



# BLUE NOTES



*"Jeff Rupert, he is dynamite!" Mel Torme.*

*"From the moment I first heard Jeff Rupert with my band I considered him one of the great jazz players of today." Maynard Ferguson.*

Yep, those who know Jeff can agree wholeheartedly about his musicianship. As if that weren't enough, there's so much more to him. Jeff is a snappy dresser, one heck of a nice guy, a family man, a man who cherishes his friends and co-workers, a philanthropist (**thanks, Jeff and Jenifer, for sponsoring an issue of Blue Notes!**), and a teacher and band leader who inspires his students to excellence. Do Central Florida residents realize how fortunate they are to have frequent access to this dynamo?

His latest CD *The Ripple* (released February 2020) was on the JazzWeek charts for 30 weeks, reaching Number 6. Way to go, Jeff! Let's see what a top reviewer of jazz music had to say about it.

## All About Jazz

### Jeff Rupert/George Garzone: The Ripple

By Jim Worsley, April 28, 2020

*The Ripple* refers to the infectious, warm, intimate, yet big sound developed by the great [Lester Young](#), starting in the late 1930s. While Young pioneered improvisational creativity, [Stan Getz](#) later took the baton (well, it was actually a saxophone) and further expanded his idol's stylish approach with new and creatively open-ended visions. Young and Getz collectively have had an enormous effect on future generations of sax players. Consequently, they have left a significant and impactful mark on the sound of modern jazz.

Here [Jeff Rupert](#) and [George Garzone](#) join together to explore the endless possibilities of improvisation. Rupert is well invested and keyed in on the intricacies of Young, as well as other big sound creators like [Ben Webster](#) and [Coleman Hawkins](#). If you are familiar with Garzone, then you already know that he is as big, bold, and adventurous as they come. If you are looking for a record with two saxophonists "dueling" to the death, then you should probably keep looking. This isn't intended as a shootout at the OK Corral. It is intended, and well delivered, as a cohesive quintet on the same page uniting together with the best interest of every song as the objective.

Rupert put this project together. He is to be credited with fine selections of classic material and arrangements that brought out their beauty. Three stout Rupert originals bind seamlessly with the vintage. Of note is that his arrangements also left a lot of room for Garzone to do what he does best. His deeply nuanced note selections contrast brilliantly with Rupert's melodic lines. The contrast, as will be discussed, goes further, and is a large part of this record's dynamic allure.

Both artists clearly have a vested interest and relationship with the music and technique of Getz. However, those relationships are unique to themselves. That is to say, Getz's music was heard and imparted into Garzone's head in a different way than it was processed

by Rupert, or any other player. It is yet another layer of individuality that heightens the contrasts and makes this record so appealing.

"Bahia" is an instant attention grabber. Rupert and Garzone forego the awkward beginnings of a conversation, emitting fluently expressive vocabulary from start to finish. It is a sign of things to come, as the tenors are at ease delicately dictating the pulse and sway. Within the framework of Rupert's original, "Go-Go," things get heated. The animated exchange is fueled by a rhythm section that levels the playing field. Staying within themselves, Rupert is nonetheless pushed to the edge by a relentless Garzone, Rupert having cleverly composed a tune in which he set himself up to be stretched. He also empowers Garzone to do the same.

Back to the standards, "Stardust" bursts onto the scene with Garzone's robust tenacity. Rupert then gleefully takes a run through the [Hoagy Carmichael](#) tune, prior to the two distinctive voices merging and emerging as one. The rhythm section is again spot-on and critical to doing justice to this iconic piece. As if at a live show, let's pause to introduce these pillars of the foundation.

Pianist [Richard Drexler](#), drummer Marty Morell, and bassist Jeremy Allen not only complete the quintet but are a vital cog in the wheel of sublime jazz renderings. This is a trio of superb veteran musicians that tightly hold together the grooves. Their patience and control are essential in allowing the two tenors to stretch, navigate, and expand freely. These cats are strong when they needed to be but are rightfully more concerned with the overall sound of the ensemble.

An encounter with bebop, and a nod to [Joe Henderson](#), features an understated, but ripe, Rupert entangled with a full-on and filthy Garzone, on a superbly arranged version of "Without A Song." Drexler, Morell, and Allen shine again and are responsible for their propensity of creating space in which the tenors roam free to push boundaries and pay it forward. "The Shadow of Your Smile" has long been considered a contemporary classic, but not necessarily a jazz tune. Morell and Allen set a mood and tempo here that paves the way for the two tenors to imaginatively express the well-known and lusciously romantic melody. Unexpectedly, this arrangement personifies the core representation of jazz that can be enjoyed in a leisurely fashion or listened to more distinctly with its enclave of purposeful note selections and changes that are in abundance throughout the record.

The lush magic of [Sarah Vaughan](#) is sweetly reimagined with "Detour Ahead." A ballad that Vaughan brought both attention and her singular grace. Here it is embraced with fluidity and textured with tranquility. When "The Red Door"—composed and originally swung by [Gerry Mulligan](#) and [Zoot Sims](#)—is reopened, you are welcomed into a redecorated home with an all new swing set. Rupert and Garzone bring their own oil to the hinges and swing freely. "The Red Door" is followed by [Lionel Hampton](#)'s "Red Top." This bop is a defining moment in Rupert's and Garzone's willingness and ability to stay in their own lanes, then light up together at the intersections. Drexler adroitly exudes the Hampton vibe on his keys.

