

## CHICO FREEMAN

**Saxophonist | Multi-Instrumentalist | Composer | Producer | Educator**

📍 **European Residence:** Bürenstrasse 83, 2504 Biel/Bienne, Switzerland (*Valid Swiss Work Permit – C*)

📍 **USA Residence:** 5425 Krenning Street, San Diego, CA 92015

🌐 **Website:** [www.chicofreeman.com](http://www.chicofreeman.com) | ✉ **Email:** [chicofreeman@mac.com](mailto:chicofreeman@mac.com)

📄 **Press Kit:** <https://chicofreeman.com/about-chico-freeman/>

---

## PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Chico Freeman, a world-renowned saxophonist, multi-instrumentalist, composer, producer, and educator, has collaborated with jazz legends such as McCoy Tyner, Dizzy Gillespie, Elvin Jones, Charles Mingus, and Jack DeJohnette. As a composer and bandleader, he merges influences from jazz, classical, R&B, electronic, Afro-Cuban, and world music, boasting over **150 recordings**. His work also spans film and theatre composition, audio engineering, and interdisciplinary musicology.

---

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

### University & Academic Positions

- **Professor, New School University – Jazz & Contemporary Music Program** (*New York, NY*)
  - Taught jazz improvisation, composition, and small group arrangements.
- **Instructor, PATHS (Performing Arts and Technology School), Brooklyn, NY**
  - Taught electronic music, production, and recording techniques.
- **Jazaar - Aarau, Switzerland**
  - Trained students for live performances with internationally renowned artists.
- **Musikschule Hug – Zurich, Switzerland**
  - Taught jazz improvisation, composition, saxophone, multi-woodwinds, flute and brass instruments
- **AACM (Association for the Advancement of Creative Music) - Music School**

- Taught improvisation and composition

### **Master Classes & Workshops (*Selected Institutions*)**

- **University of Colorado, Boulder** with (*Bradley M. Goode*)
- **Hanoi Music School, Vietnam**
- **University of Chicago**
- **University of Illinois**
- **Berklee College of Music, Boston, MA** (*w/ Dr. Billy Taylor*)
- **University of Michigan, Ann Arbor**
- **Indiana University, Bloomington** with (*David Baker*)
- **Zurich, Basel, and Lausanne Music Academies (Switzerland)**
- **Jazz in the Classroom – Lecturer (Los Angeles & San Francisco)**

### **Artist-in-Residence (*Selected Appointments*)**

- **University of Michigan | Indiana University | Graz University (Austria) | Goldsmith College (UK) | Montreux Jazz Festival - Jazz Camp | (Switzerland) | Sofia Bulgaria | Mumbai (India) | Uruguay, South America with Paquito D’Rivera | Havana Cuba |**
- **John F. Kennedy Center (Washington, D.C.)**

---

### **MAJOR TEACHING AREAS**

- ✓ **Jazz Performance & Improvisation** – Small group arrangements, jazz theory, and composition.
  - ✓ **Multi-Instrumental Instruction** – Saxophones, clarinet, flute, piano, bass, trumpet, brass, drums, and percussion.
  - ✓ **Electronic Music & Production** – MIDI/audio techniques, digital recording, mixing, and mastering (Pro Tools, Logic, Ableton Live).
  - ✓ **Jazz History & Ethnomusicology** – Interdisciplinary research in world music, audio engineering, and literature.
-

