

ANTHONY BROWN

"If music is a language, then Berkeley percussionist and composer Anthony Brown is one of the most articulate men in jazz."

SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE

"And Mr. Brown, swinging away on drums, made the piece levitate."

NEW YORK TIMES

Anthony Brown is a critically acclaimed musician, composer, bandleader, ethnomusicologist and scholar of jazz music and culture. The son of an African American/Choctaw career soldier, he was born in San Francisco and grew up on three continents spending summers with his mother's family in Tokyo while living in Japan, and graduating from high school in Frankfurt, Germany. He majored in music and psychology at the University of Oregon where he was commissioned a Lieutenant in the Army upon graduation. After serving in Athens, Greece and Heidelberg, Germany, Brown returned to San Francisco in 1980 to work with progressive jazz groups, which coalesced into the Asian American Jazz Movement. Since 1998, his San Francisco-based Asian American Orchestra has received international critical acclaim for their performances and seven recordings blending Asian musical instruments with the sonorities and sensibilities of the jazz orchestra. Their recording of Duke Ellington-Billy Strayhorn's *Far East Suite* received a 2000 GRAMMY™ nomination for Best Large Jazz Ensemble Performance. The Orchestra's next release, *Monk's Moods: Music of Thelonious Monk* with guest Steve Lacy, was rated a "Five-star masterpiece" and "Best CD of 2003" by *Downbeat*, the leading jazz magazine. Anthony Brown's 2005 recording, *Rhapsodies* features his re-composition of Gershwin's *Rhapsody In Blue* completed while he was a 2003 Guggenheim Fellow. His most recent commissioned collaboration, *DOWN BY THE RIVERSIDE Requiem for a King*, featuring spoken word by Angela Davis and music by the Asian American Orchestra and Voices Of A Dream gospel ensemble, premiered as the centerpiece of the 2018 SF International Arts Festival in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of Dr. King's assassination.

Dr. Brown composed the original scores for the world premieres of American Conservatory Theater's *After The War* (2007), TheatreWorks' *The Legacy Codes* (2003), and *Cross Currents*, in collaboration with Dimensions Dance Theater for the 2007 SF International Arts Festival. In 2008, he composed the music for the award-winning short documentary, *Witness to Hiroshima*, and has since scored

soundtracks including three for documentaries about the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II. Dr. Brown and his music are featured in the film documentaries, *Don't Lose Your Soul: The Music of Anthony Brown and Mark Izu* (2012), *Doubles: Japan and America's Intercultural Children* (1995), and *Outside In Sight: The Music of United Front* (1986). Brown's composition, *Rhymes (For Children)*, served as the theme music for *Pacific Time*, KQED's Public Radio International (PRI) weekly newsmagazine. He also can be heard on over thirty recordings on Water Baby, Soul Note, Blue Note, Gramavision, Asian Improv, RPM, and Hat Art Records.

Anthony Brown has collaborated with the Smithsonian Jazz Masterworks Orchestra, Max Roach, Sonia Sanchez, Pharoah Sanders, Cecil Taylor, Zakir Hussain, Sir Roland Hanna, Jayne Cortez, Oliver Lake, Janice Mirikitani, Wadada Leo Smith and the Ligeti Quartet, and with Anthony Davis and the San Francisco Symphony. In 2023, Brown served as a U.S. State Department Cultural Ambassador in Thailand – an honored tradition for jazz musicians including Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, Dizzy Gillespie, Dave Brubeck, et. al. He is the recipient of grants, awards, fellowships and commissions from the Ford Foundation, Meet the Composer, National Endowment for the Arts, Chamber Music America, San Francisco Arts Commission, Creative Work Fund, San Francisco Foundation, California Arts Council, Asian Heritage Council, MacDowell Colony, San Francisco Chamber Music Society, Ministry of Culture in Berlin, and the British Council.

Dr. Brown holds an M.A. and Ph.D. in Music (Ethnomusicology) from UC Berkeley, a Master of Music in Jazz Performance from Rutgers University, and received the Distinguished Alumnus Award in Music from the University of Oregon in 2017. A Smithsonian Associate Scholar, Artistic Director of Fifth Stream Music, and a professor of music at the California Jazz Conservatory, Dr. Brown has served as Curator of American Musical Culture (1992-96) and founding director of the Jazz Oral History Program at the Smithsonian Institution, and as a visiting professor of music at UC Berkeley (1998, 2002). He has contributed chapters to books about Duke Ellington and John Coltrane published by Cambridge and Oxford University Press, respectively, and has contributed music encyclopedia entries for Simon & Schuster Macmillan.

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