



Solos and Duos Series
15 Curry Hicks, 100 Hicks Way
University of Massachusetts
Amherst, MA 01003

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www.fineartscenter.com

THE 2010 SOLOS & DUOS SERIES PRESENTS:

Randy Weston

The Solos & Duos Series, produced by the Fine Arts Center at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, concludes its 9th season with a concert by **Randy Weston** on **Thursday, November 18**, in **Bowker Auditorium** at **8:00pm**.

After six decades as a professional musician Randy Weston remains one of the world's foremost pianists and composers, a true innovator and visionary. "Weston has the biggest sound of any jazz pianist since Ellington and Monk," writes Stanley Crouch. In a career that began in the late 1940s, Weston has criss-crossed the globe connecting the African diaspora through sound. "Mr. Weston is a truth seeker who sees a power in music much greater than all of us," writes The New York Times.

Born in Brooklyn in 1926, Weston's first recording as a leader came in 1954 on Riverside Records, *Randy Weston plays Cole Porter - Cole Porter in a Modern Mood*. In the 50's Weston played around New York with Cecil Payne and Kenny Dorham and wrote many of his best loved tunes, "Saucer Eyes," "Pam's Waltz," "Little Niles," and, "Hi-Fly", now all jazz standards.

In the 1960s, Weston's music prominently incorporated African elements, as in the large-scale suite *Uhuru Africa* (with poet Langston Hughes) and *Highlife: Music From the New African Nations*. On both these albums he teamed up with the arranger and his long-time collaborator, Melba Liston. In 1967 Weston traveled throughout Africa with a U.S. cultural delegation, and decided to settle in Morocco, running his African Rhythms Club from 1967 to 1972. For a long stretch he recorded infrequently on smaller record labels, but made quite an impact with the recording *The Spirits of Our Ancestors* (1992), which contained new, expanded versions of many of his well-known pieces and featured an ensemble including African musicians and North American such as Dizzy Gillespie and Pharoah Sanders.

Randy Weston has made more than 40 albums and performed throughout the world. He has been inducted into the ASCAP "Jazz Wall of Fame," designated a Jazz Master by the National Endowment of the Arts, and named jazz composer of the year three times by Downbeat magazine. He is the recipient of many other honors and awards, including the French Order of Arts and Letters, the "Black Music Star Award" from the Art Critics and Reviewers Association of Ghana, and a five-night tribute at the Montreal Jazz Festival. In October 2010, Weston will publish his autobiography, *African Rhythms: The Autobiography of Randy Weston* (Duke University Press).

Randy Weston appears in Amherst as part of "Art & Power in Movement -Rethinking the Black Power and Black Arts Movements", produced by the W.E.B. Du Bois Department of Afro-American Studies, University of Massachusetts.

Tickets are \$10 and \$5 (students), and are available through the FAC box office, 545-2511 or 1-800-999-UMAS.

The Solos & Duos Series is produced by the UMass Fine Arts Center. Thanks to UMass Hotel at the Campus Center, Amherst College and Faultlines: Mapping Jazz in the 21st Century and WMUA, 91.1FM



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