

## = The Stanley Clarke Band =

The Stanley Clarke Band is an album by jazz bassist Stanley Clarke . It was released by Heads Up Record in June 2010 and was produced by Clarke and Lenny White . Band members include Ruslan Sirota on keyboard , Ronald Bruner , Jr. on drums and Hiromi on piano . The album was awarded the 2011 Grammy for Best Contemporary Jazz Album and the track " No Mystery " was nominated for Best Pop Instrumental Performance . The Guardian gave the album three stars , calling it a " return to a funk repertoire reminiscent of Clarke 's roots in Chick Corea electric bands " , while Allmusic gave it a score of three @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half stars . It is also the second Stanley Clarke album to be credited to The Stanley Clarke Band after his 1985 album Find Out ! .

## = = The band = =

A core trio is constant throughout the album with Clarke joined by drummer Ronald Bruner , Jr. and keyboardist Ruslan Sirota . Hiromi is billed as a featured artist playing piano on " No Mystery " , " Larry Has Traveled 11 Miles and Waited a Lifetime for the Return of Vishnu ? s Report " and her composition " Labyrinth " . Several additional musicians appear on most tracks .

Clarke , in discussing the band has said that " our common thread is improvisation " . Keyboardist Ruslan Sirota is from Israel , Clarke has compared him to Chick Corea and George Duke . Pianist Hiromi is from Japan , Clarke has said that she " plays the piano like a tornado " . Hiromi also played on Clarke 's 2009 album Jazz in the Garden . Clarke referred to drummer Ronald Bruner , from Compton , California , as " one of the most important drummers out there " . Bruner and Sirota had been playing with Clarke for five years or so before the album 's release .

The additional musicians include two guitarists Charles Altura and Rob Bacon , bassist Armand Sabal @-@ Lecco on " Fulani " , keyboardist Felton Pilate on " Here 's Why Tears Dry " , saxophonists Bob Sheppard on " Larry Has Traveled 11 Miles and Waited a Lifetime for the Return of Vishnu ? s Report " . Lorenzo Dunn from Earth , Wind & Fire plays the bass synthesizer on " Soldier " . " Sonny Rollins " features Manhattan Transfer vocalist Cheryl Bentyne and a full horn section with Sheppard sharing saxophone duties with Doug Webb , plus trumpeter John Papenbrook and trombonist Andrew Lippman . Natasha Agrama and Ilsey Juber provide vocals on " Soldier " .

## = = Music = =

In describing the album , Clarke said , " Technically , it 's a Stanley Clarke record , but it 's very much a band @-@ oriented record at the same time " . Comparing the album to a ship , he said , " I 'd be the one steering the ship and keeping everybody on course . But all hands were definitely on deck , and everyone played an important role in getting us to our destination " . Clarke has said that this will be his last electric album for a while . Clarke co @-@ produced the album with Lenny White who played drums on Clarke 's 2009 album Jazz in the Garden .

## = = Tracks = =

" Soldier " , Ruslan Sirota 's compositional contribution to the album , includes a piano solo with elements borrowed from McCoy Tyner and Herbie Hancock . It was called " Metheny-esque " by music critic John Fordham . The track " Fulani " was written by Armand Sabal @-@ Lecco and is " Africa @-@ inspired " and " has a crunching rock feel " .

Talking about the track " Here 's Why Tears Dry " Clarke said , " The tune came about when a family member was ending a long @-@ time love affair . There were a lot of tears , so I came up with that song . The tears evaporate into thin air , and the pain eventually goes away . " " I Wanna Play for You Too " was written by Felton Pilate who plays keyboards on the track .

" Bass Folk Song No. 10 " and the album 's closing track , " Bass Folk Song No. 6 " are both bass solo performances that Clarke wrote many years before they were recorded here . " No Mystery " is

a reworking of the song written by Chick Corea when he and Clarke were bandmates in Return to Forever .

