

EARSHOT JAZZ

A Mirror and Focus for the Jazz Community

November 2020 Vol. 36, No. 11
Seattle, Washington



SassyBlack

Photo by Texas Isaiah



Paying for Change

At this writing, the 2020 Earshot Jazz Festival is solidly underway, and, while we're concentrating on the quality of our pivot to streaming concerts online, the sound and spirit of the music is stronger and more satisfying than ever. Each day's festival events have testified to the overall importance of the arts in daily life, and the essential role that artists play as "instruments" of creative spirit, guides to deeper beauty, and stewards of cultural treasures.

It's been especially gratifying this year to focus on Ahamfule J. Oluo as our featured resident artists. Aham first came to the Earshot Jazz festivals in the late 1990's as an eager student volunteer, whose abundance of initiative and proximity to festival artists drew him into personal conversations with jazz legends that would inspire his own artistic path. It has been gratifying for us to witness his evolution as a truly distinctive artist.

The Earshot Jazz organization has been supporting the growing legacy of Seattle's jazz community for over 35 years; one relationship at a time. Whether documenting the scene with the Earshot Jazz magazine, assisting individual artists with career advancement, promoting the art form through creative collaborations, supporting jazz education programs, or presenting one-of-a-kind concert experiences like those in this year's festival, Earshot is in it for the long haul. We appreciate your support in making that possible.

But, while Jazz is stronger than ever, the good health of American society is less evident. Divisiveness and conflict have become the order of the day, even around fundamental truths such as human equality and public health. The every-day challenges that we all face are exacerbated by politics and big biz that seem to thrive on disinformation, disrespect, and disconnection. It's "divide and conquer," without the conquer part. And our imposed isolation just makes it more acute.

We join you all in the struggle for positive change. But, even if we achieve needed changes in the political landscape, the deep scars of division between people are not likely to begin healing overnight. I believe we can make the changes, but we'll have to get it together. There is no "us and them." There's only us. And if we are each one of the 8 billion interconnected cells that comprise the whole organism of humankind, why would we even consider turning away from love?

Stay strong. Stay healthy. Stay inspired.

—John Gilbreath, Executive Director



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NOTES



In Memoriam: Philip Snyder

Philip Snyder, local jazz drummer passed away on the 13th of October. Snyder whose father played jazz guitar in a big band, took his inspiration rather from smaller combos and bebop. One of his biggest influences was drummer Shelly Manne. When Snyder was 18, he got a taste for performing when he played at a University District jazz hub, the coffeehouse named The Queequeg. Other early influences in Snyder's music were Bill Evans, Miles Davis, and John Coltrane. In the early 90's Snyder formed a quintet which showcased contemporary music, including improvised original collective works. Band members included bassist Steve Luceno, saxophonists Rich Cole and Hans Teuber, and pianist John Hansen. The band performed at the Bellevue Jazz Festival, and at Jazz Alley.

In Memoriam: Overton Berry

The beloved Seattle pianist, Overton Berry, passed away in his sleep on the night of October 18. Throughout his career, Berry worked extensively in Seattle, across the Pacific Northwest and in venues word wide. With this sad news arriving just at press time, we are making plans for a memorial article in next month's issue.

Mayor's 2021 Budget Priorities and ARTS

On September 29, Mayor Jenny A. Durkan released her 2021 Proposed Budget. With a more than \$300 million dollar shortfall in the City budget, funding to the arts will be impacted. The office of Arts and Culture (ARTS) is funded by Admission Tax revenue. Currently that Admission Tax budget is based on revenue collected two years prior. It's expected that due to the lack of events in Seattle

in 2020 because of COVID-19, the department could face significant cuts. In an effort to address that shortfall, from 2022, the ART's Admission Tax budget will appropriate tax based on collections in the same year. The 2021 Proposed Budget, reduces ARTS' Admissions Tax expenditures by \$1.5 million. Two of the larger reductions include a \$500,000 cut in the Cultural Facilities Fund Grants program and a \$237,000 reduction in Seattle Park District funding for arts and cultural activities in parks. The City Council is currently reviewing the proposed budget, and final adoption of the budget is expected on Monday, November 23. Details in the budget can be found at seattle.gov/budget

JazzEd's Virtual Protest Songs Project Postponed

JazzEd's Virtual Protest Songs Project which was to have begun in the week of October 19th has been postponed till January 2021. The online music classes which will run for ten weeks are designed for grades 6–12 and are open to students anywhere in the country. Protest songs from Janelle Monáe, Nina Simone, Marvin Gaye, Charles Mingus, and Billie Holiday will be taught to students. For details visit seattlejazzed.org