## PERFORMANCE & PRODUCTION EXPERIENCE

### Notable Collaborations (*Selected Artists*)

- **McCoy Tyner Trio** (5 years) | **Elvin Jones Jazz Machine** (2 years) | **Jack DeJohnette Special Edition** (5 years)
- **Dizzy Gillespie** | **Herbie Hancock** | **Bobby Hutcherson** | **Wynton & Branford Marsalis** | **Sonny Rollins** | **Charles Mingus** | **Sun Ra** | **Cecil McBee** | **Mal Waldron** | **Ray Charles** | **Ray Brown** | **Dewey Redman** | **Joshua Redman** | **Archie Shepp** | **Mal Waldron** | **Kenny Baron** | **Dianne Reeves** | **Dee Dee Bridgewater** | **Chaka Khan** | **Richard Davis** | **Ahmad Jamal** | **Andrew Hill** | **Freddie Hubbard** | **Joe Henderson** | **Ron Carter** | **Cecil McBee** | **Ray Brown** | **Christian McBride** | **Kenny Kirkland** | **Sting** | **Muhal Richard Abrams** | **Hilton Ruiz** |
- **Tito Puente** | **Chucho Valdés** | **Don Cherry** | **Rubén Blades** | **Andrea Bocelli** | **Ray Barretto** | **Ruben Blades** |
- **B.B. King**, **Memphis Slim**, **J.B. Hutto**, **Buddy Guy**, **Jr. Wells**
- **The Wailers**, **Peter Tosh**, **Earth Wind and Fire**, **Chaka Khan**, **The Emotions**, **The Four Tops**, **The Temptations**, **The Isley Brothers**, **The Jacksons**

### Leader of Jazz Groups

- *Chico Freeman/Antonio Farao - Tribute to John Coltrane*
- *Chico Freeman Plus+tet*
- *Roots Salutes the Saxophone with Benny Golson, Sam Rivers, Nathan Davis, Arthur Blythe, Buster Williams, Ed Thigpen, Idris Muhammed, Don Pullen, George Cables*
- *Chico Freeman y Guataca*
- *Strings and Things – 3 Bass-tet (3 acoustic basses project)*

### World & Cross-Cultural Collaborations

- **Flamenco** : Paco de Lucía, Antonio Gades (Carmen)
- **Afro-Cuban & Latin Jazz**: Irakere, Eddie Palmieri, Ray Barreto, Tito Puente, Machito
- **Japanese & Indian Music**: Traditional Shakuhachi flute, classical Indian collaborations, Trilok Gurtu Indian percussionist, Bala Subramaniam (Mridangam)
- **African Music**: Fela Aníkúlápó (Nigeria), Miriam Makeba (South Africa), Dollar Brand (Abdullah Ibrahim - (South Africa)), Titos Somba (Congo), Richard Bona (Senegal)

- **Italian Opera:** Andrea Bocelli
- 

**SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY \*(As Leader – Produced albums marked with \*\*\*)**

- **Morning Prayer \*\*\*** – India Navigation
- **Spoken Into Existence \*\*\*** Jive Music
- **Oh, By the Way \*\*\*** Double Moon Records
- **No Time Left \*\*\***Black Saint
- **Chico** India Navigation
- **Kings of Mali** India Navigation
- **Spirit Sensitive** India Navigation
- **Peaceful Heart/Gentle Spirit \*\*\*** Contemporary
- **The Outside Within** India Navigation
- **The Search** India Navigation
- **Destiny’s Dance** Contemporary
- **Tradition in Transition \*\*\*** Electra/Musician
- **Tangents \*\*\*** Electra/Musician
- **Chico Freeman Live at Ronnie Scotts** Wadham Films/London
- **The Pied Piper \*\*\***Blackhawk
- **Tales of Ellington \*\*\*** Blackhawk
- **Freeman & Freeman** (Von Freeman) India Navigation
- **Von & Chico Freeman Live at the Blue Note with Special Guest Dianne Reeves \*\*\*** Half Note Records
- **The Emissary** Clarity Recordings
- **Luminous** Jazzhouse
- **The Unspoken Word** Jazz House
- **Focus\*\*\*** Contemporary/Fantasy
- **Still Sensitive** India Navigation
- **You’ll Know When You Get There \*\*\*** Black Saint
- **Sweet Explosion (Brainstorm)** In & Out Records
- **Threshold** (Brainstorm) In & Out Records
- **Lord Riff and Me (Von Freeman/Chico Freeman) \*\*\*** Why Not/Century/Japan
- **The Young Lions (Lincoln Center) \*\*\*** Electra/Musician
- **Kings of Mali** India Navigation
- **Beyond The Rain** – Contemporary
- **Spirit Sensitive** – India Navigation
- **Destiny’s Dance** – Contemporary
- **Tradition in Transition \*\*\*** – Elektra/Musician

