"There seems little doubt that Locke, with his ability to play cool and funky, heady and relaxed, is set to become the pre-eminent vibraphonist in jazz."

— The Times, London, UK

"...stunning technique... one of the world's most versatile vibes masters."

— Hot House, Gary Walker

Selected Discography

- 2018 - Subtle Disguise – (Origin Records)
- 2015 - Love Is A Pendulum – (Motéma Music)
- 2013 - Lay Down My Heart – Blues & Ballads Vol 1 – (Motéma Music)
- 2012 - Wish Upon A Star – Joe Locke Quartet w/ Lincoln's Symphony Orchestra (Motéma Music)
- 2012 - Signing – The Joe Locke / Geoffrey Keezer Group (Motéma Music)
- 2011 - VIA – Storms/Nocturnes - w/ Geoffrey Keezer, Tim Garland (Origin Records)
- 2010 - For The Love Of You – feat. vocalist Kenny Washington (E1 Music)
- 2009 - Mutual Admiration Society 2 – w/ David Hazeltine (SharpNine)
- 2008 - Force of Four – Joe Locke (Origin)
- 2008 - Verrazano Moon – Joe Locke / Frank Kimbrough (Ominitone)
- 2008 - Live at JazzBaltica – Trio Da Paz & Joe Locke (MAXJAZZ)
- 2007 - Sticks & Strings – Joe Locke Quartet (MusicEyes)
- 2006 - Live in Seattle – The Joe Locke / Geoffrey Keezer Group (Origin)
- 2006 - Fallen Angel – w/ Bob Sneider (Sons of Sound)
- 2005 - Van Gogh by Numbers – w/ Christos Rafalides (Wire Walker)
- 2005 - Rev. elation – A Milt Jackson Tribute (Sharp Nine Records)
- 2005 - Summertime – w/ Geoff Keezer (Eighty Eight's / Sony Music)
- 2004 - Summer Knows – w/ Geoff Keezer (Eighty Eight's / Sony Music)
- 2004 - Dear Life - Joe Locke & 4 Walls Of Freedom (Sirocco Music)
- 2003 - 4 Walls Of Freedom - Joe Locke & 4 Walls Of Freedom (Sirocco Music)
- 2002 - State Of Soul - (Sirocco Music)
- 2001 - Storytelling - (Sirocco Music)
- 2001 - The Willow - w/ Frank Kimbrough (OmniTone)
- 2001 - Beauty Burning - (Sirocco Music)
- 1999 - Mutual Admiration Society - w/ David Hazeltine Quartet (SharpNine)
- 1999 - Saturn's Child - w/ Frank Kimbrough (OmniTone)
- 1998 - Slander and other Love Songs - (Milestone)
- 1997 - Sound Tracks - (Milestone)
- 1996 - Inner Space - (Steeplechase)
- 1995 - Moment To Moment - (Milestone)
- 1995 - Very Early - (Steeplechase)
- 1993 - Wirewalker (Steeplechase)
- 1991 - But Beautiful - w/ Kenny Barron (Steeplechase)
- 1991 - Longing - (Steeplechase)
- 1990 - Present Tense - (Milestone)

Web Links

official
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