A trip to "Hoboken" comes along. The Rupert-penned tune lends itself to the innate synchronicity of the quintet. Played with verve, it lends itself to the old "that's a real toe tapper" phrase. Co-written by Rupert and [Veronica Swift](#), "Beauty Becomes Her" was first heard, with Swift providing the vocal, on Rupert's record *Let's Sail Away* (Rupe Media, 2017). This instrumental take has the warmth and tenderness of Garzone's and Rupert's lines evoking the lazy afternoon sun spawning into the shimmering glow of the sunset.

[Wayne Shorter](#)'s moving homage to Lester Young, "Lester Left Town," was clearly an appropriate choice based on the theme of this project. It turned out to be an even more appropriate finale for the quintet, in that they brought their own heart and sensibilities to the fore. In the end, Garzone and Rupert are "Alone Together," sans the trio, and have a private and learned conversation with some accomplished vocabulary you won't find in your *Funk & Wagnalls*.

## Track Listing

Bahia; Go-Go; Stardust; Without a Song; The Shadow of Your Smile; Detour Ahead; The Red Door; Red Top; Hoboken: Beauty Becomes Her; Lester Left Town; Alone Together.

## Personnel

[Jeff Rupert](#): saxophone, alto; [George Garzone](#): saxophone, tenor; [Richard Drexler](#): piano; [Marty Morell](#): drums; [Jeremy Allen](#): bass.



<https://www.allaboutjazz.com/the-ripple-jeff-rupert-george-garzone-rupe-media>

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## BLUE NOTES

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# President's Improv



By Carla Hays

This has been an extremely disappointing and devastating year for all of us. So many have suffered the loss of a friend or loved one. So many have suffered financial distress and job loss. We all miss spending time with our families and friends. None of us enjoy wearing masks and not being able to live our lives as we have been accustomed to doing. I, for one, miss my children, grandchildren, and close friends, dining out, going to the theater and movies and live concerts, especially our monthly Sunday concerts. I've joked with friends that my dishwasher has never had such a work-out and neither has my icemaker. Gene and I enjoy our nightly *Quarantinis!*

We did have our December concert on the 13th. It was fabulous! Greg Parnell put together a program celebrating a number of famous musicians that would have turned 100 this year. They were Peggy Lee, Carmen McRae, Dave Brubeck, George Duvivier, Shelly Manne, and Charlie Parker - good stuff!! Greg was on the drums, Greg Zabel on bass and Bob Thornton on piano. Michelle Mailhot and Charlie Russo each performed 6 songs. We were so fortunate to have had five of the best musicians on the planet performing for us. Because of COVID and social distancing we were limited to 32 guests per show. We did two shows, one at 3:00 and one at 6:00. We were not sold out, but almost. Melody and Chris Cortez were so kind and generous to us! They did not charge us for use of the Blue Bamboo, and we got all the proceeds from the ticket sales. We're grateful!

Now some more good news! We are going to resume our monthly concerts from January through May. We will be limited again to 32 guests and we'll only do one show at 3:00. The schedule is January 10, February 7, March 14, April 11, and May 16. It's very safe. Every couple has a table. If you're a family of four, you have a table. And if you're single, you have a table. Everyone has a table, and they are spread across the entire room, far enough apart and far enough away from the band. Everyone wears masks except when seated at their own tables. I don't have the line-up yet as to who will be performing since this has just become a reality. I can promise you that Greg Parnell is working on it and that we'll present outstanding musicians and concerts. We'll send out email blasts to keep you informed.

It's December 21<sup>st</sup>, so by the time you read this most of the holiday season will have passed. I hope you all had a wonderful time celebrating Christmas or Hanukkah or whatever you celebrate. My board and I wish you a happy, healthy, safe and (old) NORMAL New Year. We look forward to seeing you soon.

Take care, stay safe, and God bless you!