- **Mystical Dreamer (Brainstorm) \*\*\*** – In & Out Records
- **Tales of Ellington \*\*\*** - Blackhawk
- **The Emissary** – Clarity Recordings
- **Von & Chico Freeman Live at the Blue Note (Special Guest Dianne Reeves) \*\*\*** – Half Note Records
- **The Essence of Silence \*\*\*** – Jive Music Austria
- **All In the Family (George & Chico Freeman) \*\*\*** – Southport Records Chicago
- **Destiny's Dance - Chico Freeman** (feat: Bobby Hutcherson, Wynton Marsalis, Cecil McBee)

#### **As Featured Artist**

- **Fathers & Sons** (Von & Chico Freeman, Ellis, Branford & Wynton Marsalis) – Columbia Records
- **The Young Lions** (Lincoln Center Stars) \*\*\* – Elektra/Musician
- **La Leyenda De La Hora** (McCoy Tyner) Columbia
- **Tin Can Alley** (Jack DeJohnette) – ECM
- **Inflation Blues** (Jack DeJohnette)
- **Mudfoot (The Leaders) \*\*\*** - Blackhawk
- **Out Here Like This (The Leaders) \*\*\*** Black Saint
- **Unforeseen Blessings (The Leaders) \*\*\*** Black Saint
- **Slipping and Sliding (The Leaders) \*\*\*** Sound Hills
- **Roots Salutes the Saxophone (Roots)** In & Out Records 1992
- **Stablemates (Roots)** In & Out Records
- **Saying Something (Roots)** In & Out Records
- **Music From The Source** (Cecil McBee) – Enja
- **Tenderness** (Kip Hanrahan) American Clave/Vera Bra
- **Up and Down** (Mal Waldron) Black Saint
- **Moment To Moment** (Carmen Lundy) Arabesque Records
- **Heavy Life** (Edward Vesela) Leo Records
- **Antiquated Love** (Özay) Basic Records
- **Bill Sims** Warner Bros. Records
- **The Rhythm Romance** (Mari Wilson/Brainstorm) Dino Records
- **Wind of Change** (Julian Bahula) JSB Records
- **Flight of the Spirit** (Norman Hedman) Monad
- **In the Moment** (Jazz on the Line) Edgetone Records
- **Music from the Source** (Cecil McBee) Enja
- **Alternate Spaces** (Cecil McBee) India Navigation
- **Days Like These** (Jay Hoggard) GRP
- **Compassion** (Cecil McBee) Enja
- **Heavy Life** (Edward Vesela) Leo Records

- **Coup De Tete** (Kip Hanrahan) American Clave/Vera Bra
  - **Rain Forest** (Jay Hoggard) Contemporary
  - **Face to Face** (Chico Freeman, Franco Ambrosetti, Reto Weber) Double Moon Records
- 

## SELECTED FILM & THEATRE SCORES

- 🎬 **Happy End** (Featuring Audrey Tautou & Jennifer Tilly)
  - 🎬 **Sue** (Berlin & Toronto Film Festival Winner)
  - 🎬 **Andre's Lives** (Icarus Films)
  - 🎬 **Rock Soup** (Golden Gate Film Critics Award)
  - 🎬 **Chico and the People** (Golden Gate Film Critics Award)
  - 🎭 **Love's Fire by Ntozake Shange** (Public Theatre NYC)
  - 🎭 **Money** (Jazz Opera - Lead Actor & Vocalist – Libretto by Amiri Baraka, Music by George Grunz) – (Kool Jazz Festival)
  - 🎭 **Jazz in the Classroom** (Video Score and Participant)
- 