" How Is the Weather Up There ? " was written by Clarke and Ronald Bruner , Jr . , and deals with global warming . The song was built around comments left by his fans in response to a post on Clarke 's Facebook page asking for thoughts on global warming .

" Larry Has Traveled 11 Miles and Waited a Lifetime for the Return of Vishnu ? s Report " pays homage in its name and musical stylings to Larry Coryell 's The Eleventh House , Miles Davis , Mahavishnu Orchestra , The Tony Williams Lifetime , Return to Forever , and Weather Report , all jazz fusion pioneers .

" Labyrinth " was composed by Hiromi and contains elements from " My Favorite Things " with a " funky touch " . " Sonny Rollins " is a Caribbean flavored tribute to saxophonist Sonny Rollins featuring Bob Sheppard on tenor sax and vocals by Cheryl Bentley .

= = Reception = =

John Fordham of The Guardian called the album a " return to a funk repertoire reminiscent of Clarke 's roots in Chick Corea electric bands " . He goes on to call it " more than just a box @-@ ticking piece of jazz @-@ funk commercialism " but laments " Clarke could probably play a lot of this kind of thing in his sleep " . William R. Wood wrote in the Kalamazoo Gazette that " Clarke ? s complex bass work is invigorating as he blends jazz , rock and funk " .

Thom Jurek of Allmusic wrote that the album " feels more like a band record than anything [ Clarke has ] done in decades " . He praises Clarke 's choice in bandmates , calling them " prodigies in their own right " but does not praise the whole album . He called " Larry Has Traveled 11 Miles and Waited a Lifetime for the Return of Vishnu 's Report " a " clumsy , failed attempt at summing up the music 's history to date " and that " Bass Folk Song No. 6 " does not " work [ as ] well " as some of the other tracks but " these are minor complaints on an otherwise fine recording " . Jeff Winbush of All About Jazz commented that there " are no radical departures " on this album and it sounds as if Clarke is " taking a victory lap here , revisiting past triumphs " but that he " still pull [ s ] sounds out of his assortment of electric , acoustic and Alembic basses like nobody else , and [ is ] still slapping , plucking and thumbing his way through contemporary , fusion jazz , rock , funk and whatever else he puts his mind to " .

= = Awards = =

The album won the 2011 Grammy Award for Best Contemporary Jazz Album and the track " No Mystery " was nominated for Best Pop Instrumental Performance . Clarke accepted his Grammy with his bandmates Ronald Bruner , Jr. and Ruslan Sirota and his wife , Sofi , at the Staples Center during a pre @-@ telecast ceremony . Clarke was on tour in Australia with Return to Forever when he learned of his nominations .

The other nominees for Best Contemporary Jazz Album were Never Can Say Goodbye by Joey DeFrancesco , Now Is the Time by Jeff Lorber Fusion , To the One by John McLaughlin , and Backatown by Trombone Shorty . The Best Pop Instrumental Performance was awarded to Jeff Beck for his rendition of " Nessun dorma " .

= = Track listing = =

All tracks written by Stanley Clarke unless noted

" Soldier " ( Ruslan Sirota ) 7 : 07

" Fulani " ( Armand Sabal @-@ Lecco ) 6 : 29

" Here 's Why Tears Dry " 4 : 52

" I Wanna Play for You Too " ( Felton C. Pilate II ) 4 : 13

" Bass Folk Song No. 10 " 3 : 40

" No Mystery " ( Chick Corea ) 7 : 09

" How Is the Weather Up There ? " ( Ronald Bruner , Jr . , Clarke ) 5 : 54

" Larry Has Traveled 11 Miles and Waited a Lifetime for the Return of Vishnu ? s Report " 6 : 32

" Labyrinth " ( Hiromi ) 5 : 56

" Sonny Rollins " 8 : 49

" Bass Folk Song No. 6 ( Mo Anam Cara ) " 2 : 41

= = Credits = =

= = Chart performance = =