Keep Music Live

Keep Music Live is a Washington state-wide initiative designed to raise funds to assist independent music venues during the state-mandated COVID-19 venue shutdowns. Created by live music lovers in Washington, the initiative is fiscally sponsored by the Whatcom Community Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization. Donations are tax deductible. For information see keepmusiclivewa.com

SassyBlack: Forging Ahead



SASSYBLACK SCREEN CAPTURE FROM SPACE DAZE BEAT CRAZE LIVESTREAM

Jonathan Shipley

“Doing anything,” SassyBlack says is what she’s most proud of lately. “Doing anything,” she says emphatically. The pandemic has wreaked havoc on all of us—SassyBlack included. This isn’t to say the hard-working femme artist hasn’t done a lot (she has). There are even a handful of silver linings that she’s discovered during the COVID sequestering we’ve all endured.

Formerly of THEESatisfaction (the second hip hop group signed by Sub Pop), SassyBlack will be part of the 2020 Earshot Jazz Festival offering up

a playlist as part of their series Sunday Morning Playlists. At the start of the pandemic she collaborated with Artist Trust to share ideas on live streaming. In June she was mentioned in Medium’s Zora (a publication that amplifies the voices of women of color), as one of “Ten Under-the-Radar Artists to Listen to Now.” In September, she was part of Northwest Film Forums’ Local Sighting Program. She’s soon to undertake an online jazz song writing class for Hugo House. COVID isn’t slowing her down, in other words.

Multifaceted, known for psychedelic soul and hologram funk, her music has

been featured on Adult Swim and the BET series *Twenties*. She’s also acted in Comedy Central’s *Broad City* and was on HBO’s *Vinyl*, a series created, in part, by Mick Jagger and Martin Scorsese. A Seattle native, she graduated from Cornish College of the Arts, and has been compared to such luminaries as Sarah Vaughan and Erykah Badu.

She’s her own person though and is continually evolving. “The pandemic has pushed me into the artist I desire to be,” she says. That push has been sitting down. Her sitting down has been a good thing—those COVID

silver linings. “I’ve been traveling since 2009. This is the longest time I’ve ever been able to breathe.” She’s practicing more. She’s working on composing more. In her home studio she’s focusing on producing and engineering. Video editing and production has taken her time. Visual work, film scoring, licensing. “It’s all about bettering my craft.” This insular work will come into fruition soon. She’s got two singles coming out at the end of October and a big project coming soon after. “I can’t tell you anything about it, BUT I’ll be collaborating with musicians I really respect.”

One has to respect SassyBlack for her myriad interests and her thoughts about the challenges of both COVID, as a musician, and the social upheavals of late with the Black Lives Matter movement, as a Black woman. “A shift is needed,” she says of the music industry. With music venues struggling because musicians can’t perform music in front of live audiences, it’s a good moment to step back and assess the situation. SassyBlack says it was difficult before the pandemic and COVID shone a spotlight on it. She mentions that touring was an investment and bands rarely broke even. “There’s been an imprisonment of performers with labels and royalties and credit given. It’s been eye opening. It’s sad to see all these venues and promoters close down but it gives us an opportunity to showcase the true value of artists.”

And then there is the true value of those fighting social injustices. “I grew up anti-racist,” SassyBlack says. “My parents were very involved in social justice movements and I’ve been around it all from a very young age taking care of marginalized communities.” She likes the progress being made in Seattle and beyond but wants to make note that it’s been going on for a long time. “Nikkita Oliver inspires me a lot,” she says. “There have been people doing this a lot of years—try-

ing to push the needle. It’s been years of pushing. It just didn’t happen. I appreciate those that have joined us but it’s been years of pushing.”

As a Black woman, and as a musician, it’s led her to a life in jazz. “It’s how I move in the world.” She notes that one can’t know jazz without knowing racism. “All of this is based on slavery and if you don’t understand that then you are missing pieces of your soul.”

Her music, she hopes, offers up some of that understanding. Meanwhile, the pandemic rages on and artists are doing their best to make ends meet and

do what calls to them—make music. What can a music fan do to help? To start, fans can buy music on the platforms that best benefits the musician. In SassyBlack’s case, it’s on her Bandcamp page. “Crazy,” she says of ways people can support artists, “but you can contact an artist and ask them!”

