**CHICK COREA (1941-1921)**

**Biography**

**Chick Corea** attained iconic status in music. The late keyboardist, composer and bandleader was a DownBeat Hall of Famer and NEA Jazz Master, as well as one of the most nominated artists in GRAMMY Awards history with 67 nods – and 23 wins, in addition to 4 Latin GRAMMYS. From straight-ahead to avant-garde, bebop to jazz-rock fusion, children’s songs to chamber and symphonic works, Chick touched an astonishing number of musical bases in his career after playing with the genre-shattering bands of Miles Davis in the late ’60s and early ’70s.

Yet Chick had never been more productive than in the 21st century, whether playing acoustic piano or electric keyboards, leading multiple bands, performing solo or collaborating with a who’s who of music. Underscoring this, he was named Artist of the Year three times this decade in the DownBeat Readers Poll. Born in 1941 in Massachusetts, Chick remained a tireless creative spirit, continually reinventing himself through his art. As *The New York Times* has said, he was “ebullient and eternally youthful.”

The latest addition to Chick’s remarkable discography is ***Chick Corea Akoustic Band LIVE***, the long-anticipated reunion of his beloved Akoustic Band with bassist John Patitucci and drummer Dave Weckl, together as a trio for the first time in more than two decades. Recorded in St. Petersburg, Florida in January 2018, the exhilarating double album made up for lost time with more than two hours of inspired playing and spirited camaraderie. The trio’s intricate interplay and highwire jousting reflects more than 30 years of collaboration between Corea’s Akoustic and Elektric Bands.

***Chick Corea Akoustic Band LIVE*** arrives less than a year after another double album: *Plays*, a captivating and intimate double album of solo performances. While he claimed that, “Solo piano is lonely,” Chick found himself in good company throughout these stellar performances, engaging with several of his favorite composers. The list of icons represented a wide swath of musical history, from the classical repertoire of Mozart and Chopin to formative jazz influences like Thelonious Monk and Bill Evans, on to the Great American Songbook classics, the bossa nova beauty of Jobim, and the modern pop sensibility of Stevie Wonder. With countless classics having become standards over the last half century, Corea himself deserved to take his place in that pantheon, and *Plays* included a number of pieces – reprised from past albums or spontaneously improvised – from his own estimable songbook. The album also showcased his charming rapport with enthusiastic audiences in concert halls across Europe and the U.S., who became integral collaborators in these spirited renditions.

Chick’s classic albums as a leader or co-leader included Now He Sings, Now He Sobs (with Miroslav Vitous and Roy Haynes), Paris-Concert (with Circle: Anthony Braxton, Dave Holland and Barry Altschul) and Return to Forever (with Return to Forever: Joe Farrell, Stanley Clarke, Airto Moreira and Flora Purim), as well as Crystal Silence (with Gary Burton), My Spanish Heart, Remembering Bud Powell, and Further Explorations (with Eddie Gomez and Paul Motian).

A venturesome collaborator, Chick teamed with artists from jazz legend Lionel Hampton to new-generation pianist Stefano Bollani, from banjoist Béla Fleck to vocal superstar Bobby McFerrin. Chick’s duo partnerships with Gary Burton and Herbie Hancock endured decades.

In the ’80s and ’90s Chick continued to venture into new territory consistently, displaying his broad musical reach with his Elektric Band (which reunited in 2004) and Akoustic Band, as well as the exciting sextet Origin, whose Change album was called “a sparkling display for his lively post-bop playing” by Entertainment Weekly.

Rare for a “jazz musician,” Chick received the Richard J. Bogomolny Award from Chamber Music America in 2010, and he broke new ground as a composer with The Continents: Concerto for Jazz Quintet and Chamber Orchestra, released in 2013 by a storied classical label, Deutsche Grammophon. Chick recorded his first album of solo piano in 1971, and he continued his intimate journey with the instrument on Solo Piano – Portraits.

For a sold-out international tour and live album in 2008, Chick reconvened his pioneering jazz-rock fusion band Return to Forever, which he founded in 1972. The core of the band – Chick with original member Stanley Clarke and veteran Lenny White – produced a GRAMMY-winning acoustic album in 2011 with Forever. Then a new version of Return to Forever – with Clarke, White, Jean-Luc Ponty and Frank Gambale – toured the world to acclaim, yielding the live CD/DVD The Mothership Returns.

In another celebration of kindred spirits, Chick co-led the Five Peace Band with guitarist John McLaughlin, a fellow Miles Davis alum. The group won a GRAMMY for Five Peace Band Live, and the New Zealand Herald praised the quintet live as “jazz without compromise, invention without fear.” In 2011, Chick celebrated his 70th birthday in a big way at NYC’s famed Blue Note Jazz Club, with a month-long run that encompassed more than 40 performances with 10 different lineups – a staggering aggregation of musical friends and fellow-travelers that included Herbie Hancock, Bobby McFerrin, Wynton Marsalis, John McLaughlin and Stanley Clarke along with triumphal sets by his own legendary ensembles, the Chick Corea Elektric Band and Return to Forever. The momentous occasion was captured on *The Musician*, a live 3-CD and Blu-ray set.

For the 2013 album The Vigil, Chick put together a new-era electro/acoustic quintet, featuring himself on keyboards and longtime associate Tim Garland on reeds, alongside some hot young players. Released in 2015, Two documented his constantly-evolving duet with Béla Fleck, the estimable banjoist. The same year, Chick embarked on a hugely acclaimed world tour with fellow piano legend Herbie Hancock, reuniting for their first full-scale tour as a duo since 1978. In 2017, he released the adventurous multi-generational session *Chinese Butterfly*, reuniting him with legendary drummer Steve Gadd, a friend and collaborator for more than 50 years.

Recently, Chick found himself as active as he’d ever been. 2019 saw him release two critically-acclaimed albums. The first, *Antidote*, introduced Chick’s new Spanish Heart Band, a stunning group of musicians from Spain, Cuba, Venezuela and the U.S. won a GRAMMY Award for Best Latin Jazz Album. He also reunited with his fellow virtuosos, bassist Christian McBride and drummer Brian Blade, for *Trilogy 2*, the follow-up to their 2014 trio debut that instantly attained classic status and earned two GRAMMY nominations.