

The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts

DAVID M. RUBENSTEIN, *Chairman*

DEBORAH F. RUTTER, *President*

CONCERT HALL

Monday Evening, April 16, 2018, at 8:00



ART WORKS.



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The Kennedy Center
and the
National Endowment for the Arts
present

The 2018 NEA Jazz Masters Tribute Concert

Honoring the 2018 National Endowment for the Arts Jazz Masters

TODD BARKAN
JOANNE BRACKEEN
PAT METHENY
DIANNE REEVES

Jason Moran is the Kennedy Center Artistic Director for Jazz.

This performance will be livestreamed online, and will be broadcast
on Sirius XM Satellite Radio and WPFW 89.3 FM.

Patrons are requested to turn off cell phones and other electronic devices during performances.

The taking of photographs and the use of recording equipment are not allowed in this auditorium.

THE 2018 NEA JAZZ MASTERS TRIBUTE CONCERT

Hosted by

JASON MORAN, *Kennedy Center Artistic Director for Jazz*

With remarks from

JANE CHU, *Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts*

DEBORAH F. RUTTER, *President of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts*

The 2018 NEA JAZZ MASTERS

Performances by

NEA Jazz Master Eddie Palmieri and the Eddie Palmieri Sextet

John Benitez

Camilo Molina-Gaetán

Jonathan Powell

Ivan Renta

Vicente "Little Johnny" Rivero

Terri Lyne Carrington

Nir Felder

Sullivan Fortner

James Francies

Pasquale Grasso

Gilad Hekselman

Angélique Kidjo

Christian McBride

Camila Meza

Cécile McLorin Salvant

Antonio Sanchez

Helen Sung

Dan Wilson

NEA JAZZ MASTERS 1982–2018

Muhal Richard Abrams
Jamey Aebersold
Toshiko Akiyoshi
Mose Allison
George Avakian
David Baker
Todd Barkan
Danny Barker
Ray Barretto
Kenny Barron
Count Basie
Louie Bellson
Tony Bennett
George Benson
Art Blakey
Carla Bley
Joanne Brackeen
Anthony Braxton
Dee Dee Bridgewater
Bob Brookmeyer
Cleo Brown
Ray Brown
Dave Brubeck
Kenny Burrell
Gary Burton
Donald Byrd
Candido Camero
Benny Carter
Betty Carter
Ron Carter
Kenneth Clarke
Buck Clayton
Jimmy Cobb
George Coleman
Ornette Coleman
Chick Corea
Miles Davis
Richard Davis
Buddy DeFranco
Jack DeJohnette
Lou Donaldson
Dorothy Donegan
Paquito D'Rivera
Harry "Sweets" Edison
Roy Eldridge
Gil Evans
Art Farmer
Ella Fitzgerald
Tommy Flanagan
Frank Foster
Von Freeman
Curtis Fuller
Dizzy Gillespie

Ira Gitler
Benny Golson
Dexter Gordon
Lorraine Gordon
Charlie Haden
Jim Hall
Chico Hamilton
Lionel Hampton
Slide Hampton
Herbie Hancock
Barry Harris
Roy Haynes
Jimmy Heath
Percy Heath
Joe Henderson
Luther Henderson
Jon Hendricks
Nat Hentoff
Billy Higgins
Andrew Hill
Milt Hinton
Dave Holland
Bill Holman
Shirley Horn
Freddie Hubbard
Bobby Hutcherson
Dick Hyman
Milt Jackson
Ahmad Jamal
Keith Jarrett
J.J. Johnson
Elvin Jones
Hank Jones
Jonathan "Jo" Jones
Quincy Jones
Sheila Jordan
Orrin Keepnews
Andy Kirk
Lee Konitz
Hubert Laws
Yusef Lateef
John Levy
John Lewis
Ramsey Lewis
David Liebman
Abbey Lincoln
Melba Liston
Charles Lloyd
Johnny Mandel
The Marsalis Family
(Ellis Jr., Wynton,
Delfeayo, Jason,
Branford)

Tom McIntosh
Jackie McLean
Marian McPartland
Carmen McRae
Jay McShann
Pat Metheny
James Moody
Dan Morgenstern
Anita O'Day
Jimmy Owens
Wendy Oxenhorn
Eddie Palmieri
Sun Ra
Dianne Reeves
Max Roach
Sonny Rollins
Annie Ross
George Russell
Pharoah Sanders
Gunther Schuller
Jimmy Scott
Joe Segal
Artie Shaw
Archie Shepp
Wayne Shorter
Horace Silver
Jimmy Smith
Dr. Lonnie Smith
Billy Taylor
Cecil Taylor
Clark Terry
Toots Thielemans
McCoy Tyner
Rudy Van Gelder
Sarah Vaughan
Cedar Walton
George Wein
Frank Wess
Randy Weston
Joe Wilder
Joe Williams
Gerald Wilson
Nancy Wilson
Teddy Wilson
Phil Woods
Snooky Young

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JOHN ABBOTT



Jazz impresario **Todd Barkan's** name is inextricably associated with one of the nation's legendary jazz clubs: the Keystone Korner, a San Francisco venue he had opened in 1972 and then managed for more than a decade.

While that alone would make him a significant figure in the jazz world, he also worked as a record producer, for labels such as Fantasy/Milestone, Concord, 32 Records, and HighNote. His love of jazz, respect for the music and its practitioners, and knack for curating exciting live performances served him well in his subsequent capacity at Jazz at Lincoln Center.

Barkan was born in Nebraska, but was raised and educated in Columbus, Ohio, where he developed an interest in jazz as a teenager. He took piano lessons from David Wheeler and Don Patterson, planning on a career in jazz. He also became friends with jazz legend Rahsaan Roland Kirk, whom Barkan considered his musical mentor.

Barkan first started producing jazz concerts in 1964 while attending Oberlin College in Ohio. By 1968 he had relocated to San Francisco, working by day as a customs broker and by night as pianist for the Latin jazz band Kwane & The Kwan-Ditos. An inquiry to perform at the bar and live-music venue Keystone Korner proved life-changing as Barkan ended up buying the place and turning it into what pianist Mary Lou Williams once hailed as "the Birdland of the 70s." During that time, Barkan presented artists and produced dozens of highly acclaimed live recordings at his club. In addition he worked as a booking agent, setting up West Coast tours for jazz legends Art Blakey, Miles Davis, Dexter Gordon, McCoy Tyner, and Phil Woods, among others.

Following the club's closure in 1983, Barkan relocated to New York City to work as a record producer for labels in the U.S. and Japan. During 1985–1990, he was the manager of the Boys Choir of Harlem, setting up a program that showcased jazz musicians as

guest soloists with the choir. In 2001 Barkan was hired as Jazz at Lincoln Center's artistic administrator by Wynton Marsalis. He stayed with the organization for more than a decade, serving as programming director and emcee for its Dizzy's Club Coca-Cola venue from 2004 to 2012.

