

Richmond Times-Dispatch

Rodney Stith helps kick off new record label with show at Hippodrome



Rodney Stith performed at Richmond's In Your Ear Studios on Feb. 9, 2021, in an episode of Shockoe Sessions Live!, a concert series streamed live. His upcoming concert coincides with a public launch of Shockoe Records.

Rodney Stith & The Soul Foundation will perform Tuesday at the Hippodrome Theater in Jackson Ward, with special guest performances by Chance Fischer and Weldon Hill.

Tickets range from \$25 to \$100 and available through Eventbrite.

The show, which begins at 6 p.m., will also be streamed live as part of the Shockoe Sessions Live! concert series.

The concert coincides with the release of Stith's new EP, "The Soul Chronicles of Rodney Stith," and also as a public launch of Shockoe Records, which was established earlier this year.

Shockoe Records evolved from In Your Ear Studios' Shockoe Sessions Live!, which had evolved from Shockoe Sessions that In Your Ear co-founder Carlos Chafin started several years ago, with free shows featuring local musicians in "business meets art" sort of gatherings that led to friendships and alliances that were beneficial to all sides, he said.

When the pandemic hit, the sessions began streaming hourlong concerts on Tuesday evenings as a way to keep the music going. Shockoe Records grew out of a desire to “promote and push the talent in the city, and get it out there to a much bigger audience,” said Craig Martin, a co-owner of the label, along with Chafin and Queon “Q” Martin of Soulidify Productions.

“We’re into it for elevating Richmond-based artists and getting them out to the rest of the world,” Martin said. “That’s the core purpose.”

Shockoe Records has a diverse lineup of five initial acts: Stith’s soul, Fischer’s hip-hop, jazz pianist Hill, Elizabeth Wise’s blues and Holy River’s Earth folk. Stith’s is the third album produced by the label. The first was “Reckless Sophistication,” by Elizabeth Wise and Her Guys, and the second was Holy River’s “Shockoe Sessions Live.” Albums from Fischer and Hill are in the works.

Albums are available digitally, and CDs can be purchased at Plan 9 Music. All eventually will have vinyl versions as well.

Shockoe Records plans to take on more artists in the next year, Martin said.

Part of Shockoe Records approach is to partner with local businesses. One of those partners is Plan 9 Music, which will host a mini-concert by Stith at its Carytown store Saturday at 7:30 p.m.

A portion of the proceeds from this event will benefit The Historic Jackson Ward Association and RIFF (Richmond International Film Festival) Arts Institute.



SHOCKOE RECORDS

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