

"An amazing guitarist... unique and beautiful music - and best of all - very original....I'm really impressed." Pat Metheny

Rez Abbasi

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Biography

Born on the Indian

sub-continent, removed at the age of four to the vastness of Southern California, schooled at the University of Southern California and the Manhattan School of Music in jazz and classical music, as well as a pilgrimage in India under the tutelage of master percussionist, Ustad Alla Rakha, Rez Abbasi is a vivid synthesis of all the above stated influences and genres.

Making New York home for the past 18 years, Rez Abbasi is considered by many to be one of the foremost modern jazz guitar players on today's scene. He has developed a unique sound both as a composer and an instrumentalist and has honed his skills with performances throughout the world including multiple tours in Europe, Canada, the U.S., Mexico and India. He has performed and recorded with many jazz greats including, Grammy winner Ruth Brown, Peter Erskine, Kenny Werner, Barre Phillips, Tim Hagans, Marc Johnson, Billy Hart, Marvin 'Smitty' Smith, Gary Thomas, Rick Margitza, Dave Douglas, DD Jackson, Rudresh Mahanthappa, Tony Malaby, George Brooks, Pandit

Ronu Majumdar, Pandit Kadri Gopalnath, Pandit Vishwa Mohan Bhatt, Marilyn Crispell, Greg Osby, Howard Levy and a host of others.

Rez is musical director and producer for Indian/Canadian Juno award winning vocalist, Kiran Ahluwalia. Kiran's 2008 recording, "Wanderlust" on the World Connection label, hit the top ten on the European world-music radio charts and also received top ten in SongLines Magazine. The group travelled extensively throughout Europe, performing at the Paleo and Sfinks festivals. Rez also plays an integral role in two of saxophonist Rudresh Mahanthappa's groups, The Indo-Pak Coalition (Innova) and Kinsmen (PI). Kinsmen placed in twenty top ten list's for 2008. As a result, Rez was interviewed by NPR's "All Things Considered", Rolling Stone Magazine India and featured in the New York Times. The Indo-Pak Coalition recently performed at many festivals including, the Montreal Jazz Fest. and Newport Jazz Fest. Rez can also be heard as a member of saxophonist Dave Pietro's Chakra Suite (Challenge Records), Sandro Dominelli trio among many other groups.

With six albums of original compositions under his belt, Abbasi continues to garner new groups of musicians to help his musical vision come to life. His 2005 recording **Snake Charmer**, has created a stir in the music world partly due to his organic, original approach

Invigorating and graceful playing, unpredictable and fascinating compositions. Abbasi is a rarity!"

- *Jazziz*

in blending two complex musical genres together, namely jazz and Indian music. The provocative instrumentation of organ, drums and guitar alongside Indian vocalist Kiran Ahluwalia, is on one hand, a sound grounded in jazz and yet uncommon in jazz arenas. 20th Century Guitar reviewed the CD as, "One of the best examples yet of how to merge Indian Classical music with jazz...Snake Charmer really breaks new ground." In 2007, Rez achieved even greater heights with the follow up to Snake Charmer, **Bazaar**.

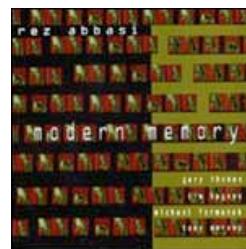
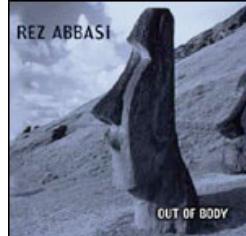


Bazaar continues the groups journey through uncharted territory and achieves results unparalleled in todays jazz/world music scene. Rez makes wise use of his fellow player's talents to create a larger sphere of sound. Besides Gary Versace on organ and Dan Weiss on drums and tabla, Kiran Ahluwalia returns as a central member of the group.

Abbasi's musical philosophy states, "To create a global-based music steeped in jazz is my goal. In this way, I'm following in the footsteps of some of the greatest jazz musicians. Coltrane, Ellington and Gillespie all immersed themselves into music from around the world and then brought it back home. If I have that kind of unifying affect, I've succeeded!"

Rez recently finished his newest work, **Things To Come** (2009), which is yet another leap into uncharted musical territory and his most intriguing. It includes a star studded group of Vijay Iyer, Rudresh Mahanthappa, Kiran Ahluwalia, Johannes Weidenmuller and Dan Weiss and is on the prestigious Sunnyside Record label. Rez was also awarded the Chamber Music America grant in 2009 in order to write more material for this group - Stay Tuned!

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Press Quotes

"If part of jazz's appeal centers on the way tension is both created and crushed, the guitarist's new *Things To Come* should capture a fair amount of listeners." - *Village Voice*

"Miraculously, Abbasi gets it exactly right. Out of all the different elements arises a singular and distinctive statement. Consequently the music convinces and enchants on every level." - *All About Jazz*

"Abbasi's adroit soloing and lean, evolving tunes are generated by exceptional reach and a very musical passion." - *New York Press*

"Abbasi creates a sinuous, sometimes haunting and always evocative blend of contemporary jazz and Asian influences." - *Time Out (NY)*

"Abbasi's unpredictable phrasing and accomplished writing are what sets him apart from hordes of other technically adept guitarists."
- Bill Milkowski (*JazzTimes*)

"In some regards, the guitarist and his band offer a post-millennium update on the Mahavishnu Orchestra"
- *New York Times*

"Stimulating new music. Is this soul-jazz, fusion, Indian music, post-bop or world fusion? The answer has to be: All of them and none of them."
- Scott Yanow (*All Music Guide*)

"As jazz increasingly admits sounds from around the globe, Abbasi's efforts rank among the freshest and most compelling. Compositions that stand alone in today's jazz." - *The Ottawa Citizen*

"Eye popping, dazzling virtuosity with considerable writing chops."
- *Signal to Noise*