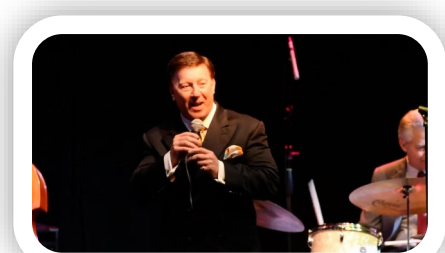
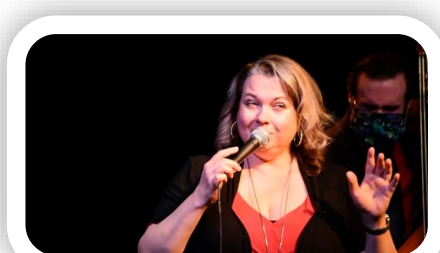
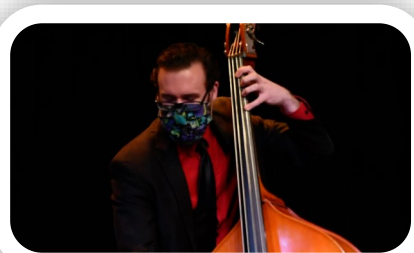
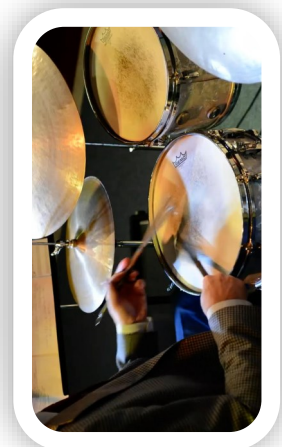
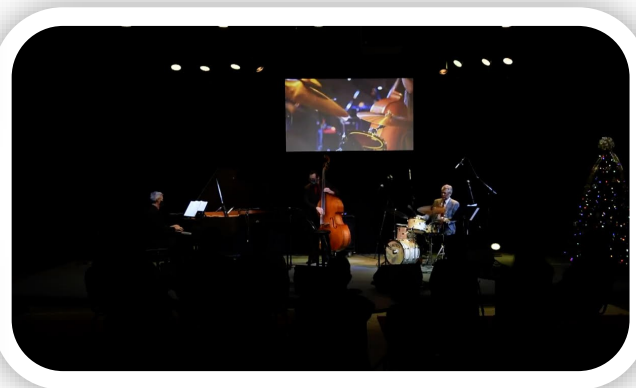
Cheers, Carla

# Blue Bamboo Center For the Arts

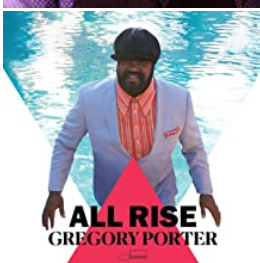


DECEMBER 13, 2020 CFJS CONCERT

Concert photos courtesy of Chris and Melody Cortez



## Top of the Charts!



### KEY NUMBERS

- 250,000 festival-goers
- 16 days of Festival
- 380 concerts, 250 of which are free
- 11 stages, 6 of which are free
- 55 bars and stands

The Montreux Jazz Festival takes place for two weeks every summer in Switzerland, on the shores of Lake Geneva. Created in 1967 by Claude Nobs, the Montreux Jazz Festival has become over the years an essential event, generating fantastic stories and legendary performances.

Nearly 250,000 spectators come to the Festival every year, enjoying a breathtaking setting, concerts with renowned acoustics and many free stages.

With its ambitious programming choices, musical diversity and warm welcome, the Montreux Jazz Festival offers a privileged experience to musicians and the public.

In Montreux, the artists are up close and personal with their fans, which encourages deeply memorable, and even legendary, moments. Here, music is experienced in a truly unique fashion, further enhanced by exceptional comfort and acoustics.

The Montreux Jazz Festival, a platform for creative freedom and encounters, is a one-of-a-kind playground for the artists. Some of them completely re-think their concerts just for Montreux, while others shine at the Festival's legendary jam sessions and offer fascinating workshops.

In its 50 years history, Montreux has hosted iconic performances by artists including **Nina Simone, Miles Davis, Aretha Franklin, Ella Fitzgerald, Marvin Gaye, Prince, Leonard Cohen, David Bowie, Elton John** and **Stevie Wonder**. Deep Purple and Prince even helped to write the legend of the place in their songs, while David Bowie and Freddie Mercury came to live in the region and record albums.

### 50 YEARS OF MUSIC DIGITIZED

From the very beginning, the Festival's founder Claude Nobs has recorded all its concerts using the latest technologies. Under the guidance of the [Claude Nobs Foundation](#), this unique collection of audiovisual archives has been recognized by **UNESCO's Memory of the World Register**. Through a partnership with EPFL, the archives, including more than 11'000 hours of live music, have been entirely preserved and digitalized since 2017.

*"This archive is the most important testimonial to the history of music, covering jazz, blues and rock."*

**Quincy Jones**



# The 2021 Grammy Nominations In Jazz Announced

<https://jazzbuffalo.org/2020/11/24/the-2021-grammy-nominations-in-jazz-announced/>

Nominating categories for jazz music includes categories for improvised jazz solo, jazz vocals, jazz instrumentals, jazz large ensemble, and Latin Jazz.

Nominations are reflective of recordings released between Oct. 1, 2019, and Aug. 31, 2020.

The nominations include familiar names in jazz such as Chick Corea, Joshua Redman, and Kurt Elling. They also include newer nominees in breakout projects such as Thana Alexa, Gerald Clayton, and Orrin Evans.