There are opportunities forthcoming to back SassyBlack. Follow her on social media, and stay tuned for her next creative endeavors, and support her as she takes advantage of even more silver linings.

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kandace springs, 2018 studio session
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EARSHOT JAZZ FESTIVAL IN NOVEMBER

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 7PM

Gerald Clayton & John Clayton



GERALD CLAYTON PHOTO BY DANIEL SHEEHAN

Sponsored by Seed IP
\$10–25

Gerald Clayton is among the most inspiring and captivating forces on the jazz scene today. He tirelessly reinvents avenues for creative exchanges with other artists, transforming his music into a celebration of the inherent differences in musical perspectives that promote true artistic synergy.

Clayton earned a BA in Piano Performance at USC's Thornton School of Music under the instruction of piano icon Billy Childs. His burgeoning discography has earned him four Grammy nominations.

Now a Blue Note artist, the acclaimed pianist and composer recently

released his label debut *Happening: Live at the Village Vanguard*. As *Jazz Times* enthuses, "Clayton's piano contributions, in their wild, free-spilling, lyrical aspiration, are consistently stunning."

The son of treasured bassist and composer John Clayton, he enjoyed a familial apprenticeship from an early age. Bassist John Clayton is an award-winning composer, arranger, conductor, producer and educator, with a Grammy and eight nominations to his name. Tonight's concert offers an outstanding opportunity to enjoy this intergenerational musical juncture.

—Marianne Gonterman

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 8:30PM

Reggie Goings Quartet

Copresented with Langston Seattle
Welcomed by KBCS
\$10–25

Vocalist Reggie Goings was once a frequent performer on the Seattle jazz scene, performing at venues like the New Orleans Creole Restaurant. In recent years, the soulful baritone had been less active, until Seattle Repertory Jazz Orchestra (SRJO) director Michael Brockman invited Goings to perform in the band's tribute to another soul legend, the great Ray Charles. The performance reminded Seattle jazz fans of his blues infused baritone that acted as a perfect fit for the role.

For this event Goings will perform with a trio whose names have been etched prominently in the story of jazz music in Seattle over four decades.

Pianist Randy Halberstadt's colorful voicings and harmonic elegance have graced the performances of the SRJO for many years. His SRJO bandmate Phil Sparks has been a first call bassist in Seattle since his arrival thirty years ago. Like Sparks, drummer Jamael Nance goes way back with Goings, frequenting gigs and sessions that centered on tenor saxophonist Hadley Caliman.

The language Goings draws from is steeped in history, and expressed by an artist dedicated to, and humbled by, this quintessential art form we call jazz. In a year when the festival is all about Seattle artists, having Goings in the house is a perfect fit, at a perfect time.

—Paul Rauch



REGGIE GOINGS BY JIM LEVITT

Thomas Marriott's Trumpet Ship

Welcomed by KNKX 88.5
\$10–25

Since his return to Seattle from NYC in 2004, trumpeter Thomas Marriott has recorded eleven albums as a leader or co-leader on the Seattle based Origin Records label. None have been more anticipated than Marriott's most recent release on Origin, *Trumpet Ship* (2020). The album focuses on first-take quartet offerings of Marriott originals and standards. Recorded in one three-hour session at Studio X in 2016, the album is a celebration of Marriott's friendship with Philadelphia based pianist, Orrin Evans.

Trumpet Ship was received well, upon the March 2020 release. It seemed the album and the tour with his Philly based bandmates would create a high-

light in Marriott's career, after two decades of consistently high-quality work. But, as the story of 2020 has been told, tour plans were dropped due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

This performance takes advantage of the opportunity created by this unfortunate turn of events, to flip the script, and celebrate Marriott's original music. To do so, the trumpeter has gathered his Seattle quartet, featuring three of the city's best. Pianist Marc Seales, bassist Jeff Johnson, and drummer John Bishop join Marriott. For one evening, they will regain the momentum that was brought to a grinding halt by the pandemic, and give the Earshot audience a performance to remember this epic year by.

