**EMBARGOED UNTIL JANUARY 31 2025  
  
Reuben James – Big People Music**

Virtuoso pianist, vocalist and composer to release new album of all-star collaborations featuring **Jamie Cullum, Jungle, Honne, Emeli Sandé, Joe Armon-Jones, Theo Croker, Keyon Harrold, Kofi Stone** and more

**Lead single Own Thing is released today and available HERE**

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Reuben James, the genre-breaking pianist, singer-songwriter and composer announces the release of his third album, *Big People Music*, released via his label Rufio Records on May 16 2025. Reuben follows the acclaimed release of his soul-inflected 2023 album *Champagne Kisses* with an ambitious body of work spanning the worlds of lively funk, jazz improvisation, classic soul and pop songwriting, featuring global talents including **Jamie Cullum**, **Jungle**, **Honne**, **Emeli Sandé**, **Joe Armon-Jones**, **Theo Croker, Keyon Harrold, Kofi Stone** and more.

Across 16 tracks, Reuben produces an immersive soundworld of intricate and infectious grooves, soaring vocal harmonies and earworming melody – the culmination of a decade’s experience spent at the forefront of the UK jazz, soul and singer-songwriting scenes. Tracks like “Own Thing” build on a sprightly, interweaving piano riff to produce a slick, funk-inflected rhythm and joyous, singalong lead vocal melody, while “So Lucky” channels Reuben’s languorous vocal delivery to produce a hard-edged, slap bass-driven two minutes of dancefloor focus, and “Feel It Coming” harnesses sweeping string lines to create a cinematic soundworld for London rapper **Jay Prince**’s scattergun verses.

Equally at home in a downtempo groove, numbers like “Teach Me” channel a dub-influenced reggae rhythm and reverb-laden melody to recount a sultry night of romance, while “You’re Mine” flexes Reuben’s skills behind the keyboard to produce a piano-laden masterclass in contemporary R&B.

“Growing up, I listened to many songs that were considered ‘big people music’– tracks that you could only understand once you had lived a life,” Reuben says. “With this album, I wanted to tap into that mature and hypnotic sound for those with exquisite taste but also make sure it’s accessible to everyone. It’s Chic meets Herbie Hancock for the next generation – all tied together by rich live instrumentation.”

Reuben first honed his musical skills on the mid-noughties jazz circuit in his hometown of Birmingham, before moving to London where he began performing at the iconic Ronnie Scott’s. Reuben has firmly established himself as a musician’s musician, featuring on projects with everyone from **Stormzy** to **Disclosure**, **Liam Payne**, **Sam Smith**, **James Bay**, **Little Mix** and **Lang Lang**, as well as scoring the hit Apple TV+ show **Ted Lasso** with **Marcus Mumford**. In his work as a bandleader, meanwhile, Reuben has honed an intuitive and accessible sound indebted to classic funk and soul as much as it references contemporary pop and R&B. Following the release of his debut 2020 EP, *Slow Down,* he has gone on to produce the stunning jazz references of 2022’s album *Tunnel Vision* and 2023’s *Champagne Kisses*, amassing over 50 million streams across DSPs.

*Big People Music* is his most expansive and immediate album yet, equally at home on the bandstand as it is on the dancefloor and mainstream radio playlists. Recorded with live instrumentation alongside producers **Ben Jones** and **Karma Kid** at the residential Limusic writing camp in the South of France, Reuben melds classic songwriting with a fresh harmonic approach. Reflecting his range of musical moods and experience on the record, Reuben enlisted an all-star cast of collaborators to help bring his creative vision to fruition. Intellect **Stephen Fry** sings Reuben’s musical praises on the intro, while UK dancehall legend **DJ Big John New Thousand** talks up his instrumental powers on “Ambulance”, a cross-Atlantic jazz fusion with British Ezra Collective member **Joe Armon-Jones** and US trumpeter **Theo Croker** takes placeon the title track, British jazz stalwart **Jamie Cullum** features on the ‘60s soul references of “Show Me Your Love”, the stunning vocals of **Emeli Sandé** adorn “You’re Mine”, Erykah Badu’s longtime collaborator **Keyon Harrold** soars on “Keyon’s Reprise”, and hometown rap hero **Kofi Stone** graces “Brum Town” – an homage to Reuben’s Midlands birthplace. Rounding out this remarkable calibre of collaborators are electronic-focused dancefloor hitmakers **Jungle** on the doo-wop shuffle of “Shotgun” and dance duo **Honne** on the easygoing funk groove of “No One Else”.

Leading the array of musical stars throughout the album is Reuben himself, leaving space for Sandé’s mighty vocal runs, interweaving with Armon-Jones’ piano phrases and giving harmony to Cullum’s melody. His touch enhances and envelops this range of modern music’s hottest names. “This album is a coming of age for me,” Reuben says. “I’m making the music I’ve always dreamed of making – timeless tracks for the Big People!”

Released independently on his own Rufio imprint, *Big People Music* is ultimately testament to Reuben James’ ascent – the artist’s favourite who is making music for everyone.  
  
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