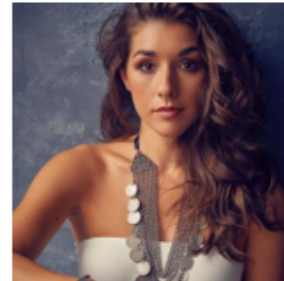
**Winners of the 2021 63rd Grammy Awards will be announced on Sunday, January 31, 2021. The awards show will air on CBS at 8 pm ET.**



*Chick Corea*

## Best Improvised Jazz Solo

- GUINEVERE  
Christian Scott Atunde Adjuah, soloist  
Track from: Axiom
- PACHAMAMA  
Regina Carter, soloist  
Track from: Ona (Thana Alexa)
- CELIA  
Gerald Clayton, soloist
- ALL BLUES  
Chick Corea, soloist  
Track from: Trilogy 2 (Chick Corea, Christian McBride & Brian Blade)
- MOE HONK  
Joshua Redman, soloist  
Track from: RoundAgain (Redman Mehlau McBride Blade)



*Thana Alexa*

## Best Jazz Vocal Album

- ONA  
Thana Alexa
- SECRETS ARE THE BEST STORIES  
Kurt Elling Featuring Danilo Pérez
- MODERN ANCESTORS  
Carmen Lundy
- HOLY ROOM: LIVE AT ALTE OPER  
Somi With Frankfurt Radio Big Band
- WHAT'S THE HURRY  
Kenny Washington



*Terri Lyne Carrington*

### **Best Jazz Instrumental Album**

- ON THE TENDER SPOT OF EVERY CALLOUSED MOMENT  
Ambrose Akinmusire
- WAITING GAME  
Terri Lyne Carrington And Social Science
- HAPPENING: LIVE AT THE VILLAGE VANGUARD  
Gerald Clayton
- TRILOGY 2  
Chick Corea, Christian McBride & Brian Blade
- ROUNDAGAIN  
Redman Mehldau McBride Blade



*Orrin Evans*

### **Best Large Jazz Ensemble Album**

- DIALOGUES ON RACE  
Gregg August
- MONK’ESTRA PLAYS JOHN BEASLEY  
John Beasley
- THE INTANGIBLE BETWEEN  
Orrin Evans And The Captain Black Big Band
- SONGS YOU LIKE A LOT  
John Hollenbeck With Theo Bleckmann, Kate McGarry, Gary Versace And The Frankfurt Radio Big Band
- DATA LORDS  
Maria Schneider Orchestra



*Arturo O’Farrill*

### **Best Latin Jazz Album**

- TRADICIONES  
Afro-Peruvian Jazz Orchestra
- FOUR QUESTIONS  
Arturo O’Farrill & The Afro Latin Jazz Orchestra
- CITY OF DREAMS  
Chico Pinheiro
- VIENTO Y TIEMPO – LIVE AT BLUE NOTE TOKYO  
Gonzalo Rubalcaba & Aymée Nuviola
- TRANE’S DELIGHT  
Poncho Sanchez



*Christian Sands*

### **Best Instrumental Composition**

- BABY JACK  
Arturo O’Farrill, composer (Arturo O’Farrill & The Afro Latin Jazz Orchestra)
- BE WATER II  
Christian Sands, composer (Christian Sands)
- PLUMFIELD  
Alexandre Desplat, composer (Alexandre Desplat)
- SPUTNIK  
Maria Schneider, composer (Maria Schneider)
- STRATA  
Remy Le Boeuf, composer (Remy Le Boeuf’s Assembly Of Shadows Featuring Anna Webber & Eric Miller)



John Beasley

### Best Arrangement, Instrumental or A Cappella

- BATHROOM DANCE  
Hildur Guðnadóttir, arranger (Hildur Guðnadóttir)
- DONNA LEE  
John Beasley, arranger (John Beasley)
- HONEYMOONERS  
Remy Le Boeuf, arranger (Remy Le Boeuf's Assembly Of Shadows)
- LIFT EVERY VOICE AND SING  
Alvin Chea & Jarrett Johnson, arrangers (Jarrett Johnson Featuring Alvin Chea)
- URANUS: THE MAGICIAN  
Jeremy Levy, arranger (Jeremy Levy Jazz Orchestra)



### Best Contemporary Instrumental Album

- AXIOM  
Christian Scott Atunde Adjuah
- CHRONOLOGY OF A DREAM: LIVE AT THE VILLAGE VANGUARD  
Jon Batiste
- TAKE THE STAIRS  
Black Violin
- AMERICANA  
Grégoire Maret, Romain Collin & Bill Frisell
- LIVE AT THE ROYAL ALBERT HALL  
Snarky Puppy



Jacob Collier

### Best Arrangement, Instruments and Vocals

- ASAS FECHADAS  
John Beasley & Maria Mendes, arrangers (Maria Mendes Featuring John Beasley & Orkest Metropole)
- DESERT SONG  
Erin Bentlage, Sara Gazarek, Johnaye Kendrick & Amanda Taylor, arrangers (Säje)
- FROM THIS PLACE  
Alan Broadbent & Pat Metheny, arrangers (Pat Metheny Featuring Meshell Ndegeocello)
- HE WON'T HOLD YOU  
Jacob Collier, arranger (Jacob Collier Featuring Rapsody)
- SLOW BURN  
Talia Billig, Nic Hard & Becca Stevens, arrangers (Becca Stevens Featuring Jacob Collier, Mark Lettieri, Justin Stanton, Jordan Perlson, Nic Hard, Keita Ogawa, Marcelo Woloski & Nate Werth)



Jan 14, 2021 7:30 pm Terry Theater Jacksonville, FL	Jan 24, 2021 2:00 pm Winter Haven Fine Arts Theatre Winter Haven, FL
Jan 16, 2021 8:00 pm Banyan Bowl Miami, FL	Jan 26, 2021 7:00 pm Naval Air Museum Pensacola, FL
Jan 21, 2021 7:30 pm Central Park PAC Largo, FL	Jan 27, 2021 7:00 pm Chipley High School Chipley, FL





# **n p r** Micah Thomas

## Is A Jazz Pianist With A Lot Of Runway

August 10, 2020 5:00 AM ET

Heard on [Morning Edition](#)

<https://www.npr.org/2020/08/10/900582409/micah-thomas-is-a-jazz-pianist-with-a-lot-of-runway>



Every now and again, a young jazz musician turns up out of nowhere to take the whole scene by surprise, and then by storm. That's exactly what we're seeing right now from Micah Thomas.