In 2013 Barkan co-produced the Keystone Korner Concert Series at the Iridium as well as WBGO's jazz series at 54 Below, both clubs in New York City. In 2014 he helped establish the Sea of Jazz Festival in Pompano Beach, Florida. Barkan received a 2015 Grammy Award for Latin Jazz Album of the Year as co-producer of *The Offense of the Drum* by Arturo O'Farrill & the Afro Latin Jazz Orchestra. To date Barkan has produced hundreds of recordings, including artists such as Tommy Flanagan, Freddie Hubbard, Bobby Hutcherson, Hank Jones, and Jimmy Scott. Barkan continues to work as a lecturer, record producer, and curator of live jazz events.

CAROL FRIEDMAN



Whatever the musical setting—whether solo, duo, trio, quartet, or quintet—pianist **Joanne Brackeen's** unique style of playing commands attention. In addition to her captivating and complex improvisations, she

has written intricate, rhythmically daring compositions in a wide stylistic range. She is a full-time professor at Berklee College of Music in Boston, Massachusetts, and a Berklee guest professor at the New School in New York City.

Brackeen was a child prodigy who at age 11, learned to play the piano in six months by transcribing eight Frankie Carle solos. By 12 she was already performing professionally. Some of her musical constituents at the time were Art Farmer, Dexter Gordon, Charlie Haden, Billy Higgins, Bobby Hutcherson, Scott LaFaro, and Charles Lloyd. Simultaneously the Los Angeles Conservatory heard of her musicianship and offered her a full scholarship. She attended classes less than one week

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before deciding the bandstand was more significant.

Brackeen married and moved her family, including four children, to New York in 1965. She began her career there with such luminaries as George Benson, Paul Chambers, Lee Konitz, Sonny Stitt, and Woody Shaw among others. She joined Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers in 1969, becoming the first and only female member of the group, staying until 1972. Brackeen then performed extensively with Joe Henderson (1972–1975) and Stan Getz (1975–1977). After leaving Getz's quartet, she emerged as a leader.

Traveling and performing mainly with her own band was a delightful and enriching experience for both Brackeen and her band members, which included Terence Blanchard, Michael Brecker, Ravi Coltrane, Jack DeJohnette, Eddie Gomez, Billy Hart, Horace "El Negro" Hernandez, Branford Marsalis, Cecil McBee, John Patitucci, Chris Potter, and Greg Osby. She has recorded more than two dozen recordings as a leader, which include 100 of her 300 original compositions. She appears on nearly 100 additional recordings.

Sharing her musical knowledge and passing on the tradition have been important parts of Brackeen's career. In addition to teaching at Berklee College of Music and the New School, she has led clinics, master classes, and artistic residencies worldwide.

Berklee College of Music has recognized Brackeen with the following prestigious honors: a Distinguished Professor Award, an Outstanding Achievement in Education Award, and the Berklee Global Jazz Institute Award. Worldwide she received an Outstanding Educator Award from the International Association for Jazz Education, a Living Legend Award from the International Women in Jazz, and the BNY Mellon Jazz 2014 Living Legacy Award. She also received two National Endowment for the Arts grants for commissions and performances and received a U.S. Department of State sponsorship for a tour of the Middle East and Europe in the mid-1980s. She continues to teach and

tour internationally, and to date, she has played in 46 different countries.

JOHN PEDEN



Pat Metheny reinvented the traditional sound of jazz guitar, bringing a fresh sonic potential to the instrument while offering a deep reservoir of improvisational insight and musicality. He is one of the few artists who has achieved

crossover popularity—three of his recordings achieving gold record status with more than 20 million records sold worldwide—and critical acclaim. While his music resists any easy description, his compositions cover a wide range of settings, from modern jazz to rock to country to classical.

Metheny grew up in a musical family, starting on trumpet at the age of eight and switching to guitar a few years later. By age 15 he was mentored by and worked regularly with some of the best jazz musicians in Kansas City. Following his graduation from Lee's Summit High School, Metheny very briefly attended the University of Miami in Coral Gables, Florida, but he was quickly offered a teaching position instead. At age 18 he was the youngest teacher ever at that university.

He then encountered jazz vibraphonist Gary Burton, who enticed him to teach at the Berklee College of Music—where Burton was teaching as well—and join his band, which Metheny did from 1974 to 1977. Metheny's 1975 debut album *Bright Size Life* introduced his unique sound, reshaping how one approached jazz guitar for a new generation of players and fans alike. Throughout his career, Metheny has been innovative in using emerging technologies to expand the palette of his music. In addition to being on the cutting edge of electronics, he has also developed acoustic mechanical platforms in his Orchestrion projects as well as a wide array of custom guitars, such as his 42-string Picasso model.

Having recorded scores of albums under his own name and as a sideman, Metheny performed with many diverse artists, such as

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David Bowie, Ornette Coleman, Charlie Haden, Jim Hall, Herbie Hancock, Roy Haynes, Milton Nacimiento, and Steve Reich. Metheny has also scored numerous movie soundtracks—the best-known work being *The Falcon and the Snowman*, on which he worked with Bowie. Metheny's body of work for acoustic and electric instruments includes compositions for a wide range of performers, including solo guitar, small groups, large orchestras, and ballet.

To date Metheny has won 20 Grammy Awards, being the only artist to have won awards in ten different categories. He was inducted into the *DownBeat* Hall of Fame in 2013, joining the only other guitarists inducted: Wes Montgomery, Charlie Christian, and Django Reinhardt. He received an honorary doctorate from the Berklee College of Music in 1996. He continues to record and tour in the United States and worldwide.



Dianne Reeves can effortlessly sing in whatever style she wants with her far-reaching range, whether it is rhythm-and-blues, gospel, Latin, or pop. But jazz always was—and continues to be—her musical foundation.

Born in Detroit and raised in Denver, Colorado, Reeves became interested in music as a result of her family's rich musical atmosphere and growing up in an era where musical boundaries were less rigid than they are today. She was introduced to jazz through her uncle Charles Burrell, a classical and jazz bassist, who gave her lots of records including those by an early influence, Sarah Vaughan. She began singing and playing piano at age 12 under the mentorship of her choir teacher Bennie Williams, and became a member of her high school jazz band. Upon winning a national competition, the band traveled to Chicago in 1973 to perform at the National

Association of Jazz Educators Conference, and she came to the attention of Clark Terry, who hired her to sing with him later that year.

In 1977 Reeves moved to Los Angeles to pursue a musical career. Founding members of Earth, Wind & Fire and fellow Denver denizens, Philip Bailey and Larry Dunn, coaxed Reeves to come to Los Angeles where she immediately found a great deal of session work waiting for her. She was featured in the band Caldera with Eduardo del Barrio, co-founded the fusion group Night Flight with Billy Childs, and toured extensively with Sergio Mendes.

