

There is a wonderful new CD out there, Robert Rodriguez' "Melodies and Fantasies," issued on Rodbros Music. Nominally his debut CD, the word "debut" hides the fact that Robert had several previous fine recordings to his credit, many of them with his brother Michael in the Rodriguez Brothers Quartet, or with the great vibraphonist Joe Locke as a member of "Force of Four." You can catch a nice solo of Robert's about half way through a Force of Four Clip on YouTube:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dJr5ur5i3p8>



Those of you with (long) memories may recall that the Rodriguez brothers had a six month "residency" at *JazzNights* in 2011, performing together and in separate trios. Why so much attention to such a young musician? It's simple – he (and his brother) are well worth it; every once in a great while new people appear on the scene who just demand attention. Word of mouth compels you to check them out and from then on, you're hooked. Ben Ratliff agreed:

"...there's no mistaking the sparks, Robert crunches and fragments harmony when soloing..."

Ben Ratliff, *The New York Times*

And so did A. G. Zaire in a comment on both the brothers:

"It's like running into Richie Powell and Clifford Brown at the Café Bohemia in 1953. I don't believe in reincarnations, but this makes me wonder. Here are two young musicians at the beginnings of their careers, and one can only delight not only in what is here now, but even more in what is sure to come."

A. G. Zaire

Well, it did come. I heard Robert in a duo performance with bassist Jorge Roeder this April at Mezzrow in New York, and the musicianship was brilliant and the excitement palpable.

Robert Rodriguez was born in New York in a musical family. He moved to Miami around the age of 10 . There he studied classical piano, but was captured by jazz while at the New World School of the Arts and later at the University of Miami where he performed with the likes of Maria Schneider and Kenny Wheeler, and studied with Ira Sullivan. He returned to New York in 2000 and is now a regular on the scene there and all over the world. Robert is also a composer of note – he has commissions from the Chamber Music of America and an ASCAP young composers award.

Both Clarence Penn and Jorge Roeder have performed at *JazzNights*, Mr. Penn in 2013 with Carol Morgan, and Mr. Roeder just this last January with Julien Labro. Mr. Penn is a first-call drummer and renowned for the musicality he brings to his work.

“Clarence is a charismatic player, with great dynamic range and drama and musicality. He’s an intricate and heady drummer who thinks compositionally, but uses his gut and instincts towards the end result of making something exciting, that feels alive, and is full of energy and passion.”

Maria Schneider

Originally from Lima, Peru, Jorge Roeder is one of the most versatile bass players in the New York jazz scene. Touring, recording and performing actively in New York, Jorge is currently part of several projects including The Julian Lage Group whose debut album was nominated for a Grammy for "best contemporary jazz album category" in 2009. He has performed with luminaries such as Gary Burton, Steve Lacy, Kenny Werner and Matt Wilson.

Recommended CDs:

Robert Rodriguez Trio, Melodies and Fantasies, Robert Rodriguez, Hans Glawischnig, Marcus Gilmore, Rodbros Music

Force of Four, with Joe Locke, Johnathan Blake and Ricardo Rodriguez, Origin Music

The Rodriguez Brothers, Impromptu, Criss Cross 1381, Mood Swing, Rodbros music