*(Courtesy of the artist)*

Pianist Micah Thomas is having the jazz equivalent of a standout rookie season. Just within the last several weeks, he finished his graduate studies at Juilliard and released a terrifically assured debut album called *Tide*.

It introduces an artist of superb technical facility, along with something even more striking — a deep understanding of the sprawling lineage of modern jazz piano and a youthful determination not to get caught retracing anybody's steps.

Another sign that Micah Thomas is a hot name right now: He keeps showing up as a sideman. Take *Omega*, the new album by saxophonist Immanuel Wilkins, just out on Blue Note Records. All you need is a taste of this music to understand what a catalyst Thomas is within the band, and how explosive he can be as a soloist.

Thomas is a dynamo at the piano, but he has an introvert's demeanor; his is a quiet, centered self-confidence. Some of this may have to do with his upbringing, far from the bustle of any major jazz scene.

"I think because I grew up in Ohio and because the way I approached music wasn't very social, I kind of developed a lot of my stuff relatively by myself, compared to other people," he says. "So by the time I had gotten to New York, I kind of had some pretty concrete ideas of what I wanted to do. And for that reason, I think Juilliard was great for me."

There, Thomas had access to teachers like pianist [Frank Kimbrough](#), who quickly recognized his talent. He's also been mentored by the likes of Sullivan Fortner and other artists who were pretty recently hailed as young phenoms themselves.

On a sharp recent release called *In Common 2*, Thomas is the featured young blood alongside players like guitarist [Matthew Stevens](#), saxophonist [Walter Smith III](#) and bassist [Linda May Han Oh](#).

Whatever the setting, there's a remarkable fluidity in Thomas's playing, a sense of expansive possibility met by lightning reflexes. In many ways, he's still developing his sound. But there's already a core principle in place: a spirit of surprise.

"One of the things I want to do in my playing is create the idea that anything could happen," Thomas says. "And so, I've worked a lot on trying to implement many different types of textures while I'm playing, and working on approaching moments in different ways with the rest of the band."

And you can hear that interaction with his trio on his debut album, *Tide*. But it's also clearly a snapshot of a musician with a lot of runway ahead. That's a really exciting prospect, as well as a reassurance that jazz is still in good hands.





The Jazz Orchestra at Dr. Phillips Center

## Let Freedom Ring

Jazz and the Civil Rights Movement  
Presented by Fifth Third Bank

January 15, 2021 | Frontyard Festival™, Presented by AdventHealth



Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra Presents

## Gershwin!

January 30, 2021 | Frontyard Festival™, Presented by  
AdventHealth



<https://www.nojazzfest.com/>



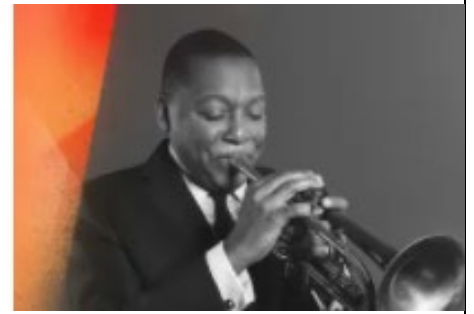
Fri May 14, 2021 8:00 PM  
Parker Playhouse  
Ft Lauderdale, FL

The Manhattan Transfer

Dr. Phillips Center Presents

## Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra Septet with Wynton Marsalis

May 21, 2021 | Frontyard Festival™, Presented by AdventHealth



*The jazz festival with soul!*

*Our 28th annual Capital Jazz Fest has been rescheduled for June 4-6, 2021. Stay tuned for more details in early 2021. We hope to see you on the other side of the pandemic!*

**FESTIVAL INTERNATIONAL  
DE JAZZ DE MONTRÉAL**

**June 25 - July 3, 2021 41st Edition**

Claimed to be the world's largest jazz festival, Montreal Jazz Festival has brought some of the best jazz acts to Canada for over 40 years. Spanning over 10 days, the festival includes free outdoor concerts at both indoor/outdoor venues. Because of its location in French-speaking Montreal, the festival maintains strong ties to France and features French artists along with a diverse lineup of jazz acts from across North America.

The artists have yet to be announced.



## Fort Adams State Park

Fort Adams is located at **90 Fort Adams Drive, Newport, RI**. One of the park system's national treasures, Fort Adams is situated at the mouth of Newport Harbor with panoramic views of the Newport Bridge and the East Passage. The festival at the Fort features 4 stages of music, food & crafts, two beer & wine gardens and a number of displays. The festival runs rain or shine.