In 1981 she recorded her first album for Palo Alto Records. In 1983 Reeves moved to New York after she was invited to tour as the featured principal voice with Harry Belafonte, who presented Reeves to the world. In 1987 she was signed to Blue Note Records, whereupon she had her cousin, keyboard pioneer and jazz great George Duke, produce the first of many of her albums.

Stretching across genres, she performed with Chicago Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Daniel Barenboim as well as with the Berlin Philharmonic conducted by Sir Simon Rattle. She has also recorded and performed as featured soloist with Wynton Marsalis and the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra. In 2002 she became the first creative chair for jazz for the Los Angeles Philharmonic—a position designed to build the organization's jazz presence in the community in which it has greatly succeeded. Reeves was also featured in George Clooney's acclaimed 2005 film *Good Night, and Good Luck*, whose soundtrack provided Reeves with the Grammy Award for Best Jazz Vocal Performance. Reeves has won five Grammys to date, including the award for Best Jazz Vocal Performance for three consecutive recordings. She is the recipient of honorary doctorates from the Berklee College of Music and the Juilliard School.

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COURTESY OF THE ARTIST



Grammy Award-winning bassist **John Benitez**, born in Rio Piedras Puerto Rico, started playing gospel music in church at the age of 13. Already a gifted musician, Benitez began his formal education at Escuela Libre de Musica, followed by study at the University of Puerto Rico and later the Puerto Rico Conservatory of Music with master bassist Federico Silva.

By age 19 Benitez was the first-call bassist in San Juan's thriving jazz and Latin music scenes. He performed with well-known artists such as Chick Corea, Lucecita Benitez, Batacumbelle, Lalo Rodriguez, Cuco Peña, Roberto Roena, and Justo Betancourt, among others. In 1993 he moved to New York and attended the City College of New York where he studied with the legendary acoustic bassist Ron Carter and later with the contra bass guitarist Anthony Jackson. Benitez learned on the bandstand performing with some of the finest jazz and Latin musicians including Wynton Marsalis, Tito Puente, Michele Camilo, Dave Valentin, Eddie Palmieri, Bobby Watson, David Sanchez, Jeff "Tain" Watts, Roy Hargrove, Antonio Hart, Danilo Perez, Kenny Kirkland, Will Calhoun, Vinny Valentino, Chucho Valdez, Don Pullen, Dave Samuels, and Mongo Santamaria, to name just few.

As a sideman and a featured special guest, Benitez has performed in all of the major jazz festivals and venues around the world including Turkey, Jordan (where he played for the royal family), South America, Canada, Norway, Finland, and all over Europe.

became the youngest person to receive a union card in Boston. After studying under full scholarship at Berklee College of Music, Carrington moved to New York City in 1983 with the encouragement of her mentor Jack DeJohnette, and quickly started working with jazz greats Clark Terry, James Moody, Lester Bowie, Pharoah Sanders, and Stan Getz. In the late 1980s she relocated to Los Angeles where she gained recognition on late night TV as the house drummer for both the *Arsenio Hall Show* and Quincy Jones's *Vibe* TV show, hosted by Sinbad.

In 1989 Carrington released a Grammy-nominated debut CD on Verve Forecast, *Real Life Story* featuring Carlos Santana, Wayne Shorter, John Scofield, Patrice Rushen, and Grover Washington, Jr. Other solo albums of note include 2002's *Jazz is a Spirit*, 2008's *More To Say*, 2011's Grammy Award-winning *The Mosaic Project*, and 2013's homage to Duke Ellington, Charles Mingus, and Max Roach—*Money Jungle: Provocative in Blue*, which also earned a Grammy Award, establishing her as the first woman ever to win in the Best Jazz Instrumental Album category.

Carrington received an honorary doctorate from Berklee College of Music in 2003 and was appointed professor at the college in 2005, where she currently serves as Zildjian Chair in Performance, Berklee Global Jazz Institute. She is also Artistic Director for the Beantown Jazz Festival, Berklee Summer Sessions: Women's Performance Program, and is co-artistic director of The Carr Center, Detroit, Michigan.

To date Carrington has performed on more than 100 recordings and has been a role model and advocate for young women and men internationally through her teaching and touring careers. She has particularly had a long-standing affiliation with jazz icons Herbie Hancock and Wayne Shorter. Carrington's latest releases are *The Mosaic Project: LOVE and SOUL* and *Perfection*, a co-led project with David Murray and Geri Allen. Her current band Social Science, expects to release their debut album in fall 2018.

TRACY LOVE



Celebrating 40 years in music, three-time Grammy Award-winning drummer/producer/composer **Terri Lyne Carrington** started her professional career in Massachusetts at ten years old when she

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COURTESY OF THE ARTIST



Called “the next big jazz guitarist” by *NPR*, hailed by *The New York Times* as a “whiz kid,” and dubbed “incredible” by the *Montreal Gazette*, **Nir Felder** is a new voice in jazz guitar. Growing up right outside New York

City, Felder spent his youth playing in rock bands while learning about jazz at the local record store, inspired by icons from John Coltrane to voodoo-chill Jimi Hendrix. After attending Berklee College of Music on a full scholarship, Felder moved to New York City in 2006. He quickly became one of the city's most highly sought after sideman, performing with an eclectic group of luminaries in jazz and other genres including Diana Krall, Brad Mehldau, John Mayer, Chaka Khan, Terri Lyne Carrington (with whom he recorded the Grammy-winning “Money Jungle”), Vijay Iyer, Jack DeJohnette, Meshell Ndegeocello, Dianne Reeves, the New York City Opera, and many others on tour throughout five continents and at venues including Radio City Music Hall and the Village Vanguard and national television stations NBC and FOX.

Seeking a more personal creative outlet, Felder first formed his own quartet in 2010, recording the critically acclaimed debut *Golden Age* (Sony/OKeh), called “lyrical and lofty” by *The New York Times*, “mesmerizing” by *The Boston Globe*, “a melodic triumph” by the *New York City Jazz Record*, “mind-boggling” by *All About Jazz*, and “a great record” by *DownBeat*. Four years after the release of *Golden Age*, Felder's latest project for release in 2018 is a set of two trio recordings featuring bassist Matt Penman and drummer Jimmy Macbride. Using the studio as an instrument and the latest in sound design technology, the result is a layered music that blends jazz improvisation with other genres in new ways and stretches the boundaries of what a jazz record is and can be.



GULNARA KHAMATOVA

Lauded as one of the top jazz pianists of his generation, **Sullivan Fortner** is recognized for his virtuosic technique and captivating performances. The winner of three prestigious awards—a Leonore Annenberg Arts

Fellowship, the 2015 Cole Porter Fellowship from the American Pianists Association, and the 2016 Lincoln Center Award for Emerging Artists—Fortner's music embodies the essence of the blues and jazz as he connects music of all eras and genres through his improvisation.

