

RED HOUSE RECORDS

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HEATHER MASSE AND ROSWELL RUDD “AUGUST LOVE SONG”

Heather Masse (The Wailin' Jennys) teams up with Free Jazz trombone legend Roswell Rudd for an Album of fresh originals and jazz standards out February 26, 2016 on Red House



Red House Records is pleased to announce the **February 26, 2016** release of *August Love Song*, a collaboration between impeccable vocal stylist **Heather Masse** and octogenarian trombone maverick **Roswell Rudd**. Masse, who studied jazz at the New England Conservatory of Music, is a member of *Billboard*-charting folk trio **The Wailin' Jennys** and a regular on *A Prairie Home Companion*. This is the follow-up to her acclaimed collaboration with Dick Hyman, *Lock My Heart*, a collection of sultry jazz standards pairing Masse with the piano legend. Rudd burst on the free jazz scene in the 1960s; his ensemble work with **Archie Shepp** and forays into African and world music find him continuing to explore sound and rhythm in a vital, fresh way.

Masse and Rudd, who met when they both appeared on *A Prairie Home Companion*, were surprised to find they were neighbors in the Catskills in rural New York. They decided to get together to play music and quickly found they had a strong musical connection that bridged the difference in their ages.

“The trombone and voice seem like an unlikely duo, but Roswell and I found a blend, and presence with each other that at its core is two voices, listening and connecting with each other,” Masse says.

“Roswell has pushed me to stretch my limits and has helped me to find sounds and timbres in my voice that I never knew were there,” she says. “I’ve learned so much from collaborating with his big sound and spirit.”

“We have the kind of sonic embrace – organic collaboration – that is rare, and with Heather it is exceptional,” Rudd says.

Weekly jam sessions in Rudd’s living room became the impetus for *August Love Song*, recorded at Rudd’s home to capture the free-and-easy feel of the sessions. Joined by **Rolf Sturm** (guitar) and **Mark Helias** (contra bass), the group alternates between originals by Rudd, his partner, composer **Verna Gillis**, and Masse, including “**Love Song for August**” (August is Masse’s 3-year-old son) as well as their improvised arrangements of mutual favorites by **Gigi Gryce** (“**Social Call**”), the **Gershwins** (“**Love is Here to Stay**”), **Duke Ellington** (“**Mood Indigo**”) and **Dizzy Gillespie** (“**Con Alma**”).

While separated by two generations, Masse and Rudd find common ground in the interplay of jazz creation. Their joy in the musical give and take is heard on every track, be it classic or original.

ABOUT ROSWELL RUDD

“He was as galvanizing a presence as ever; at his best, he made the music sound as if it were still being discovered.”
– **New York Times**

“Closely as trombone maverick Roswell Rudd has been associated with the avant-garde jazz scene of the '60s, his range is seemingly limitless, extending from Dixieland to Himalayan music and points beyond.” – **Time Out NY**



Roswell Rudd, aka **THE INCREDIBLE HONK**, is proudly of the tradition that has given us such jazz trombone greats as **Jack Teagarden**, **Kid Ory**, **J.J. Johnson**, and **Joseph Nanton**. One of the most imaginative, stimulating players, Rudd is known for his work with groundbreaking groups and musicians like **Herbie Nichols**, the **New York Arts Quartet**, **Cecil Taylor**, **Archie Shepp**, **Carla Bley**, and **Steve Lacy**.

His musical range has expressed itself in extraordinary musical collaborations and subsequent recordings with musicians from **Mali (Toumani Diabate)**, **Mongolia (Buryat Band)**, the great Puerto Rican cuatrista **Yomo Toro**, and the brilliant Cuban guitarist/singer **David Oquendo**.

In 2000 he was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship in composition. In August 2010 he was voted #1 in the *Downbeat* Critics Poll. In 2003, 2004, 2005, 2009 and 2010 he was voted Trombonist of the Year by the Jazz Journalists Association.

His trailblazing on the trombone has influenced an entire generation of trombonists who hear his extroverted gut bucket stylings as the modern incarnation of the New Orleans style. He has equally a passionate lyricism in the tradition of American folk songs and ballads.

He's received international recognition as a performer, and for his compositions and arrangements ranging from large scale music dramas to instrumental jazz suites. His jazz operas **BLUES FOR PLANET EARTH** and **GOLD RUSH** have achieved cult status from their performances in the 1960s.

From 1999 to the present have been his Soundscape years marked by his collaboration with Verna Gillis. He continues to co-lead an ensemble with Archie Shepp, as well as touring with **MALICool**, the Mongolian Buryat Band, as well as being a featured guest with a myriad of musicians. Rudd is one of the giants. His active playing force is to be greatly welcomed, with his larger-than-life individualism.

For more about Roswell Rudd, go to <http://www.soundscapepresents.com/docs/main/frame.htm>

ABOUT HEATHER MASSE

Masse exhibits impeccable phrasing and a lush sound that suggests the sensuousness of Sophie Milman shot through with somber, Sarah Vaughan threads. - Jazz Times

Masse's voice is perfectly natural and fresh—lush and supple. She is neither married to the melody nor has the compulsion to show off vocal fireworks. - All About Jazz



Singer-songmaker **Heather Masse** is a rare artist with “lush velvety vocals, capable of melting butter in a Siberian winter” (*All Music*). She grew up in rural Maine and was trained at the **New England Conservatory of Music** as a jazz singer, she is steeped in the jazz tradition, which informs her distinct approach to singing folk, pop and bluegrass.

A member of the Billboard-charting folk group, **The Wailin’ Jennys**, she has performed at hundreds of venues across the world. She has been a frequent guest on **Garrison Keillor’s** *A Prairie Home Companion*, both as a solo performer and as a member of The Jennys. On the show, she has collaborated with artists such as **Elvis Costello, Wynton Marsalis, Sheryl Crow, Renee Fleming,** and **Emmylou Harris.**

Heather has performed with the contemporary bluegrass band **The Wayfaring Strangers**, fiddle virtuoso **Mark O’Connor’s Hot Swing**, and in 2006, recorded an album with **Joy Kills Sorrow**, a contemporary stringband. She also released *Tell Me Tonight* with the Brooklyn-based collaboration **Heather & the Barbarians.**

In 2008, Ms. Masse released *Many Moons*, an EP of jazz-inspired folk duets with pianist **Jed Wilson**. She followed that up with her first full-length solo album, *Bird Song*. Her solo debut on Grammy-winning indie label Red House Records, the album showcased her luscious alto voice and her superb songwriting. The title track “Bird

Song” won her 1st prize at the International Acoustic Music Awards, and in 2012 she also won a prestigious Juno Award for *Bright Morning Stars*, her latest recording with The Wailin’ Jennys.

Masse returned to her jazz roots in 2013 with *Lock My Heart*, an album of standards she recorded with piano legend **Dick Hyman.**

Masse continues to perform with the Wailin’ Jennys and can often be heard joining Garrison Keillor on *A Prairie Home Companion*. For more about Heather Masse, go to <http://www.heathermasse.com>