<https://www.newportjazz.org/2021-newport-jazz-festival>

Capital Jazz presents

# The SuperCruise XIV<sup>SM</sup>

*"Nobody rocks the boat like Capital Jazz!"*

**14th Annual SuperCruise**  
**January 14 - 22, 2022**  
**Full-Ship Music Festival at Sea**

*8 days and nights of jazz, soul,  
comedy, gospel, and funk!*

<https://www.capitaljazz.com/supercruise/2022/>

## Blue Bamboo Center For the Arts

HOME CALENDAR ARCHIVES CONTACT RENTALS GALLERY RECORDING SERVICES MEDIA COVERAGE  
OUR LOCATION

<https://bluebambooartcenter.com/>



They are looking at potential ways to offer live music again. When it does become available, they will post the music schedule here:

<https://www.eddiev.com/live-music>



<https://heidisjazzclub.com/calendar/month>



<https://www.jazz.org/events/2020-21-season/>



<https://jazztastings.com/landing-page-new/new-events/>

Jazz Tastings posts their performance schedule the last week of the prior month.





# The Shape of Jazz to Come: Artists to Watch

by BRIAN ZIMMERMAN

<https://www.jazziz.com/the-shape-of-jazz-to-come-artists-to-watch-in-2019/>

Jazz thrives on regeneration and invention, which means that each new year brings a new opportunity for artists to extend the tradition, challenge norms, make new connections and push the music into unforeseen territory.

Here are 19 artists we think will take jazz to new heights. Some have been on the scene for a while; others you should get to know. Young and visionary, they're all linked by a desire to move the music forward, tugging the tradition along with them. Want to get a sense for where jazz is headed? Follow these players.

	<p><b>Joel Ross, vibes</b></p> <p>This Chicago native has worked alongside a host of seasoned vets, from Herbie Hancock and Christian McBride to Jon Batiste and Ambrose Akinmusire. But as he proved on his 2018 release <i>Good Vibes</i>, he's a dauntless leader in his own right, one of those rare musicians whose presence elevates the players around him. Plus, he's got quick hands, an adventurous ear, and a knack for blurring lines.</p>
	<p><b>Roxy Coss, saxophone</b></p> <p>Saxophonist Roxy Coss' recent album <i>The Future Is Female</i> captivated listening audiences in 2018. And for good reason. Not only did the album showcase Coss' fluid improvisational style and grand compositional vision, but it also positioned the saxophonist as a powerful advocate for inclusion in the jazz world. Coss is the founder of the <a href="#">Women in Jazz Organization</a>, which was founded in 2017 to promote equality and solidarity within the scene. The aim, says Coss, is for "women and non-binary people [to] have equal opportunity to participate in and contribute to Jazz, leading to an improved and more rich, diverse, and successful art form." Her voice — as an artist and champion of inclusion — is as important as ever.</p>
	<p><b>Theo Croker, trumpet</b></p> <p>Theo Croker has been generating momentum in the jazz world for a while, but 2019 may prove the year he blasts through the stratosphere. In March, the trumpeter is slated to release a new album, <i>Star People Nation</i>, that will find applying his irrepressibly hip, funk-flavored aesthetic to the role of producer, songwriter and performer. Never one to shy away from issues of social justice, Croker calls his new album "a self-reflective collection of provocative, powerfully-passionate and boundary-busting compositions that speak to our greater, shared human existence."</p>
	<p><b>Maria Grand, tenor saxophone</b></p> <p>Swiss-born saxophonist Maria Grand is a standout among the cohort of young artists blazing trails in the avant-garde jazz scene. In 2012, at age 20, she was the youngest musician selected to perform in a tribute to NEA Jazz Master Von Freeman, and in 2013 she landed a coveted spot at the Newport Jazz Festival. Her full-length leader debut, <i>Magdalena</i>, was released on Biophilia Records in 2018. Featuring her dauntless ensemble Diatribe and tackling subjects ranging from mythology to family relationships, the album positioned Grand as an improviser of piercing insight and a composer of vast ambition.</p>



### Adam O'Farrill, trumpet

Trumpeter Adam O'Farrill was born in Brooklyn to Latin-jazz royalty — his father is Grammy-winning pianist [Arturo O'Farrill](#), and his grandfather is legendary Afro-Cuban composer Chico O'Farrill — but the acclaim he's built as a performer and bandleader is entirely his own. Adam's group Stranger Days released its first album in 2016, and while the disc was a magnet for critical praise, it was Adam's highly idiosyncratic playing that turned the most heads. His tone is warm and flame-kissed, and his brilliant improvisations employ a vast and refreshingly unconventional jazz vocabulary. Years from now, this a cat that other trumpet players will be trying to emulate.



### Veronica Swift, vocals

Veronica Swift is a vocalist possessing that rare combination of grand vision and exquisite technique. Her style encompasses nearly every page of the jazz songbook, from Dixieland to bebop and beyond. She's performed at the Telluride Jazz Festival a staggering 10 times — her first coming at only 10 years old — and in 2015 came in second place in that year's Thelonious Monk International Vocal Competition. In 2019, she is slated to release an album on Mack Avenue Records. Expect ample radiance and poise.