As a leader the Sullivan Fortner Trio has performed on many of the world's most prestigious stages including Jazz at the Lincoln Center, Newport Jazz Festival, Monterey Jazz Festival, Discover Jazz Festival, Tri-C Jazz Festival, Jazz Standard, and the Gillmore Keyboard Festival. Fortner has been heard with other leading musicians around the world including Dianne Reeves, Roy Hargrove, Wynton Marsalis, Paul Simon, John Scofield, Cécile McLorin Salvant, Fred Hersch, Sean Jones, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Roberta Gambarini, Peter Bernstein, Stefon Harris, Nicholas Peyton, Billy Hart, Dave Liebman, Gary Bartz, Etienne Charles, and Christian Scott.

Fortner brings the same sense of musicianship to his recordings as he does to his live performances. His first album *Aria* (Impulse Records) has garnered acclaim by *The New York Times* and *DownBeat Magazine* as it showcases Fortner's mastery at both rendering well-chosen standards and composing memorable melodies. On *Aria* Fortner leads a splendid ensemble, comprised of drummer Joe Dyson, Jr., bassist Aidan Carroll, and tenor and soprano saxophonist Tivon Pennicott. Fortner's highly anticipated sophomore album as a solo recording artist is slated to be released in 2018. Fortner can also be heard on the recordings of Etienne Charles's *Kaiso* (2011), Donald Harrison's *Quantum Leaps* (2010), and Theo Croker's *Fundamentals* (2007). Most recently, he has

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recorded with Grammy Award-winning artists Roy Hargrove and Cecile McLorin Salvant on their highly anticipated albums.

Fortner's foray into music education has led him to lead master classes at today's most formidable music institutions including Oberlin Conservatory of Music, Manhattan School of Music, New Orleans Center for Creative Arts (NOCCA), Purdue University, Lafayette Summer Music Workshop, and Belmont University (TN).

A native of New Orleans, Fortner began playing the piano at the age of seven and was hailed a virtuoso before he was out of high school. He has a Bachelor of Music degree in jazz studies from Oberlin Conservatory and a Master of Music in jazz performance from Manhattan School of Music.

COURTESY OF THE ARTIST



Even before moving to New York City in 2013, pianist **James Francies** had generated a well-deserved buzz in the jazz arena. He is the youngest recipient of the American Federation of Musicians (AFM) President's Youth

Award, *DownBeat Magazine* awarded him twice for Composition and Jazz Arrangement, his band opened for the legendary Jazz Crusaders reunion, and he performed at Monterey Jazz Festival.

Since he has been in New York City, Francies has toured and recorded with the likes of with Eric Harland, the Roots, Jeff "Tain" Watts, Pat Metheny, Chris Potter, Chris Dave, and Drumhedz, and fronts his own band, Kinetic. Francies can often be seen on the *Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon* on NBC with the Roots. He is currently in the process of recording his debut album for the legendary Blue Note Record Label and was named one of Eight Artists You Should Know by the genre-bending website Revive Music. Francies has also been featured in *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Uproxx*, *DownBeat Magazine*, and other publications. Francies also works with drummer and

producer Questlove of the Roots on numerous projects such as music for commercials, film scores, and singles for different artists. Francies recently was a part of the film score for *Vincent N' Roxxy* with Questlove that stars Zoe Kravitz, Emile Hirsch, and Kid Cudi. The film can currently be viewed on Netflix.

Francies's impressive performance/recording credits include the Roots, Pat Metheny, Eric Harland, Bilal, Kodak Black, Chris Potter, Robert Glasper, Jeff Tain Watts, Jose James, Chris Dave, and many others. Francies was also a part of Chance The Rapper's hit single "No Problem" which went on to win two Grammy Awards in 2017. In his high school years, Francies was a member of the Grammy Jazz Session Combo, the Thelonious Monk Institute All-Star Jazz Sextet, the Next Generation Jazz Orchestra, and the Texas Music Educators Association's (TMEA) All-State Jazz Ensemble. Francies has performed and toured extensively throughout five different continents. Francies graduated from the New School for Jazz and Contemporary Music on full-scholarship. James Francies is a Blue Note Recording Artist, endorsed by Yamaha Pianos, Korg Keyboards, and is an IWC Brand Ambassador.

STEFANIA CURTO



One of the most strikingly unique artists of his generation, **Pasquale Grasso** has undoubtedly changed the way the world views jazz guitar. Born in Ariano Irpino, Grasso began playing guitar at a very young age. By the summer of

1997, his parents, who recognized the depth of their young son's talent, sought out the instruction of jazz innovator Agostino DiGiorgio. A former pupil of Chuck Wayne, DiGiorgio immediately took interest in Grasso, whose prodigious aptitude for the instrument flourished as the young guitarist quickly became his closest pupil. From that point it would not be long before news of this talent spread.

Barry Harris, the world-renowned jazz educator and bebop piano master, became an

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extraordinary influence when Grasso attended his jazz workshop in Switzerland during the summer of 1998. Harris, contemporary of Miles Davis, Sonny Stitt, and Cannonball Adderley, took Pasquale and his brother Luigi under his wing. Over the span of the next five years, the Grasso brothers became pillars of Harris's international workshops and were quickly promoted from mere attendees to instructors for the other students. Grasso was named Harris's guitar teaching assistant and for the last ten years, he has conducted workshops in Italy, Switzerland, France, Spain, Holland, and Slovenia.

In 2008 Grasso pursued classical guitar studies in the Music Conservatory of Bologna under Professor Walter Zanetti. During his time at the conservatory, Grasso developed a new approach to the guitar, combining classical tradition with Chuck Wayne's modern technique.

In 2012 he moved to New York City and quickly made a name for himself in the city's vibrant jazz scene. Grasso became part of the Ari Roland Quartet and the Chris Byars Quartet, performing in clubs, music festivals, and recording in the studio regularly. Later that year he was named a Jazz Ambassador with the U.S. Embassy, going on to tour extensively across Europe, Kuwait, Kazakhstan, Cyprus, Lithuania, and Ukraine, among others.

Despite his young age, Grasso has performed with many leading musicians of the international jazz scene such as Barry Harris, Charles Davis, Freddie Redd, Frank Wess, Leroy Williams, Ray Drummond, Murray Wall, Steve Grossman, Tardo Hammer, Jimmy Wormworth, John Mosca, Sacha Perry, Ari Roland, Luigi Grasso, Chris Byars, Zaid Nasser, Bucky Pizzarelli, China Moses, Harry Allen Quartet, Grant Stewart, Stepko Gut, Nicolas Dary, Dado Moroni, Agostino Di Giorgio, Michel Pastre Big Band, Gianni Basso Big Band, Joe Cohn, Oscar Zenari, and Luca Pisani. Grasso's guitar was expertly crafted for him by longtime friend and luthier Bryant Trenier. Trenier Guitars is located in Suffern, New York.

