



Al Jarreau

March 12, 1940 – February 12, 2017

I was driving home today after filling up my car when the news broke all over the speakers. I was shocked and now that I look back, I know for sure that I was not alone. I came in the house and told my wife we had lost another one. We have lost so many of our great entertainers in the last few years, I am afraid that artists coming up through the ranks might have a moment of pause.

Who would blame them? Being an entertainer is a hard life, just ask Marcus Miller who has worked with many entertainers, including Al Jarreau. When I moved from Cassettes to CD's, my first purchased was Al Jarreau *L is for Lovers*. Al's tanga style and mellow smoothness was unique indeed, and that uniqueness was the foundation of his career spanning over 50 years. Al Jarreau was what they call, "Pure Entertainer". You had no choice but to leave one of his concerts with a smile because you had just been entertained, by the best, Al Jarreau.

Al's history can be provided far better by [Wikipedia](#) than I. In the understanding of my feelings of this news. My heart is heavy and my chest is a little tight. To be truthful, this is about all I can write at this time.

Now that the dust has settled a little, Al Jarreau's best message to me was to be the best you can, as yourself. As hard as it may have been to fathom then, it made perfect sense because when it came right down to it, who else were you going to be? In truth, the last thing no matter the profession, did you want to be labeled as a lookalike or a sound alike. Only as yourself could you establish the foundation that would shape the history and legacy that would become a remembrance for all who knew you.

I was listening to Marcus Miller on Sirius yesterday and he was talking to Diana Reeves about Al Jarreau. Of course she had worked with him many times throughout the years where he became a big influence in her life as well. What really struck me was when Marcus mentioned to her the last time they were talking on The Miller Time Show together.



It came to me like a shot, it was over George Duke. Al and George were such good friends that Al did an Album in remembrance of George. Words can't express the lost I feel where this world is a little less bright now. Even though I cannot stop this (as much as I would love to do so), I can only express their influence on me which I have tried to express in jazzrainious. I will be working up a special on Al, George, and for once (someone still living even at 84) I think I will do one on Quincy Jones as well.

Bill Sommerville