**GERALD ALBRIGHT**

**Gerald Albright** is currently putting the finishing touches on the forthcoming CD project, “***30***”. This pivotal number represents 30 years since the release of his debut CD, *Just Between Us*.

This self-produced anniversary project is a reflection of some of Albright’s favorite music that he has written over the past three decades! All of the songs are action-packed with new and unique arrangements, spear-headed by Albright, Chris “Big Dog” Davis, and James “JRob” Roberson. This CD will prove to be one of Gerald Albright’s finest efforts to date.

It will be released later in 2018.

If you thought the mixture of deep funk and simmering sensuality of *Slam Dunk* (which Albright released in 2014) was on fire, he wowed us with the high-octane sequel, *G*. *G* gives you that in-your-face horn-section-magic, of classic bands like Earth, Wind & Fire and Tower of Power.

What makes *G* and the upcoming project “***30****”* so special is that these two projects are stemmed from Albright’s own record label – Bright Music Records. Early in his career, the versatile saxophonist was often told by his labels to “be funky, but not too funky” – but after 30 years at the top of his game as one of contemporary urban jazz’s core artists and sonic innovators, the eight-time Grammy nominee is letting loose like never before.

When Albright titled his 2006 album *New Beginnings*, he was referring to the move he and his family made to Colorado after a lifetime in Southern California. Ten years later, he’s in a similar mode, blazing into the next phase of his storied career releasing his own projects as an indie artist, after decades on major and major affiliated labels. Like a lot of his peers in the genre, he realized that the business models of those big companies don’t fit into the current economic structures of urban jazz. Inspired by a loyal fan base of thousands throughout the world, he knew it was time to leverage his hard won success, step out on faith, and create a company that could not only release his music but also serve as a legacy for his family. Choosing the name Bright Music Records is reflective of his great optimism in embarking on an endeavor that uniquely defines who he is.

What we got from *G*is nothing less than Genuine Gerald. “**30**” and all projects to follow will place a stamp on the Albright name as one to deliver nothing but the best.

Albright gets right down to business, celebrating his fresh start of “**30**” with a new rendition of “Sooki Sooki”. He creates all the horn sections himself, texturing alto, tenor and baritone saxophones, with the funkiness of an up and coming hit maker, James “JRob” Roberson on keyboards. Roberson’s off-the-chain talent on keyboards will also keep you jumping on “Chips and Salsa” and “4 On the Floor”.

With Chris “Big Dog” Davis (one of urban jazz’s top hit makers, who has worked with everyone from Najee to Maysa, Phil Perry, and Kim Waters) creating an array of keyboard sounds on “Bermuda Nights”, “Road to Peace”, “New Beginnings”, “Come Back to Me”, “Boss of Nova” and “Just Between Us”, Albright infuses a mixture of horns and other instruments.

The emotional up-tempo ballad “Come Back to Me” features the saxophonist on alto, tenor and bari, in addition to C flutes, alto flutes and bass guitar. It also features his daughter Selina – a solo artist in her own right – on background vocals.

Another highlight of “**30**”would be a bonus track, “4 On the Floor” featuring the dynamic Ricky Watford on guitar.

Albright says that the big, multi-faceted sound of the album, particularly his use of multiple flutes, is a throwback to the way he came up in music. “I’ve been implementing them over the past few projects, using flute seasonings strategically with certain songs, and it was exciting to take those sounds to the next level,” he adds. “I come from that orchestral big band sound that defined my high school years playing in the 70s, and had great teachers who believed that musicians should never take shortcuts. In those jazz band days, I doubled on other instruments besides sax, and coming from that world, it’s always been hard to neglect those instincts. I like having a lot of sonic options. I use everything as a facility to bring my music to another level. When I think of those EWF and TOP horns, they were so ‘in your face, present and clear’.

Born and raised in Los Angeles, Albright was already an accomplished saxophonist by the time he enrolled at the University of Redlands, but he switched to bass 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 bassist left in the middle of a tour, Albright replaced him and finished the tour on bass guitar. Playing both sax and bass, he became the consummate session and touring musician in the 80s, working with everyone from Anita Baker, Ray Parker, Jr., Atlantic Starr, The Temptations and Maurice White to Les McCann, Teena Marie, the Winans and Whitney Houston.

He launched his solo career in the infancy of what became the smooth jazz format, with *Just Between Us* in 1987 and has been a core part of the genre with chart-topping albums, countless radio hits and as a member of many all star tours, including Guitars & Saxes and Groovin’ For Grover. In the late 90s, he fronted a big band for and toured with pop star Phil Collins and did a dual recording with vocal great Will Downing called *Pleasures of the Night*. Between his last two Grammy-nominated solo albums *Pushing The Envelope* (2010) and *Slam Dunk* (2014), he enjoyed hit collaborations with two huge hits - *24/7* with guitarist Norman Brown and *Summer Horns* by Dave Koz and Friends (including Mindi Abair and Richard Elliot), which were also Grammy-nominated for Best Pop Instrumental Albums. He toured with Brown and Summer Horns, and most recently has been on the road with South Africa gospel/jazz singer and guitarist Jonathan Butler. Albright’s other albums whose titles perfectly reflect their flow include *Smooth* (1994), *Groovology* (2002), *Kickin’ It Up* (2004) and *Sax for Stax* (2008).

Because Albright’s musical muse has taken him to so many fascinating locales along the contemporary R&B/urban jazz spectrum, he’s joyfully defied easy categorizations.

“Top to bottom,” Albright says, “Whether in concert, listening to my music over the radio or CD player, I always want my listeners to be taken on a musical journey with different textures, rhythms, chord progressions and moods. I want people to know where I’ve been and where I’m going, and to let them hear that I’m in a really good place in my life.”