COURTESY OF THE ARTIST



Gilad Hekselman has quickly developed a reputation as one of the most promising guitarists in New York since his arrival in 2004. After only a few years, this native Israeli has shared the stage with some of the greatest

artists in the New York City jazz scene including Chris Potter, Mark Turner, Ben Wendel, Eric Harland, John Scofield, Anat Cohen, Ari Hoenig, Esperanza Spalding, Jeff Ballard, Gretchen Parlato, Avishai Cohen, Jeff "Tain" Watts, Tigran Hamasyan, Aaron Parks, and Greg Hutchinson.

Hekselman has been performing in all the major jazz clubs in New York including the Village Vanguard, the Jazz Standard, Blue Note, Smalls, and more. He has also been touring the world constantly with his own bands, gHex Trio and ZuperOctave, and as a sideman with some of the most prominent musicians on the scene.

He has released multiple albums as a band-leader to critical acclaim including *SplitLife* (Smalls Records), *Words Unspoken* (LateSet Records) *Hearts Wide Open*, *This Just In*, and *Homes* (Harmonia Mundi). His next record is scheduled to be released in 2018.

COURTESY OF THE ARTIST



Three-time Grammy Award-winner **Angélique Kidjo** is one of the greatest artists in international music today, a creative force with 13 albums to her name. *Time Magazine* has called her "Africa's premier diva." The BBC

has included her in its list of the continent's 50 most iconic figures, and in 2011 *The Guardian* listed her as one of their Top 100 Most Inspiring Women in the World. *Forbes Magazine* has ranked Kidjo as the first woman in their list of the Most Powerful Celebrities in Africa.

As a performer her striking voice, stage presence, and fluency in multiple cultures and

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languages have won respect from her peers and expanded her following across national borders. Kidjo has cross-pollinated the West African traditions of her childhood in Benin with elements of American R&B, funk, and jazz, as well as influences from Europe and Latin America.

Her star-studded album *Djin Djin* won a Grammy Award for Best Contemporary World Album in 2008, and her album *Oyo* was nominated for the same award in 2011. In January 2014 her first book, a memoir titled *Spirit Rising: My Life, My Music* and her 12th album, *Eve*, were released to critical acclaim. *Eve* later went on to win the Grammy Award for Best World Music Album in 2015, and her historic, orchestral album *Sings with the Orchestre Philharmonique Du Luxembourg* won a Grammy for Best World Music Album in 2016.

The new year brings us Kidjo's newest project, her interpretation of The Talking Heads's classic 1980 album *Remain in Light*. She recorded her version of the album with superstar producer Jeff Bhasker (Kanye West, Jay Z, Drake, Beyoncé, Bruno Mars, and Taylor Swift), taking classic songs such as "Crosseyed and Painless," "Once in a Lifetime," and "Born Under Punches (The Heat Goes On)" and reinterpreting them with electrifying rhythms, African guitars, and layered backing vocals.

Kidjo also travels the world advocating on behalf of children in her capacity as a UNICEF and OXFAM Goodwill Ambassador. She created her own charitable foundation Batonga, dedicated to support the education of young girls in Africa.



COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

Christian McBride is a six-time Grammy Award-winning bassist/composer who, since the early 1990s, has recorded more than 300 dates as a sideman and released albums as a leader since 1995.

Aside from various stints with Sting, Chick Corea, George Duke, Roy Haynes, John

McLaughlin, and Pat Metheny, among others, McBride has been artist-in-residence and artistic director with organizations such as Jazz Aspen, Los Angeles Philharmonic, The Jazz Museum in Harlem, Jazz House Kids, and NJPAC (New Jersey Performing Arts Center-Newark).

McBride tours consistently with his bands New Jawn and Tip City. He also fronts the Christian McBride Big Band, whose Mack Avenue Records recording *The Good Feeling* won the Grammy Award for Best Large Jazz Ensemble Album in 2012—his third win overall. On September 22, 2017, Christian McBride's Big Band released their sophomore album, *Bringin' It*. *Bringin' It* also won the Grammy Award for Best Large Jazz Ensemble Album in 2018.

In addition McBride hosts a show on Sirius/XM and DJs at clubs as DJ Brother Mister. McBride was recently named host of *Jazz Night in America*, a new program from NPR Music and WBGO that showcases today's thriving jazz scene. While he continues his role as Artistic Director for the Montclair Jazz Festival, 2017 also marked his first year in the same role for the critically acclaimed Newport Jazz Festival.



COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

During her seven years in the United States, **Camila Meza** has created a big impact in the New York jazz scene. She possesses an innate and rare combination of qualities as a singer and guitar player, who also writes her own

songs and arrangements. She has a highly expressive voice with a unique tamber and way of phrasing, while her sound and accompaniment on the guitar are equally touching and soulful. Meza's music takes us on a joyfully energetic and deep journey full of beauty and adventure. Her Latin American roots and profound connection to jazz combined with the fusions of contemporary and popular music give the music she creates a very special and appealing sound.

MEET THE TRIBUTE CONCERT ARTISTS

Meza belongs to a new generation of jazz musicians that are interested in creating new sounds and allowing diverse influences into their music. With love for this exploration, Meza felt right at home in the diverse and creative jazz scene of New York City. She graduated from the New School for Jazz and Contemporary Music in 2012 where she had the chance to study with masters such as Peter Bernstein, Vic Juris, Sam Yahel, Steve Cardenas, and Gil Goldstein, amongst others. But even before working with these masters, she began playing with her peers and other musicians of New York, quickly becoming part of the New York community.

An artist with an international reputation, she has already played in festivals and venues all over Europe including Swidnica Jazz Festival in Poland, Hildener Jazz Festival in Germany, Bergamo Jazz Festival in Italy, BMW Jazz Competition in Munich, Bern Jazz Festival in Switzerland, and led two nights at the renowned jazz club in France, Duc de Lombards. She has toured as part of singer Sachal Vasandani's Quartet, pianist Fabian Almazan's project with Strings with whom she recorded a Blue Note/Artist Share album in 2013, and is the lead singer of trombonist Ryan Keberle's band Catharsis, contributing on two critically acclaimed albums: *Into the Zone* and *Azul Infinito*. Meza has performed with jazz legends Tom Harrell, Dave Douglas, as a guest in Paquito D'Rivera's band at the Patagonia Jazz Festival in Chile, and also as a special guest of Aaron Goldberg Trio at The Jazz Standard in New York. Her collaboration with Goldberg led to her first recording in New York, a six track (EP) of her arrangements of standards, Latin American, and Brazilian songs. Her breakthrough album *Traces* had her showcasing her talents as a composer, excelled singer, and guitar player on her debut album for the New York-based label Sunnyside Records.

