ABOUT

Robert McDuffie Biography

Grammy-nominated violinist Robert McDuffie enjoys a dynamic and multi-faceted career. While appearing as soloist with the world's foremost orchestras, he enjoys sharing the stage with actress/playwright Anna Deavere Smith in Martin Luther King's "Letter from Birmingham Jail," playing Bach for Memphis Jook dancer Li'l Buck, or performing with Chuck Leavell and the late Gregg Allman in "Midnight Rider". Philip Glass dedicated his Second Violin Concerto, "The American Four Seasons," to Mr. McDuffie. Mike Mills of the iconic band R.E.M. composed "Concerto for Violin, Rock Band and String Orchestra" for him. Robert McDuffie is the founder of both the Rome Chamber Music Festival in Italy and the Robert McDuffie Center for Strings at Mercer University in his native city of Macon, Georgia.

Robert McDuffie has appeared as soloist with most of the major orchestras of the world, including the New York and Los Angeles Philharmonics; the Chicago, San Francisco, National, Atlanta, Houston, Dallas, St. Louis, Montreal, and Toronto Symphonies; the Philadelphia, Cleveland, and Minnesota Orchestras; the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, the North German Radio Orchestra, the Düsseldorf Symphony, the Frankfurt Radio Orchestra, the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen, the Hamburg Symphony, Bruckner Orchestra Linz, Orchestra del Teatro alla Scala, Santa Cecilia Orchestra of Rome, Venice Baroque Orchestra, Jerusalem Symphony, Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de Mexico, Orquesta Sinfónica de Mineria; and all of the major orchestras of Australia.

His recent appearances abroad have been at the Royal Festival Hall in London with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, the Philharmonie in Cologne, the Seoul and Daejeon Arts Centers in Korea, the National Concert Hall in Taipei, the Tonhalle Düsseldorf, the Brucknerhaus in Linz, the Musikhalle and the Staatsoper in Hamburg, and at the National Theater in Santo Domingo.

Mr. McDuffie gave the world premiere of Philip Glass' Violin Concerto No. 2, *The American Four Seasons*, with the Toronto Symphony. He completed a 30-city U.S. tour with the Venice Baroque Orchestra, pairing the Glass*Four Seasons* with the Vivaldi *Four Seasons*. He has also played the Glass with the National Symphony of Mexico, the Düsseldorf Symphony, the Hamburg Ballet; the Nashville, Louisiana, San Diego, Dallas, San Antonio, and Colorado Symphonies; the Poznan Philharmonic of Poland, the Prague Philharmonia at the Prague Spring Festival, the Scottish Ensemble in Glasgow, the Amsterdam Sinfonietta in Holland and Belgium, at the Belgrade Music Festival, at the Aspen Music Festival in Aspen, Colorado; and, paired with the Vivaldi *Four Seasons*, with the Zurich Chamber Orchestra at the Zurich Tonhalle, at the St. Christopher Festival in Vilnius, Lithuania, and with the Israel Chamber Orchestra in Tel Aviv.

Robert McDuffie recorded *The American Four Seasons* with the London Philharmonic and Marin Alsop on Philip Glass' Orange Mountain Music label. His acclaimed Telarc and EMI recordings include the violin concertos of Mendelssohn, Bruch, Adams, Glass, Barber, Rózsa, Bernstein, William Schuman, and Viennese violin favorites. He has been profiled on NBC's *Today*, *CBS Sunday Morning*, PBS's *Charlie Rose*, A&E's*Breakfast with the Arts*, and in the *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal*.

He has performed *The American Four Seasons* with the Robert McDuffie Center for Strings Ensemble in New York City at (le) Poisson Rouge and returned to Hamburg for additional performances with the Hamburg Ballet. Future plans include additional appearances with actor/playwright Anna Deavere Smith and his annual visit to the Aspen Music Festival. He has performed with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, the Puerto Rico Symphony Orchestra, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and the Louisiana Philharmonic. In June 2016 he performed the world premiere of Mills Concerto for Violin, Rock Band and String Orchestra with the Toronto Symphony, followed by performances at the Rome Chamber Music Festival, the Aspen Music Festival and a three-week U.S. tour. In 2017, he toured the U.S. with the Bruckner Orchestra Linz, alternating the Barber Violin Concerto with the Glass American Four Seasons.

As founder of the Rome Chamber Music Festival, Robert McDuffie has been awarded the prestigious *Premio Simpatia* by the Mayor of Rome in recognition of his contribution to the city's cultural

life. He served for ten years on the board of directors of the Harlem School of the Arts in New York City where he was chairman of the artistic and education committee. Mr. McDuffie holds the Mansfield and Genelle Jennings Distinguished University Professor Chair at Mercer University in his native city of Macon, Georgia. He plays a 1735 Guarneri del Gesù violin, known as the "Ladenburg", This instrument is owned by a limited partnership formed by Mr. McDuffie.