



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

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SONNY ROLLINS

BASS CONCERT HALL
SUNDAY, MAY 3, 2009, 7:00 P.M.
FOR ONE PERFORMANCE ONLY!

TICKETS ON SALE NOW!

“I am convinced that all art has the desire to leave the ordinary.”
– *Sonny Rollins*

Expectations run very high at **Sonny Rollins** concerts, for both audiences and the artist himself. Considered jazz’s greatest living improviser, Rollins seizes the opportunity offered by each live performance to search for his “lost chord”; his audiences await nothing short of transcendence. Sonny and his band will make a rare Austin appearance at Bass Concert Hall on Sunday, May 3, 2009 at 7:00 p.m.!

Sonny veered away from classical music after his uncle, a professional saxophonist, introduced him to jazz and blues. He gravitated to the tenor saxophone in high school, inspired in particular by Coleman Hawkins. By the time he was out of school, Rollins was already working with big-name musicians such as Bud Powell, Fats Navarro, and Roy Haynes. In 1951 he debuted as a leader on Prestige; his affiliation with that label also produced classics such as ***Saxophone Colossus***, ***Worktime***, and ***Tenor Madness*** (with John Coltrane).

In early 1956, until he went out on his own permanently as a leader in the summer of 1957, Rollins played in the Max Roach–Clifford Brown Quintet, one of the most definitive (and tragically short-lived) hard-bop ensembles of its day. Rollins then entered a tremendously fertile period during which he recorded major works such as ***A Night at the Village Vanguard***, ***Way Out West***, and ***Freedom Suite***.

In 1959, Rollins took the first of his legendary sabbaticals. Living on Manhattan’s Lower East Side, he was often spotted on the nearby Williamsburg Bridge, deep in a

rigorous practice regimen. “I wanted to work on my horn, I wanted to study more harmony,” he told Stanley Crouch in *The New Yorker*.

When Rollins returned to performing in 1961, he recorded *The Bridge* with Jim Hall and Bob Cranshaw, led a quartet with trumpeter Don Cherry and drummer Billy Higgins, and recorded with his idol Coleman Hawkins. He also received a Grammy nomination for his score for the popular film *Alfie*. At decade’s end he undertook one final hiatus, studying Zen Buddhism in Japan and yoga in India. He considered leaving music permanently in order to pursue spiritual studies, but a teacher persuaded him that music *was* his spiritual path.

In 1972, with the encouragement and support of his wife Lucille, who had become his business manager, Rollins returned to performing and recording, signing with Milestone and releasing *Next Album*. His lengthy association with the Berkeley-based label produced two dozen albums in various settings—from his working groups to all-star ensembles (Tommy Flanagan, Jack DeJohnette, Stanley Clarke, Tony Williams, George Duke); from a solo recital to tour recordings with the Milestone Jazzstars; in the studio and on the concert stage. Sonny was also the subject of a mid-’80s documentary by Robert Muggé entitled *Saxophone Colossus*.

He won his first performance Grammy for *This Is What I Do* (2000), and his second for 2004’s *Without a Song (The 9/11 Concert)*, in the Best Jazz Instrumental Solo category (for “Why Was I Born”). *Sonny, Please* was nominated for a best jazz album Grammy in 2006. In addition, Sonny received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences in 2004. In June 2006, Rollins was inducted into the Academy of Achievement at the International Achievement Summit in Los Angeles, and in May 2007 was a recipient of the Polar Music Prize, presented in Stockholm. Most recently, he was named best tenor saxophonist in the 2008 *Down Beat* Critics’ Poll and the *Jazz Times* Readers’ Poll, and by the Jazz Journalists Association in their June 2008 awards event.

“I feel tremendously privileged to have succeeded to some extent in a music that includes the likes of Louis Armstrong and Fats Waller—all of these guys who I thought were such tremendous people putting out all of this positive music,” Rollins says. “It was all that I could ever dream—to be involved in this.” Sonny Rollins, seeker and grand master, is jazz’s most exacting, exhilarating, and inspiring practitioner.

CALENDAR LISTING

Sunday, May 3, 2009, 7:00 pm – The University of Texas at Austin Performing Arts Center presents **Sonny Rollins** at the Performing Arts Center’s Bass Concert Hall (E. 23rd St. and Robert Dedman Dr). A map of the campus:

http://www.utpac.org/visit/maps_directions. Tickets (\$26.00 - \$48.00 / \$10 student tickets / discounted tickets available for UT faculty & staff, seniors and Military) are on sale now at the authorized ticket outlets, which include the Bass Concert Hall Box

Office, most H-E-B stores and all Texas Box Office outlets, online at www.utpac.org, or by calling (512) 477-6060 or (800) 982-BEVO.