COURTESY OF THE ARTIST



Camilo Molina-Gaetán (*Eddie Palmieri Sextet*) is an accomplished multi-percussionist from New York City and is considered to be one of the most promising and versatile percussionists of his generation. He has a vast

knowledge of music, spanning from jazz to salsa, as well as the folkloric music of Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Caribbean. In 2000, Molina-Gaetán was selected as one of ten semifinalists to compete in the Thelonious Monk International Afro-Latin Hand Drum Competition. He went on to be selected third-place winner who, at age ten, was the youngest finalist in the 14-year history of the competition. Molina-Gaetán continues to make a name for himself early in his career, performing with acts varying in musical genres and styles. He is currently a member of Legendary Pianist Eddie Palmieri's Orchestras and has toured, recorded, and performed with artists such as Santana, Tito Puente, Eddie Palmieri, Dave Grusin, Giovanni Hidalgo, Los Pleneros de la 21, Miguel Zenón, Teatro Pregones, Viento de Agua, John Santos, The Curtis Brothers, and many more.

COURTESY OF THE ARTIST



Originally from Largo, Florida, **Jonathan Powell** (*Eddie Palmieri Sextet*) picked up the trumpet at the age of 11 never to look back. He was inspired by the great jazz trumpeters Louis Armstrong, Dizzy Gillespie, Freddie

Hubbard, and Miles Davis to name a few. At the age of 19 Powell moved to New York City to immerse himself in the jazz culture. Though jazz was his first and greatest love, he soon began incorporating elements of North Indian classical music, drum 'n' bass, Hip Hop, death metal, and 20th-century classical music into his original compositions. These influences are heard and felt on his debut album *Transcend*, self-released in 2010 and the follow up album *Beacons of Light*, released in 2015 on Truth Revolution Records.

MEET THE TRIBUTE CONCERT ARTISTS

Powell has shared the stage and recording studio with world renown musicians and artists like Eddie Palmieri, Blood Sweat and Tears, Ricky Martin, Elton John, OMI, Miguel Zenon, Henry Cole, Arturo O'Farrell and the Afro-Latin Jazz Orchestra, JT Taylor, La Excelencia, Sam Rivers, The Pedro Giraudo Jazz Orchestra, Q-Tip, Andy Milne, Gary Thomas, Lenny White, Reggie Workman, Just Blaze, CL Smooth, Slick Rick, and Snoop Dogg, to name a few. Known for his ease of adaptability to many musical styles, Powell has earned a name for himself on the Latin music scene in New York City by winning the Latin Jazz Corner's Best Latin Jazz Trumpet Player of 2009.

COURTESY OF THE ARTIST



Born in Ponce, Puerto Rico, and raised in Coamo, Puerto Rico, **Ivan Renta**, (*Eddie Palmieri Sextet*) has become one of the premiere saxophonists in the jazz, Latin jazz, and Latin music industry. His ability to adapt to any

musical situation has landed him on stage at many of the world's most prestigious venues and music festivals. His credentials include performances and more than 200 recordings with artists such as Tito Puente, Wynton Marsalis, Eddie Palmieri, Willie Colón, Ron Carter, Bobby Valentin, Marc Anthony, Jennifer Lopez, Jimmy Heath, Ray Barretto, the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra, and Bebo Valdéz, to name a few. Renta has also performed with such diverse musical acts as Al Jarreau, Tom Odell, Stevie Van Sandt, and Hall & Oates.

Renta has collaborated on five Grammy Award-winning recordings. Renta is also an active music educator and clinician. In 1999 Renta moved to New York City to attend the New School Jazz and Contemporary Music Program. While at the New School, Renta studied with jazz legends such as Reggie Workman, Gary Dial, George Garzone, Buster Williams, to name a few. In 2000 Renta got a call to participate on Tito Puente and Eddie Palmieri's recording *Masterpiece*, the winner of multiple Grammys and what turned out to

be Puente's last album. After recording *Masterpiece*, Renta became a member of Eddie Palmieri's Latin Jazz Ensemble and Salsa Band. Renta accepted an invitation in 2003 made to him by pianist/composer/arranger Arturo O'Farrell to join Jazz at the Lincoln Center's Afro Latin Jazz Orchestra. After working with Palmieri for approximately six years, he proceeded to become, the saxophonist for salsa legend Willie Colón's Orchestra. He has also collaborated extensively with trombonist Luis Bonilla and percussionist Chembo Corniel.

He recently released his first project as a leader with pianist Edsel Gomez, bassist Ruben Rodriguez, drummer Ernesto Simpson, and percussionist Richie Flores with special guests Giovanni Hidalgo, Luis Bonilla, and Nelson "Gazu" Jaime. It was released in September of 2013. In February of 2014, Renta's lifetime body of work was recognized by the Puerto Rico House of Representatives. He has performed with his Latin Jazz Quintet at the Ventana al Jazz Fest (2014 and 2016) in Puerto Rico and Humberto Ramirez's Puerto Rico Jazz Jam as well as at various jazz clubs throughout the New York City area. He continues to work with Arturo O'Farrell and the Afro Latin Jazz Orchestra, where he is a featured soloist, and has traveled to Cuba over the last few years, where they recorded the Grammy award-winning album *Cuba: The Conversation Continues*. He has also performed and/or recorded with the big bands of Ron Carter, Jimmy Heath, Robin Eubanks, Chris Potter, and Eddie Palmieri.



MARK FITTON

Cécile McLorin Salvant

was born and raised in Miami, Florida, of a French mother and a Haitian father. She started classical piano studies at five, and began singing in the Miami Choral Society at eight. Early on she devel-

oped an interest in classical voice, began studying with private instructors, and later with Edward Walker, became a vocal teacher at the University of Miami.

MEET THE TRIBUTE CONCERT ARTISTS

In 2007 Salvant moved to Aix-en-Provence, France, to study law as well as classical and baroque voice at the Darius Milhaud Conservatory. It was in Aix-en-Provence, with reedist and teacher Jean-François Bonnel, that she started learning about jazz and sang with her first band. In 2009 after a series of concerts in Paris, she recorded her first album *Cécile* with Jean-François Bonnel's Paris Quintet. A year later, she won the Thelonious Monk competition in Washington, D.C.

Over the years she has developed a curiosity for the history of American music, and the connections between jazz, vaudeville, blues, and folk music. Salvant carefully chooses her repertoire, oftentimes unearthing rarely recorded, forgotten songs, with strong stories.

She enjoys popularity in Europe and in the United States, performing in clubs, concert halls, and festivals. In 2014 her second album, *WomanChild* (Mack Avenue Records), was nominated for a Grammy.

Her third album, *For One To Love* (for Mack Avenue Records), was recorded in 2015 with Aaron Diehl (piano), Paul Sikivie (bass), and Lawrence Leathers (drums). In 2016 *For One To Love* won the Grammy Award for Best Jazz Vocal Album. Her fourth album, *Dreams and Daggers*, (for Mack Avenue Records), was recorded in part live at the Village Vanguard in 2016 with Aaron Diehl (piano), Paul Sikivie (bass), and Lawrence Leathers (drums), the Catalyst Quartet, and Sullivan Fortner. In 2017 *Dreams and Daggers* was nominated for the 60th Grammy Award for Best Jazz Vocal Album.



