

“Get up every day and write some melody” — Roswell Rudd

Roswell was so good at illuminating for us the inner workings of Jazz’s masterworks—by Monk, Herbie Nichols, Ellington, Strayhorn, et al. —and so convincing as an open-field improviser working without a script that we probably have overlooked the creativity and craftsmanship of his own compositions.

We know of about 250; the handful presented tonight are among the highlights of his 55-year development as a writer. “Get up each day and write some melody” was what Roswell preached and lived. Most of these works he mapped out at the piano; some of them went into service right away, and others, like “Pouchie and the Bird”, had several reiterations before going public.

A surprising number of Roswell’s pieces are songs with words—his good philosophical advice but also vignettes, personifications, and dedications to the personalities and incidents of his life. A few of the earliest Rudd compositions were brewed like a strong tea out of the constant contemplation of others’ works— like “Mood Indigo” transforming into “Short” in 1963–64. “Rosmosis”, here heard in a rare complete treatment, belongs to that first batch from his twenties. “Keep Your Heart Right”, which many will remember from Archie Shepp’s Live in San Francisco (1966), was the enduring anthem of his early career, as “Bamako” would be for 21st century triumphs. Those recent gems are well represented by much of tonight’s program.

Thanks to the vision of Verna Gillis, we have a strong documentation on latter-day records of Roswell playing his own works, and thanks to her vision for his legacy there will be ever greater access to them.*These pieces will testify alongside his recordings to Roswell Rudd’s creative self and be interpreted by rising generations that didn’t get to bask in person in his charm.

—Ben Young

* The Roswell Rudd digital archive at Worcester Polytechnic Institute opens today at jazzhistorydatabase.com. It is the definitive, permanent, and growing portal for Roswell’s compositions and presentation of his life and career.

“I never left and now I’m back”

The Music of Roswell Rudd

1935-2017



Saturday November 17, 2018
8 p.m.

Set One

Trombone Tribe Bone Again (2008)

Slide & the Family Bone (1994)

Ray Anderson, Art Baron, Steve Swell, Josh Roseman, Greg Glassman,
Deborah Weisz, Brian Drye, Steven Bernstein, Bob Stewart, Marcus Rojas,
Tony Scherr, Michael Sarin

I Look in the Mirror (2008)

Sam Baum & Murray Wall
Piano & bass

Blue Mongol (2004)

Steve Gorn, Solo flute

Heather Masse

Funky Little Sweet Thing (2012)

with Ivan Rubenstein-Gillis, guitar; Steven Bernstein, slide trumpet; Tony Scherr,
bass; Michael Sarin, drums; Briggan Krauss, alto sax

Bamako (2000)

with Ivan Rubenstein-Gillis, guitar; Steven Bernstein, slide trumpet; Tony Scherr,
bass; Michael Sarin, drums

sexmob

Rosmosis (1964)

Keep Your Heart Right (1965)

Breathahoward from Numatik Swing Band (1971)

Steven Bernstein, slide trumpet; Briggan Krauss, alto saxophone;
Tony Scherr-bass; Michael Sarin, drums

*“You blow in this end of the trombone and sound comes out the
other end and disrupts the cosmos.” — Roswell Rudd*

Set Two

Jacob Garchik’s The Heavens Sand in my Slide Shuffle (2003)

Curtis Hasselbring, Tim Vaughn, Max Seigel, Brian Drye, Trombones; Dan Peck
on tuba

Loved by Love (2007)

Reggie Bennett, vocalist; Jacob Garchik, Jason Jackson, Josh Roseman,
Curtis Hasselbring, Tim Vaughn, Max Seigel, Brian Drye, Trombones;
Dan Peck on tuba

Jamie Saft Trio

Ode to a Green Frisbee (1977)

Pazuzu (1986)

with Trevor Dunn, bass & Harvey Sorgen, drums

Lafayette Harris & Ken Filiano

Whatever Turns You On (1973)

Bobby Sanabria y Ascención with David Oquendo

Pouchie & the Bird (1976)

Bamako (2000, arr. 2002)

Bobby Sanabria, drums; Andy Eulau, bass; Darwin Noguera, piano;
Oreste Abrantes, congas; John Walsh, trumpet; Peter Brainin, tenor sax, flute;
Chris Washburne, trombone; and David Oquendo, guitar

Thank You! to all these wonderful musicians for donating their enormous
talents and time,
and the same for

Adam Schatz who signed on right away to help produce tonight’s show.

Ben Young – always the source and resource

Publicity & Social Media by *Matt Merewitz*, Fully Altered Media

Mustafa Bhagat and *Flicker Filmworks*, and

Rich Falco from Worcester Polytechnic Institute for providing the printed
programs.

Giacomo Bruzzo & Robert Burton for donations towards expenses.

*Proceeds from tonight’s concert will be donated to the Roswell Rudd
Scholarship for brass students at the Rondout Valley High School in Accord, New York*