## SELECTED HONORS & AWARDS

- 🏆 **Chicago Tribune – MVB (Most Valuable Band) 2022**
  - 🏆 **New York Jazz Award**
  - 🏆 **Key to the City of Chicago** (Freeman Family & "Von Freeman Way" Dedication)
  - 🏆 **WBGO Living Legends of the Tenor Saxophone** (Featured with Von Freeman)
  - 🏆 **Stereo Review's Record of the Year – The Outside Within**
  - 🏆 **Avlaia (Curtain) Award** (Cultural Magazine of Thessaloniki, Greece)
  - 🏆 **Bicentennial Exhibition Award**
  - 🏆 **History of Black Music in L.A.**
  - 🏆 **2 Grammy Nominations**
- 

## SELECTED FESTIVALS & CONCERTS

- 🎷 **The 1<sup>st</sup> International Jazz Festival Nha Trang, Vietnam**
- 🎷 **Carnegie Hall** – American Composers Orchestra
- 🎷 **Playboy Jazz Festival** – Hollywood Bowl
- 🎷 **Montreux Jazz Festival (Switzerland)**

- 🎷 North Sea Jazz Festival (Netherlands)
  - 🎷 Umbria Jazz Festival (Italy)
  - 🎷 New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival (USA)
  - 🎷 Montreal Jazz Festival (Canada)
  - 🎷 London Jazz Festival (UK)
  - 🎷 Pan African World Festival (Senegal)
  - 🎷 Vienne Festival de Jazz (Vienne, France)
  - 🎷 Pori Jazz Festival (Finland)
  - 🎷 Molde Jazz Festival (Norway)
  - 🎷 Tokyo Jazz Festival (Japan)
  - 🎷 Nice Festival de Jazz (Nice, France)
  - 🎷 The Young Lions (Lincoln Center New York)
  - 🎷 Chico Freeman In Concert (Carnegie Hall New York)
  - 🎷 Elysee, La Villette Command Performance for President Francois Mitterrand (France)
  - 🎷 Playboy Jazz Festival – The Leaders (Hollywood Bowl)
- 

## EDUCATION

- 🎓 Bachelor of Music – Northwestern University
  - 🎓 Master’s Degree (Pending) – Governors State University
- 

## NOTABLE MENTORS AND TEACHERS

- 🎓 Von Freeman
  - 🎓 Max Roach
  - 🎓 Muhal Richard Abrams
  - 🎓 Charles Mingus
  - 🎓 Benny Golson
  - 🎓 Sam Rivers
  - 🎓 Fred Hemke
  - 🎓 Elvin Jones
  - 🎓 George Coleman
  - 🎓 Billy Taylor
  - 🎓 Billy Higgins
-

## **ADDITIONAL CAREER HIGHLIGHTS**

### **Innovator in Jazz & Beyond**

- Freeman is known for his **innovative approach to jazz**, seamlessly blending traditional styles with avant-garde, fusion, and global influences.
- He has been **recognized as one of his generation's most technically skilled and expressive saxophonists**, often compared to jazz greats like John Coltrane and Wayne Shorter.
- His compositions explore **polyrhythms, harmonic complexity, and lyrical phrasing**, making him a sought-after bandleader and collaborator.

### **Leadership in Creative Music Movements**

- A long-standing **member of the AACM (Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians)**, Freeman was part of the movement that redefined jazz through experimental and free-form approaches.
- He has championed **progressive jazz**, incorporating electronic elements, spoken word, and new recording techniques into his work.
- As a mentor, he has influenced **countless musicians**, particularly in the realms of improvisation and composition.

### **Pioneering Work in Global Music Fusion**

- Freeman has explored **Afro-Cuban, African, Indian, Brazilian, Japanese, and European classical music traditions**, collaborating with master musicians from around the world.
- He has worked with **traditional flamenco artists**, Indian classical musicians, and **Japanese Shakuhachi flute masters**, integrating these styles into his recordings and live performances.