JUSTIN BETTMAN

Riding the crest of a musical wave that began with his score for Alejandro González Iñárritu's Academy Award-winning film *Birdman* or (*The Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance*); followed by soundtracks composed

for director Fernando León de Aranoa's *Política*, *Manual de Instrucciones*; and EPIX network's *Get Shorty*, drummer/composer **Antonio Sanchez** returns with his most personal work to date—*Bad Hombre*. The album a socio-political electronica and rhythm epic and was nominated for Best Contemporary Instrumental Album of 2017.

To date Sanchez has been awarded five Grammys, nominations for Golden Globe and BAFTA, World Discovery Award for Best Soundtrack and New Artist Discovery Award, Echo Award, and more.

Bad Hombre crowns an extraordinary period in the Mexico City-born musician's life. Following 17 years as one of the most revered collaborators of renowned guitarist/composer Pat Metheny, he toured the world and appeared on ten recordings with the guitarist's various ensembles. He also has collaborated with many of today's most prominent jazz musicians.

This astonishing run was paved by years of hard work, which included a recent trio album turn and one of two albums recorded with his brilliant quintet Migration. These remarkably diverse releases spotlighted Sanchez's evolution as a composer and bandleader. *Three Times Three* showcased Sanchez at his improvisatory best with three different, but equally iconic all-star trios—pianist Brad Mehldau and bassist Matt Brewer; guitarist John Scofield and bassist Christian McBride; and saxophonist Joe Lovano and bassist John Patitucci. *The Meridian Suite* featured an hour-long electro-acoustic suite penned for Migration.

His journey continues this year with a new release of his compositions on a forthcoming

MEET THE TRIBUTE CONCERT ARTISTS

work *Channels of Energy* with Vince Mendoza and the WDR Big Band. A new Migration recording is also in the pipeline for release later this year. Sanchez has made his home in New York City since 1999.

COURTESY OF THE ARTIST



Known as one of the finest Latin jazz pianists of the past 50 years, **Eddie Palmieri** is also known as the bandleader of both salsa and Latin jazz orchestras. His playing skillfully fuses the rhythm of his Puerto Rico heritage

with the melody and complexity of his jazz influences: his older brother Charlie, Thelonious Monk, Herbie Hancock, and McCoy Tyner.

Palmieri's professional career as a pianist took off in the early 1950s when he played with various bands—Eddie Forrester's Orchestra, Johnny Segui's band, and the Tito Rodriguez Orchestra. In 1961 he formed his own band, La Perfecta, which featured an unconventional front line of trombones rather than the trumpets customary in Latin orchestras. This created an innovative sound that mixed American jazz into the Latin performances, surprising critics and fans alike. Palmieri perfected his arranging skills in the 1970s, releasing several impressive records that reflected his unorthodox approach to music, such as the groundbreaking 1970 release *Harlem River Drive*, which merged musical categories into a freeform sound that encompassed elements of salsa, funk, soul, and jazz. In 1975 he won the first-ever Grammy Award for Best Latin Recording for his album *The Sun of Latin Music*. He has won ten Grammy Awards total, and has received two honorary Doctorate of Music degrees from Berklee College of Music (1998) and Lehman College in the Bronx (2017). In 2013 Palmieri was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Latin Grammy's as well as the honor of NEA Jazz Master.

In 2017 Palmieri released his newest musical project, *Sabiduría/Wisdom*, a fusion of jazz, funk, and Latin fused with Afro-world rhythms.

He has additional projects to be released, seven songs to be included in an interactive app, as well as a big band album, entitled *Mi Luz Mayor*, which features guest artists Carlos Santana and Gilberto Santa Rosa.

COURTESY OF THE ARTIST



Vicente "Little Johnny" Rivero (*Eddie Palmieri Sextet*) legendary congo, percussionist, producer, songwriter, and bandleader was born in New York City to Puerto Rican parents. At age 14 Rivero joined Orquesta Colón, the

youngest Latin band in New York City, and recorded two albums with them. He then moved to Puerto Rico with his parents and joined La Sonora Ponceña. After playing bongos with the band for a year and a half, he switched to congas, which rekindled the love affair he had begun with this instrument as a small child. Over the 16 years Rivero played with La Sonora Ponceña, he recorded 18 highly respected albums with them.

Currently Rivero is touring the world extensively with the winner of ten Grammy Awards, Eddie Palmieri. In addition Rivero continues to work at studio sessions and perform with many of the biggest and most respected acts in Latin music including his own band.

Rivero's first solo effort, *Pasos Gigantes*, has been very well received by critics and music fans alike. He also wrote 12 songs and produced this CD, showcasing his compositional and playing abilities. His second solo album, *Music In Me*, was also well received in the Latin jazz field in 2016. At the moment, he is working on his new CD entitled *Golpe Duro* under Uprising Music, Truth Revolution Records, and distributed by the Ropeadope label.

Rivero's credits include work with Eddie Palmieri, Charlie Palmieri, Rubén Blades, Cheo Feliciano, Andy Montañez, Ismael Miranda, Ismael Quintana, Adalberto Santiago, Justo Betancourt, Bobby Valentín, Celia Cruz, Giovanni Hidalgo, Ray Barretto, Patato Valdes, Changito, Tata Guines, John Santos, Frankie Ruiz, Sergio George,

MEET THE TRIBUTE CONCERT ARTISTS

Descarga Boricua All Stars, RMM All Stars, Batacumbelle, Alfredo De La Fe, Victor Manuelle, Domingo Quiñones, Brian Lynch, Conrad Herwig, Dave Valentin, Dr. Lonnie Smith, Ray Appleton “Killer”, Harry Allen, Linda Ciofalo, Tim Ries (Rolling Stones) Donald Harrison, Phil Woods, David Sánchez, Miguel Zenon, Monty Alexander, Joe Locke, Kenny G, Bebo Valdes, Paquito D’ Rivera, David Murray, Kathy Watson, and many other artists. Rivero has collaborated musically with three Grammy winners.

COURTESY OF THE ARTIST



Pianist/composer **Helen Sung** hails from Houston, Texas, where she attended the High School for the Performing & Visual Arts (HSPVA). An aspiring classical pianist before jazz intervened during undergraduate studies at the

University of Texas at Austin, Sung went on to graduate from the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz Performance and win the Kennedy Center’s Mary Lou Williams Jazz Piano Competition. Now based in New York City, Sung has worked with such luminaries as the late Clark Terry, Ron Carter, Victor Lewis, Steve Turre, Wayne Shorter, Wynton Marsalis (who named her as one of his Who’s Got Next: Jazz Musicians to Watch!), and MacArthur Fellow Regina Carter.