### Lakecia Benjamin, saxophone

Born and raised in New York City, saxophonist Lakecia Benjamin came to jazz from the angle of funk and soul. She was reared on the music of James Brown, The Meters and Sly and the Family Stone, and as she set out on her own in the music world, she brought those influences with her, mixing them the prodigious jazz chops she acquired as a student at Fiorello LaGuardia High School and The New School. As a performer, she's shared the stage with the likes Stevie Wonder, The Roots and Macy Gray. More recently, she can be seen as a featured saxophonist in vocalist Gregory Porter's ensemble. The new year will find her touring behind her powerful 2018 album, *Rise Up*, while plotting her next step as a recording artist.



### Emmet Cohen, piano

Starting in 2017, pianist Emmet Cohen set out on a mission to [build bridges](#) between jazz generations. His method: the *Jazz Masters Legacy Series*, a collection of albums in which he invites jazz legends to record alongside his trio of abundantly skilled young artists. The first in the series featured drummer Jimmy Cobb (of Miles Davis' *Kind of Blue* fame). The second featured bass legend Ron Carter. Soon, Cohen will release even more installments in the series, including an edition with saxophone luminary Benny Golson.



### Nubya Garcia, saxophone

Jazz of a polyphonic, multidisciplinary sort is having its day in the U.K., and London-based saxophonist Nubya Garcia is one of the reasons why. Her invigorating brand of Caribbean-flavored jazz has made her a superstar on the local scene, and as an accompanist, she's been a crucial voice in groups led by drummer Moses Boyd and electronic-music producer Congo Natty. More revelatory, however, are her leader projects — including the six-piece ensemble Maisha, the Nérija septet and the group featured on her latest album, *Nubya's Five* — which reveal her to be a player whose sound alone can ignite a scorching groove.



### Linda May Han Oh, bass

Linda May Han Oh's album debut *Entry*, from 2009, put the bassist on the map as a player with an enchanting combination of technical skill and musical insight. It wasn't long before she was sharing the stage with artists like Vijay Iyer and Dave Douglas. Critical acclaim came fast and furious. In 2010, she was named the No. 1 Rising Star Acoustic Bassist in DownBeat Magazine's Critics' Poll, and later that year she received second place at the BASS2010 Competition in Berlin. Currently, she's touring the world with Pat Metheny's quartet, and a release by this group is expected soon.



### **Nick Finzer, trombone**

Trombonist Nick Finzer is changing the jazz landscape from within its own borders. In addition to leading his own bands in and around New York City and teaching at the University of North Texas, he also founded and runs [Outside In Music](#), an artist-focused label and media company that seeks to build a community of forward-thinking artists who are passionate about sharing their music with the world. This year's release schedule is full of promise and ambition, and you can bet you'll be hearing more from Finzer in the months ahead.



### **Michael Mayo, vocals**

In late 2018, vocalist Michael Mayo closed out a South American tour with Herbie Hancock, impressing international audiences with his towering vocal range, crystal-clear articulation and expert use of electronics (his [solo version of Coltrane's "Giant Steps,"](#) in which accompanies himself via vocal loops, is simply mind-boggling). He finished the year by releasing a video single, ["20/20,"](#) on which he applied his silk-lined voice in the service of a groove flavored by R&B and neo-soul. He'll also have a track on the forthcoming Kneebody EP *By Fire*, due out in May on Edition records. Expect big things from this impeccable young vocalist.



### **Justin Brown, drums**

Justin Brown's palette as a drummer includes almost every shade of the jazz spectrum. For years, he served as the percussionist in trumpeter Ambrose Akinmusire's groundbreaking left-of-center jazz ensemble, and more recently occupied the drum chair behind crossover phenom Thundercat, painting vibrant rhythmic streaks onto the bassist's wall of R&B-inflected sound. His 2018 album *NYEUSI* (Biophilia) was among [the year's best](#), a jazz-rap hybrid project full of thronging synth grooves and pulse-quickenning drum beats. Watch him take his game to the next level in 2019.



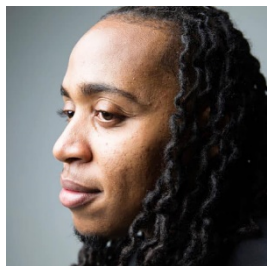
### **Arianna Neikrug, vocals**

Vocalist Arianna Neikrug emerged, white-hot, on the jazz scene in 2015, propelled by her victory in that year's Sarah Vaughan International Jazz Vocal Competition. The following year, she performed a critically praised set at the Montreal Jazz Festival, and in August 2018 she released her debut album, *Changes*, on the Concord Jazz label. She's already a vital presence on the New York jazz scene, but 2019 is squaring up to be a big year, as the vocalist continues to tour and hone material for a new album. Of the fresh batch of vocalists cropping up on today's scene, no one [interprets a lyric](#) quite like her.



### **Alfredo Rodriguez, piano**

Alfredo Rodriguez was born in Cuba to a musical family — his father was a popular singer and TV host. As a child, he studied classical piano at some of his country's finest musical institutions, while playing popular music in his father's orchestra by night. While performing at the Montreux Jazz Festival in 2006, he was discovered by the legendary Quincy Jones, who would become his mentor and set him on a path toward international acclaim. Beginning in 2012, the pianist released four sterling albums on Mack Avenue Records, each as captivating as the next. His latest project, *Duologue*, is an intimate project with Cuban percussionist Pedrito Martinez, full of bristling musical ideas and scintillating rhythms. It should set the course for an exciting year of touring.