—Paul Rauch



THOMAS MARRIOTT PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

Ab Baars Solo



AB BAARS PHOTO BY PETRA CVELBAR

\$10–25

Earshot fans are no doubt familiar with stellar second-generation New Dutch Swing reed man Ab Baars, thanks to his many appearances here with the ICP Orchestra and his own small groups, but they may not know his estimable solo work, which will be the focus of Baars' festival show this year, streamed live from his Amsterdam studio. A 1989 recipient of Holland's most prestigious award, the Boy Edgar Prize, Baars is a unique reed player. He uses an Albert system clarinet, which has fewer keys than the more modern Boehm system, thus requiring a variety of alternate fingerings that coax players to make new choices and leave behind old habits. Baars also plays shakuhachi, that most

resistant of Japanese flutes, and tenor saxophone, on which he elicits a colorful, fearless palette that owes a debt to Archie Shepp.

Baars plays all three instruments on his solo albums which reveal a subtle, nuanced, abstract approach to improvisation. Leaping in a trice from a lowing caress to a pyrotechnic squall—with judicious silences setting off his phrases—Baars can be a bit puzzling, at first, until you realize snippets of the melody or harmonic benchmarks are surreptitiously slipping into his lines. In an email Baars writes that he will be using his full arsenal for the Earshot show and will play “a few new compositions and something by Misha Mengelberg and John Carter.”

—Paul de Barros

Benjamin Hunter Quintet

Welcomed by Rainier Avenue Radio
\$10–25

“It has given us time to think,” says the award-winning multi-instrumentalist Benjamin Hunter of the COVID-19 pandemic. “Time to be alone with ourselves. Time to reckon with that isolation. Time to embrace it.” Hunter plays roots music (on violin, mandolin, guitar, percussion, and voice) and the isolation has changed the notes of his music. “It’s underscored for me the importance of the arts and the true value of human connection.”

Hunter, with Camilo Estrada on bass, Darrius Willrich on keys, Chris Patin on drums, and Ricardo Guity on percussion, will play original music exploring the Black diaspora—from West African to the blues; jazz to Mo-

town. All the musicians have deep music roots in Seattle.

Coupled with COVID has been the upsurge of the Black Lives Matter Movement. “As an activist and community organizer for 10 years in this city, I’m curious to know how BLM has colored Earshot Jazz. This is to say, the movement is part and parcel of my life in America. It has been my whole life.”

There are silver linings in the pandemic, in the tumult in the streets. For Hunter, they’re opportunities to pay more attention to things that matter (family, self-care, storytelling) and focus on playing, and prac-



BENJAMIN HUNTER PHOTO BY AMBER ZBITNOFF

ticing, and writing music. “My goal,” Hunter says of his music, “is to make something I am happy with; that comes from my own authenticity.”

—Jonathan Shipley

Fred Hersch Solo

Sponsored by Michael Goodheim
\$10–25

Pianist Fred Hersch hasn’t let the pandemic slow him down; in fact, it seems to have fired him up. As soon as the COVID-19 pandemic careened into our lives, the 15-time Grammy nominee and 2011 Jazz Journalists Association Pianist of the Year started posting a “Tune of the Day” on Facebook, a practice that resulted in the solo CD, *Songs From Home* which he’ll be sharing with Earshot Festival viewers this year. Hersch has made solo piano a specialty, releasing a dozen albums over the years. With a two-handed energy that can propel him rhythmically and a crystalline touch

that compels listeners to sink sweetly into his quieter moods, Hersch is a master of the form.

Hersch describes *Songs From Home* as “comfort food” for these sequestered times. Instead of the usual mix of Monk, American Songbook and jazz standards, the set surveys popular tunes such as “Wouldn’t It Be Lovely,” from *My Fair Lady*; the Jimmy Webb classic, “Wichita Lineman”; Joni Mitchell’s “All I Want”; and pointedly, for 1955-born Hersch—Paul McCartney’s “When I’m Sixty-Four.” The tone is quiet, intimate and thoughtful, though “After You’ve Gone” gets a jaunty turn and “Get Out of Town” a playful one. Duke’s “Solitude” spar-



FRED HERSCH PHOTO BY JOHN ABBOTT

kles and Kenny Wheeler’s “Consolation (A Folk Song)” is a rare treat.