Sung’s sixth release as leader, *Anthem For A New Day* (Concord Jazz), topped jazz radio charts and garnered a SESAC Performance Activity Award. With appearances at major festivals/venues including Newport, Monterey, Detroit, SFJAZZ, and Carnegie Hall, Sung is also stepping onto the international stage: her NuGenerations Project toured southern Africa as a U.S. State Department Jazz Ambassador, and recent engagements include European tours promoting *Anthem*, the London Jazz Festival, and Taiwan’s Taichung Jazz Festival. In addition to her own band, Sung can currently be seen with such fine ensembles as the Mingus Big Band, Terri Lyne Carrington’s *Mosaic Project* (she also performed on Carrington’s Grammy-winning

album *Mosaic Project*), and Lea Delaria’s *House of David* project.

An active, commissioned composer, Sung won a 2014 Chamber Music America/Doris Duke Foundation New Jazz Works Grant, enabling her to create and record *Sung With Words*. Scheduled for release in September 2018, it is a “music-inspiring-poetry-inspiring-music” collaboration with Dana Gioia, a California Poet Laureate and former Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts. Inspired by her experience at the Monk Institute, Sung stays involved in music education through residencies and workshops/clinics, and also serves on the jazz faculties at the Juilliard School and Columbia University. In 2017 the College of Fine Arts of the University of Texas awarded Sung with its most prestigious honor—the E. William Doty Distinguished Alumna Award, and HSPVA inducted her into its Jazz Hall of Fame.

COURTESY OF THE ARTIST



Music has been an integral part of **Dan Wilson’s** life since his beginnings in gospel music. Upon hearing a Wes Montgomery record in a relative’s basement, Wilson decided to pursue a career as a musician. Since then he has spent more than a decade honing his craft.

His debut album *To Whom It May Concern* was released in 2012 and is a product of an intense study of many different musical styles and concepts. His most recent album, *Balancing Act*, was recorded live in his hometown of Akron, Ohio.

Wilson has been touring nationally and internationally with three-time Grammy nominated jazz organ legend Joey DeFrancesco. Wilson’s composition, “Who Shot John,” was featured on DeFrancesco’s 2015 release *Trip Mode*. Wilson can also be heard on the Grammy-nominated *Project Freedom*, by Joey DeFrancesco & The People, released in 2017. In April of 2017 Wilson joined legendary bassist Christian McBride’s Tip City.

MEET THE TRIBUTE CONCERT ARTISTS

In addition to touring with Joey DeFrancesco, he has enjoyed the honor of sharing the stage with many jazz greats including Eric Marienthal, Russell Malone, Les McCann, Christian McBride, and Dave Stryker.

Wilson also teaches jazz guitar and theory through private lessons and co-leads a group of world class musicians, called D.T.C, which

features drummer David Throckmorton and Cliff Barnes.

Wilson received his bachelor's degree in music and liberal studies from Hiram College in 2006. His passion for Brazilian music led him to the city of Rio De Janeiro in 2007 to conduct research for his master's thesis, which he defended successfully at Youngstown State University in 2009.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

Established by Congress in 1965, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) is the independent federal agency whose funding and support gives Americans the opportunity to participate in the arts, exercise their imaginations, and develop their creative capacities. Through partnerships with state arts agencies, local leaders, other federal agencies, and the philanthropic sector, the NEA supports arts learning, affirms and celebrates America's rich and diverse cultural heritage, and extends its work to promote equal access to the arts in every community across America. Visit arts.gov to learn more about NEA.

From its earliest days, the National Endowment for the Arts has funded countless jazz organizations across the country, making significant investments in support of jazz concerts, festivals, education activities, and other programs. Initiated in 1982, the NEA Jazz Masters Fellowship is the nation's highest honor given to those who have devoted their lives and careers to jazz, an art form uniquely rooted in American history and culture. Described by the *New York Times* as a "rare public accolade for jazz," the recipients represent a panoply of musical distinction, from vocalists and percussionists to vibraphonists and saxophonists—all of whom have advanced the music through their commitment to jazz. In 2004, the NEA inaugurated the A.B. Spellman NEA Jazz Masters Fellowship for Jazz Advocacy, given to an individual whose passion for jazz and

its artists has been demonstrated through major contributions to the appreciation, knowledge, and advancement of the music. With the 2018 class, the NEA has awarded 149 fellowships to great figures in jazz.

Fellowships are awarded to living individuals on the basis of nominations from the public, including the jazz community, and each receives a one-time fellowship of \$25,000. The NEA encourages nominations of a broad range of men and women who have been significant to the field of jazz, through vocals and instrumental performance, creative leadership, and education.

The NEA's website has numerous resources about the NEA Jazz Masters, including:

- Bios and photos of NEA Jazz Masters
- Video interviews with the artists
- Video from past NEA Jazz Masters Tribute Concerts
- Podcasts with NEA Jazz Masters and other jazz musicians and writers
- Jazz Moments—more than 300 short audio clips of musical excerpts and interviews with and about NEA Jazz Masters

NEA podcasts and Jazz Moments can be found at arts.gov, iTunes, and PRX.

For more information on the NEA Jazz Masters and to make a nomination, visit arts.gov/honors/jazz.

FOR THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

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ABOUT KENNEDY CENTER JAZZ

Kennedy Center Jazz, under the leadership of Artistic Director Jason Moran, presents legendary artists who have helped shape the art form, artists who are emerging on the jazz scene, and innovative multidisciplinary projects in hundreds of performances a year. The KC Jazz Club, launched in 2002 and dubbed "the future of the jazz nightclub" by *JazzTimes*, hosts many of these artists in an intimate setting. Annual Kennedy Center jazz events include the professional development residency program for young artists, *Betty Carter's Jazz Ahead*; NPR's *A Jazz Piano Christmas*, the Kennedy Center holiday tradition shared by millions around the country via broadcast on NPR; and the *Mary Lou Williams Jazz Festival*, created in 1996 by the late Dr. Billy Taylor (Kennedy Center Artistic Director for Jazz, 1994–2010). The Center's jazz concerts are frequently recorded for future broadcast on NPR.

Upcoming Jazz at the Kennedy Center

May 5, 2018

Celebrate Mary Lou Williams

Terrace Theater

May 9, 2018

Yissy & Bandancha (part of Artes de Cuba)

Eisenhower Theater

May 10, 2018

Yosvany Terry Afro-Cuban Sextet in the Cubano Club (part of Artes de Cuba)

Terrace Gallery

May 11, 2018

Zule Guerrra & Quinteto Blues de Habana (part of Artes de Cuba)

Terrace Gallery

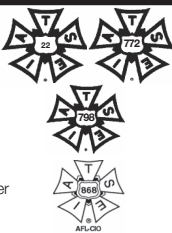
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