

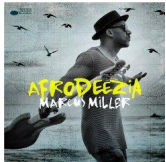
## Marcus Miller - Afrodeezia (2015)

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## Marcus Miller - Afrodeezia (2015)



01 – *Hylife* 02 – *B's River* 03 – *Preacher's Kid (Song For William H)* 04 – *We Were There*  
05 – *Papa Was A Rolling Stone* 06 – *I Still Believe I Hear [feat. Ben Hong]* 07 – *Son Of Macbeth*  
08 – *Prism (Interlude)* 09 – *Xtraordinary* 10 – *Water Dancer* 11 – *I Can't Breathe [feat. Mocean Worker]*  
Marcus Miller - Bass (Acoustic), Clarinet (Bass), Fender Rhodes, Fretless Bass, Gimbri, Guitar (Bass), Kalimba, Piano, Synthesizer, Vocals Adam Agati - Guitar, Guitar (Electric) Ambrose Akinmusire - Trumpet Cliff Barnes - Organ, Piano Aline Cabral - Vocals (Background) Louis Cato - Djembe, Drums Etienne Charles - Percussion, Trumpet Alvin Chea - Bass (Vocal), Choir Adama Dembélé - Percussion, Vocals (Background) Michael Doucet - Violin Andrea Dutra - Vocals (Background) Robert Greenidge - Steel Pan Alex Han - Sax (Alto), Sax (Soprano) Lalah Hathaway - Scat, Vocals Cory Henry - Organ Lamumba Henry - Djembe, Percussion Lee Hogans - Trumpet Ben Hong - Cello Munyungo Jackson - African Percussion Keb' Mo' - Guitar Guimba Kouyaté - Guitar (Acoustic), Vocals (Background) Marco Lobo - Percussion Mocean Worker - Drum Programming, Fender Rhodes, Guitar, Guitar (Bass) Roddie Romero - Accordion Julia Sarr - Choir Mamadou Cherif Soumano - Kora, Vocals (Background) Michael "Patches" Stewart - Trumpet Christiane Correa Tristao - Vocals (Background) Alune Wade – Choir, Vocals Wah-Wah Watson - Guitar Brett Williams - Fender Rhodes, Piano

Afrodeezia is bassist Marcus Miller's debut for Blue Note Records. Produced by the artist, the 11-track set features his core band -- saxophonist Alex Han, trumpeter Lee Hogans, pianist Brett Williams, guitarist Adam Agati, and drummer Louis Cato -- with an international list of guests. The music was inspired by Miller's work as a UNESCO artist for peace, and as a spokesperson for the Slave Route project. Afrodeezia is a masterful contemporary reflection of transcontinental rhythms and melodies that have migrated through the bodies and spirits of African slaves as they were transported to South America, the Caribbean, and the United States before refracting back across the globe in the contemporary era through jazz, R&B, and hip-hop. "Hylife," the set's first single, reflects the long reach of Ghana's popular style grafted on to contemporary jazz-funk with a host of Senegalese musicians on percussion and backing vocals. Lead vocals are provided courtesy of Alune Wade, the great Senegalese bassist. Despite its intense dancefloor appeal, the players' sophisticated rhythmic and harmonic

interplay is ferocious. On "B's River," kora player Cherif Soumano and guest trumpeter Etienne Charles solo with Miller on gimbri, bass, and bass clarinet. "Preacher's Kid (Song for William H)" melds modern jazz and American and African gospel. The bassist performs on upright, clarinet, and piano; Cory Henry guests with a gorgeous organ solo as Lalah Hathaway delivers wordless vocals supported by Wade, Dakar's mezzo-soprano Julia Sarr, and Take 6's Alvin Chea. "We Were There" celebrates the example of George Duke and Joe Sample and how their love for Brazilian sounds transformed modern jazz. Robert Glasper's Fender Rhodes is a nice foil for Miller's dominant bassline. Hathaway's scat vocals are appended by a Brazilian chorus with percussion from Marco Lobo. The cover of "Papa Was a Rolling Stone" features guitarists Wah-Wah Watson (who appeared on the Temptations' hit), and Keb' Mo', whose blues approach arcs the lineage to the Delta. Patches Stewart adds his NOLA trumpet playing to emphasize that city's R&B groove in the heart of Northern Soul. Rightfully, this jam is ruled by Miller's bassline, which pays homage to the original while revealing how it influenced everything in popular music that came afterward. "Son of Macbeth" is another monster groover that re-links calypso to contemporary jazz. Just as Robert Greenridge's steel pan drums made Grover Washington, Jr. and Bill Withers' "(Just) the Two of Us" so infectious, Greenridge appears to do the same here. "I Can't Breathe," with just Miller and Mocean Worker creating a wild meld of instrumental color, back Public Enemy's Chuck D in wedding hard funk, political hip-hop, and dance music, exhorting the listener to remember that the struggle for equality is not over. Miller's wide-angle view of jazz is extended further on the glorious Afrodeezia. It reveals in a sophisticated, exceptionally ambitious manner the labyrinthine interconnectedness of earlier sounds and rhythms -- which emerged from bondage and horrific suffering -- to new ones that bring the world joy. ---Thom Jurek, Rovi

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