

Rodney Whitaker, internationally renowned jazz bassist, was born on February 22, 1968 in Detroit, Michigan and attended Wayne State University. He began teaching at MSU in an adjunct role in 1995 before obtaining a full time position in 2000. Whitaker now serves as a university distinguished professor of jazz double bass and director of jazz studies at MSU and also served on the faculties of the University of Michigan and Juilliard. He is credited with building one of the premier jazz programs in the country at MSU. Whitaker is one of the leading performers and teachers of jazz double bass in the United States of America. He is a member of the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra and received national recognition performing with the Terence Blanchard Quintet. Whitaker has also toured internationally as a featured performer with the Roy Hargrove Quintet. Rodney appeared and presented master classes at the International Association of Jazz Educators conferences. Featured on more than 100 recordings, Whitaker's film score, China, was released on PBS in 2002. In 2006, he was nominated for the Juno Award, Canada's equivalent to a Grammy, for 'Traditional Jazz Album of the Year'. In 2011, he was nominated for an Emmy in the 'Original Music' category for "Malawi and Malaria: Fighting to Save the Children" produced by Robert Gould and Sue Carter.