

Oakland, August of 2022

To whom it may concern,

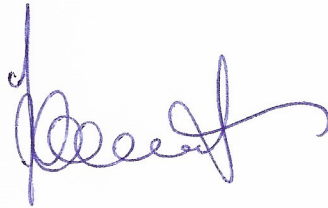
My name is Kai Eckhardt and I am a professional bassist who graduated from Berklee College of Music in 1983. I was a member of the John McLaughlin trio with Trilok Gurtu between 1987 and 1990. After that went on to work with several noteworthy artist over the years including Wayne Shorter, Zakir Hussain and Patrice Rushen. Today I am co-leader of the band Garaj Mahal and teach music at the University of California at Berkeley.

When Rocco Rizzi began studying with me more than 3 years ago he was one of my youngest students. What struck me about him right away was his high level of enthusiasm for knowledge and for music in general. He has kept that up over the years and I have witnessed him steadily evolving into a wonderful musician and human being. Rocco always studied hard in pursuit of musical excellence. While he is a formidable bassist today who is proficient on both the upright and electric bass, his musicianship blossomed in unexpected ways when he began to pursue songwriting and producing.

I believe one of Rocco's secrets for success is his ability to contribute positively to any professional situation he might find himself in. He has the kind of mind that is abundant with ideas, naturally curious and compassionate, always enriching his musical environment with positive energy. There are many young musicians abundant with talent in the world today. But there are less who bring talent, creativity and a reliable work ethic into a harmonious balance. Rocco Rizzi is one of those rare gems capable of doing just that.

It has been a joy and a privilege to be his teacher and without hesitation I gladly give him my highest recommendations.

Sincerely, Kai Eckhardt

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kai Eckhardt', with a stylized, flowing script.