

MICHAEL WARREN

Although Warren considered himself one of the black hippies of the 60s and 70s, his roots run deep into Jazz, Funk and Motown groove. He has performed and toured with a great spectrum of dynamic artists including MERL SAUNDERS, BB KING, RANDY CRAWFORD, MARIA MULDAUR, BUDDY MILES, THE CRUSADERS, THE DAVE MATTHEWS BAND and many others. The performance venues where he has displayed his talent range from The Grand Ole Opry in Nashville, The House of Blues in Chicago, The Fillmore in San Francisco to Carnegie Hall in New York City.

His musical beginnings started in Seattle, Washington. Born to a music, contracting and real estate family, Warren took the path of music, leaving real estate for a later time. Warren's father Eugene Warren, Sr. moonlighted as jazz pianist, organist and music contractor all over the Washington State and Canada while his mother and sisters sang in church. Warren recalls, "I now realize that some



of those people hanging out in are basement rehearsal room were Jimi Hendricks and Ray Charles", among others.

Warren was to be a pianist as was his older brother Eugene, Jr. and younger brother Walter. That changed when his father recruited his older brother Eugene, Jr. to play bass when his bassist couldn't make the gig. He was hooked when he watched them rehearse with the rest of the band in his dad's basement rehearsal room. By age 5 he was sitting on his brother's lap picking Motown tunes on a scaled down Dan

Electro bass. He was also sneaking down to the rehearsal room to try out every instrument left behind for the next rehearsal. By age 7, Warren was dabbling on guitar, piano, organ, and vibes, occasionally trying out saxophone and trombone. While he never really took formal lessons on any of them, by 9 years old, he gained enough knowledge and facility to show his friends how to get around the instruments and eventually started his first band at age 10. He taught his younger brother the bass so he could play piano. He recalls, "that was the first time I ever got paid to do what I truly loved. We made 10 bucks and came to 2 dollars each!" By 12 years old, he had formed his first 3-piece horn band with trumpet, sax and trombone. Needing to teach the trombone player how to play various riffs and phrases, he learned to play trombone by ear. Realizing how much he enjoyed the instrument Warren continued to play the trombone for the next 20 years.

Warren decided to leave Seattle for a short Navy career in San Diego, which did not include music study. He eventually moved to the Oakland bay area to pursue a music career. Landing at Laney College, Warren recalls, "Jazz Pianist professor Ed Kelly was the jazz band director. I remember walking into the music department and asking him if I could play bass. Looking over his glasses, he pointed over to the bass chair where there were at least 8 guys and one girl standing, handed me a bass trombone and said 'go home and practice this and you can play'. I played in the trombone section for the next 2 years. That was 1975. I eventually bought myself an electric bass and borrowed an upright and started playing mostly trombone gigs around the bay area with groups such as the Caribbean All Stars, the Ballads and Son & Daughters of Lite. For about 2 years, no one at Laney knew I was a bassist. They would always refer to me as the "that bad trombone player." Eventually, due to cracks in my front teeth, I retired the trombone and went back to playing bass".



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For Information & Booking
415.905.4567
booking@rustykeyrecords.com