### **Jamison Ross, drums/vocals**

Drummer Jamison Ross' astounding musical versatility helped propel him to victory in the 2012 Thelonious Monk International Jazz Drum Competition, for which he was awarded a recording contract with Concord Records. His debut album, 2015's *Jamison*, proved just how versatile he truly was. That's because Ross used the album as an opportunity to showcase not only his astute drumming but also his tremendous ability as a vocalist, a talent that few in the jazz world knew he possessed but were all too glad to discover. (It was subsequently nominated for a Grammy Award for Best Jazz Vocal Album.) Ross' singing has since become a primary vehicle for his artistic expression, and his follow-up album, *All For One*, proved once again just how eloquent he can be behind the mic.



### Samora Pinderhughes, keyboards

In recent years, keyboardist Samora Pinderhughes has established himself as an artist willing to take on today's most pressing social issues. His monumental 2016 album *The Transformations Suite* was an important reminder of jazz's power as a form of protest. And in 2018, he was the first-ever recipient of the Arts for Justice + Soros Justice Fellowship, given in support of his upcoming suite *The Healing Project*, a series of compositions that examine life in environments of high violence, pulling together stories of people who are forced to deal with trauma every day. More recently, he received a Chamber Music of America New Jazz Works Grant for an untitled work to be premiered in 2019. Like everyone on this list, he's an important voice in jazz. Make sure you're listening.

*Editor's Note: Though this article was published in 2019, I felt it was still relevant to mention these jazz artists.*



## International Jazz Day, April 30, 2021

Today, Jazz has spread all over the globe, and is constantly evolving, being influenced by, and influencing, other musical forms and genres.

Each 30 April has been celebrated as International Jazz Day since 2012 with an All-Star Global Concert where dozens of the world's most famous jazz musicians perform. The host city for this event varies from year to year, but the concert centers on some sort of historical landmark.

International Jazz Day is the brainchild of American jazz pianist, composer, and UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador for Intercultural Dialogues, Herbie Hancock. The purpose of the initiative was to focus global attention on the role that jazz has played in breaking down race and gender barriers around the world, and in promoting cooperation, mutual understanding, and communication, peace, and freedom.



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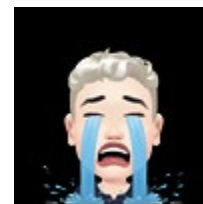
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Golden Patron	\$300 Single	\$500 Couple
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## Welcome New Members!



## Members Who Renewed

Ron Berti  
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Michael & Sheila Kramer	Mary Uithoven
Moe Lowe	Gregory Winters
Sonja Marchesano	

### MESSAGE FROM THE MEMBERSHIP TABLE

Many people have told me they no longer wish to receive the printed copy of the Blue Notes – they are enjoying the colorful version online each quarter! If you would like to discontinue the mailed version, call or send me an email and I'll be glad to make that change.

Have you lost your membership card? Is something misspelled or incorrect? Are you not receiving your requested Blue Notes newsletter or monthly phone message from Carla Hays? (Carla sends a message at least once a month before each concert.)

Have a suggestion or question?

**Mary Uithoven can help:**  
**407-719-0521 or CFJSMemberships@gmail.com**

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# NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS JAZZ MASTERS



*National Endowment For The Arts*

## 2021 NEA JAZZ MASTERS TRIBUTE CONCERT

THU, APR 22 2021 | 5:00 PM | Live Streaming

Watch online Thursday, April 22, 2021 at 5 PM PT (8 PM ET) from [arts.gov](https://www.arts.gov) and [sfjazz.org](https://www.sfjazz.org). This is a **free event**.

The National Endowment for the Arts, in collaboration with SFJAZZ, will host a special free online-only concert in honor of the 2021 NEA Jazz Masters—**Terri Lyne Carrington**, **Albert "Tootie" Heath**, **Henry Threadgill** and **Phil Schaap**. As with the 2020 Tribute Concert, the 2021 event will be a streamed virtual presentation featuring a stellar assemblage of jazz greats performing together in tribute to this year's group of honorees. The host, music director, and participating artists will be announced over the coming weeks.

The 2021 NEA Jazz Masters Tribute Concert will broadcast at 5:00 PM PT/8:00 PM ET from [arts.gov](https://www.arts.gov) and [SFJAZZ.org](https://www.sfjazz.org). A full list of broadcast partners will be announced at a later date.

An archive of the concert will be available following the event at [arts.gov](https://www.arts.gov).

You can join in the conversation on Twitter using the hashtag #NEAJazz21.

### **Honoring**

**Terri Lyne Carrington** drummer, composer, educator & producer

**Albert "Tootie" Heath** percussionist, educator

**Henry Threadgill** saxophonist, flautist, composer

**Phil Schaap** archivist, educator, historian, and jazz radio host, recipient of the 2021 A.B. Spellman NEA Jazz Masters Fellowship for Jazz Advocacy