

GERALD ALBRIGHT

One of the biggest stars of R&B, contemporary and straight-ahead jazz, **Gerald Albright** has earned his reputation as a “musician’s musician.” Born in Los Angeles, he began piano lessons at an early age. Albright’s love of music picked up considerably when he was given a saxophone that had belonged to his piano teacher. By the time he enrolled at the University of Redlands, he was already a polished saxophonist. Albright decided to switch to bass guitar after he saw Louis Johnson in concert. A few months after graduating from college, he joined jazz pianist/R&B singer Patrice Rushen, who was in the process of forming her own band. Later, when the bass player left in the middle of a tour, Albright replaced him and finished the tour on bass guitar.

During the ’80s, Albright became a highly requested session musician, playing on albums by a wide variety of artists – including Anita Baker, Ray Parker, Lola Folana, Atlantic Starr, Olivia Newton-John, the Temptations and Maurice White. He also toured extensively with Les McCann, Jeff Lorber, Teena Marie, the Winans, Marlena Shaw, Quincy Jones, and Whitney Houston, among many others. Albright also went on to record numerous successful solo albums for Atlantic Records. Two albums hit the number one slot on *Billboard’s* Top Contemporary Jazz Chart, and were nominated for GRAMMY® Awards in 1989 and 1990. Phil Collins asked him to front a Big Band in 1998, and they toured together. The two of them also recorded one of Albright’s tunes, “Chips N’ Salsa” on Collins’ Big Band Project, entitled *A Hot Night In Paris*. Later that year, Albright released *Pleasures of the Night* with Will Downing on Verve Forecast, which hit No. 1 on *Billboard’s* Top Contemporary Jazz Albums chart as well.

Albright moved to GRP in 2002 for the *Groovology* album, and continued to maintain his busy schedule as a session man. His second GRP album, *Kickin’ It Up*, followed in 2004. Two years later, he signed with Peak Records, which released the 2008 GRAMMY® nominated *New Beginnings*, and the 2009 GRAMMY® nominated, *Sax for Stax*; both in the category of Best Pop Instrumental Album.

Over the years, Albright has appeared on numerous TV shows such as *A Different World*, *Melrose Place* and *BET Jazz* segments, as well as piloting a show in Las Vegas with *Designing Women* star Meshach Taylor. Albright was selected to be one of 10 saxophonists to play at President Clinton’s inauguration ceremony. Along the way, he has sold over a million albums in the U.S. alone and has appeared on nearly 200 albums by other artists.

Albright released *Pushing The Envelope* in June 2010 on Heads Up International, a division of Concord Music Group. *Pushing The Envelope* is a showcase for Albright’s remarkably fine balance of songcraft and musicianship, and features special guest appearances by Fred Wesley on trombone, Earl Klugh on acoustic guitar and George Duke on acoustic piano. In December 2010, *Pushing The Envelope* received a GRAMMY® nomination for Best Pop Instrumental Album.

On June 19, 2012, Albright teams up with GRAMMY®-winning guitarist Norman Brown for *24/7*, their first album together. Featuring ten killer soul-jazz tracks, *24/7* includes updated versions of “Tomorrow,” a Brothers Johnson classic from 1976, and “Champagne Life,” from singer Ne-Yo’s album *Libra Scale*. Look for Albright and Brown to tour together this summer.

NORMAN BROWN

Born in Shreveport, Louisiana, and raised in Kansas City, Kansas, GRAMMY® Award winner **Norman Brown** first picked up a guitar at the age of eight. Inspired by Jimi Hendrix's mind-bending rock sounds, Brown soon discovered his father's favorite artist, Wes Montgomery, and found his stylistic holy grail. After high school, Brown moved to Los Angeles to pursue his musical career, attending the Musicians Institute where he also taught for a time. While playing with his own group in local clubs, and drawing comparisons to George Benson, Brown was discovered and signed to the MoJazz label, a division of Motown. He delivered his 1992 debut, *Just Between Us*, and followed with the gold-certified *After The Storm* and 1996's *Better Days Ahead*.

With critical acclaim and sales behind him, the talented musician made the leap to Warner Bros. and released *Celebration*, which first teamed him with producer Paul Brown. The 2003 follow-up, *Just Chillin'*, earned Brown much-deserved recognition with a GRAMMY® Award in the best pop instrumental category. That project was followed by his 2005 release *West Coast Coolin'*, where Brown tested out his skills as a vocalist, a move that was welcomed by the urban AC radio market. In addition, his 2005 compilation *The Very Best Of Norman Brown* was one of the best-selling smooth jazz albums of that year.

Brown made the leap to the Peak Records label, a division of Concord Music Group, in 2007 for his smash CD *Stay With Me*, which yielded the R&B vocal hit "Stay With Me" and the smooth instrumental favorites "Let's Take A Ride" and "Pop's Cool Groove." The guitarist kept the good vibes going on his long-awaited June 2010 release, *Sending My Love*.

In addition to success as a musician and producer, Brown launched a successful career as a broadcaster. In January of 2007, he brought his engaging personality to Broadcast Architecture's Smooth Jazz Network as an on-air personality, hosting his own weekend radio show.

On June 19, 2012, Brown joins sax master Gerald Albright for *24/7*, their first album together. Featuring ten killer soul-jazz tracks, *24/7* includes updated versions of "Tomorrow," a Brothers Johnson classic from 1976, and "Champagne Life," from singer Ne-Yo's album *Libra Scale*.

But performing remains Brown's first love. With a string of summer tour dates, Brown and Albright will share the magic of *24/7*, as well as their many beloved hits.