



Stage Introduction, for presenters and masters-of-ceremonies, to introduce Jessica Williams to the audience (either read verbatim or for use as an outline)

Jessica Williams is a well-known and highly respected pianist and composer who has deep roots in the Jazz Tradition.

DAVE BRUBECK calls her "One of the greatest jazz pianists I have ever heard..."

McCOY TYNER says "Jessica is a beautiful player..."

and ROLLING STONE Magazine calls her "A vibrant force on the

contemporary music scene."

This two-time Grammy Nominee was born in Baltimore, Maryland, and classically trained at the Peabody Conservatory of Music.

She moved to Philadelphia during her teens and worked with the great Philly Joe Jones, drummer for the Miles Davis Quintet. In her mid-twenties, she moved to the West Coast, where she played in the bands of Eddie Harris, Dexter Gordon, Tony Williams, Stan Getz, Big Nick Nicholas, Airto and Flora, Charlie Rouse, John Abercrombie, Leroy Vinnegar, and others.

She has released over 65 albums and written over 300 compositions.

She has received two grants from the National Endowment for the Arts; a Rockefeller Grant for composing; the Alice B. Toklas Grant for Women Composers, and the prestigious John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship.

In Europe, she scored Jazz Record of the Year for 2 consecutive years in the Jazz Journal International Reader's Poll.

While in California, she was presented the Keys to the City of Sacramento, receiving four grants from the Sacramento Arts Commission, and the Keys to the City of San Mateo. She was chosen Artist of the Year in Santa Cruz County, for her free musical service to the elderly, and for donating support to the Women's Shelter of Watsonville.

She been in the Top 5 CDs of JazzTimes' Critics Poll on numerous occasions, and her albums have made the TOP TEN JAZZ ALBUMS in the Village Voice several times.

During the last four decades, Jessica has recorded for Adelphi, Clean Cuts, Jazz Focus, Candid, Concord, Landmark-Fantasy, Timeless, Maxjazz, and Origin Arts.

She owns her own publishing company, JJW Music, owns her own CD company called Red and Blue Recordings, and runs her own successful Internet business, jessicawilliams.com.

She's been a guest on NPR's Fresh Air with Terry Gross, and on Marian McPartland's Piano Jazz. She's written scores for PBS and HBO and has received more than twenty ASCAP Special Awards for her prolific musical output. She has played everywhere from the Mary Lou Williams Women in Jazz Festival at the Kennedy Center to the Opera House in Tokyo, Japan.

Ladies and Gentlemen, please welcome Miss Jessica Williams.