### **Production & Studio Expertise**

- Freeman is an **expert in recording and production**, utilizing advanced **audio engineering and sound design techniques**.
- He has mastered digital audio workstations such as **Pro Tools, Logic Audio, Cubase, and Ableton Live**, allowing him to produce, mix, and master high-quality recordings.



- His work as a producer extends beyond jazz, collaborating with **hip-hop, electronic, and contemporary classical artists.**

### **Legacy & Continuing Influence**

- His album *Spirit Sensitive* is considered **one of the most beautiful and emotionally profound ballad recordings in jazz history.**
- Freeman's work with the group *The Leaders* (alongside Lester Bowie, Arthur Blythe, and Cecil McBee) represents one of the most significant all-star jazz ensembles of the 1980s and beyond.
- He remains an **active performer, educator, and thought leader**, continuing to tour globally and mentor the next generation of musicians.

### **Social & Cultural Contributions**

- Freeman has been a **cultural ambassador**, bringing jazz to underserved communities through **educational programs, residencies, and mentorship initiatives.**
- He has spoken at major institutions about **the history of jazz, Black music traditions, and the social impact of music.**

### **Special Projects**

- **McCoy Tyner Legends Project** officially sanctioned by the McCoy Tyner family/trust featuring **Avery Sharpe, Chico Freeman, Antonio Farao, Azar Lawrence, Yoron Israel**
- **The Legacy Project with The Chico Freeman Orchestra** (23-piece Orchestra), compositions by **Chico Freeman** conducted by **John Kordalewski**, funded by the **Doris Duke Foundation, South Arts**
- **The Makanda Project – Boston, Massachusetts - Chico Freeman** compositions arranged by **John Kordalewski** for the **Makanda Large Ensemble**
- **Chico Freeman** and his group performed at the **Orchestral Hall in Chicago** in tribute to his father, **legendary jazz tenor saxophonist and mentor Von Freeman.** A **Chicago street** has been named in honor of **Von Freeman.**
- **Chico Freeman**, along with **Father Von**, graced **WBGO's** calendar (**Living Legends of the Tenor Saxophone**)
- **Freeman** worked on a project with African musicians from **Mali, Senegal, and Cameroon.** It was a **joint-African and African American project, with a world**

**tour, Freeman served as co-producer and composer** of several songs on the project.

- **Featured Guest at “The Blue Note Anniversary Celebration Tribute to Dizzy Gillespie”, NYC.**
  - **Freeman performed for the Winter Olympics in Turin, Italy for nearly 250,000 people, sponsored by GE.**
  - **Freeman created a multi-channel sound installation at Engine 27. One of 20 artists selected from more than 220 applicants. Recorded and developed a 16-channel composition, where the music is *spatialized, moving freely from speaker to speaker throughout the 80’ gallery space.***
- 

## **MEDIA & PRESS RECOGNITION**

Freeman has been **featured in top music publications, newspapers, and jazz history books**, including:

- 📖 **Downbeat Magazine** (*Multiple 5-Star Reviews & Awards*)
- 📖 **The New York Times** (*Featured Articles & Reviews*)
- 📖 **Jazz Times, Jazziz, The Wire, and All About Jazz**
- 📖 **NPR Interviews & Features** (*Including Jazz Night in America*)
- 📖 **Documentaries on Jazz & AACM History**
- 📖 **Stereo Review** (*Album of the Year*)

## **REFERENCES** (*Available upon request*)

- **Nathan Davis** – Director of Jazz, University of Pittsburgh
- **George E. Lewis** – Professor of American Music, Columbia University
- **Benny Golson** – Legendary Composer, Arranger, Saxophonist
- **Muhal Richard Abrams** – Founder AACM (Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians)
- **Idris Ackamoor** – Director Cultural Odyssey