—Paul de Barros

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 7PM

FILM: Uprooted: The Journey of Jazz Dance

Presented by Northwest Film Forum
\$0-25

Available to viewers in Washington state for 24 hours. Jazz dance's history and artistic roots in the expression of enslaved peoples strengthen the art form, turning its practice into a metaphor for resistance and a struggle for acceptance. The film is directed by Khadifa Wong, based on an original idea by Zack Nemorin.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2PM

Community Conversations: The Beth and Kelly Show

Free, details at earshot.org

Dubbed “the Beth and Kelly Show” by colleagues, we’re teaching soulmates who love to talk shop and laugh along the way. We don’t have all the answers, but we do have a ton of experience and are willing to ask questions and make mistakes. Subversive in approach, we explore solutions and highlight allies as we continue to move our practice forward. Join us in this Special Edition for Earshot Jazz as we discuss jazz FOR ALL of our music students.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 8

Sunday Morning Playlists: Gabriel Teodros

Sponsored by Michael Goodheim
Free, spotify

Weekly playlists curated by local artists and DJ’s released every Sunday morning on spotify during the festival.

Guest curators include Eva Walker, Gabriel Teodros, Noel Brass Jr., and SassyBlack. Teodros is a musician, DJ, and speculative fiction writer. He hosts the Early show on KEXP.



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All photos by Daniel Sheehan taken at the 2018 Earshot Jazz Festival. Top: Brian Blade, Kato Olson, Jovino Santos Neto, Logan Richardson, Jazzmeia Horn, Bill Friesell, Ryan J. Lee, Maria Schneider. Middle: Regina Carter, Jasmin Day Singh, Tia Fuller, Wayne Horvitz, Burniss Travis, Roosevelt High School Jazz Band, Myra Melford, Joel Ross. Bottom Row: Dawn Clement, Johnnaya Kendrick, Jay Thomas, Jon Shyu, Keyon Harold, Carolina Davis, Donevan Krantor Lewis, Mark Turner.

SRJO Nonet: Birth of the Cool



MILES DAVIS PHOTO COURTESY WILLIAM P. GOTTLIEB COLLECTION

Presented by SRJO

Tickets at srjo.org

A rare performance of great jazz from the classic 1949 *Birth of the Cool* recording by Miles Davis, played by an all-star group drawn from the SRJO including bassist Phil Sparks, trumpeter Jay Thomas, saxophonists Alex Dugdale and Travis Ranney, trombonist Dan Marcus, drummer D'Vonne Lewis, co-artistic director Michael Brockman, and many others streaming live from Benaroya hall.

The original album—which features Miles Davis, Lee Konitz, Gerry Mulligan and J.J. Johnson—was a major development in post-bebop jazz, and employed many elements of classical chamber music. It quickly became one of the most famous and influential albums in all jazz history.

Tonight's selections include “Jeru,” “Rocker,” “Boplicity,” “Moon Dreams,” and “Godchild” (by Mulligan, Gil Evans, and John Lewis) plus other great works from the “cool school” of jazz.



SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 7PM

Ravi Coltrane Quartet

Sponsored by Seed IP

\$10–25

Encore Performance! Saxophonist Ravi Coltrane comes to the 2020 Earshot Jazz Festival via Birdland in New York City, performing with a quartet much in the spirit of his parents, John and Alice Coltrane.

As a professional, Ravi appeared on over thirty albums before releasing his first album, *Moving Pictures* (RCA, 1997), an effort produced by saxophonist Steve Coleman. Along the way, Ravi worked with major artists such as Geri Allen, Herbie Hancock, McCoy Tyner, and Pharoah Sanders. Over the past 30 years, he has developed a personal sound that is musically very independent of his father's, but with the same spirit of adventure and introspection that nurtured the musical identity of both his parents.

That same spirit resides in his current quartet, which features eclectic

harpist Brandee Younger. Younger's most recent release as a leader, *Soul Awakening* (Self-Produced, 2019), features Coltrane on saxophone. She also has abundant familiarity with bassist Rashaan Carter, who brings a dynamic all his own to the proceedings. Carter fits perfectly into diverse musical communities that shade from Wallace Roney to María Grand. The same could be said for drummer Allan Mednard, who has earned his jazz stripes with the likes of Jeremy Pelt, Aaron Parks, and Kurt Rosenwinkel. This musical threesome serves as a perfect vehicle for Coltrane's probing, biting solos on both tenor and soprano saxophones.

This current incarnation of his quartet, is perhaps the perfect instrument to fully express his familial pride and the freedom it allows him.

—Paul Rauch

Ahamefule J. Oluo House Party

Free

Prepare for the Revelation! Whether you've tuned into none, one, or most of this year's digitally streamed festival performances, you haven't seen a performance quite like Ahamefule Oluo's Virtual Reality House Party. This 2016-recorded document of Industrial Revelation playing in a living room brimming with house show enthusiasts, kindred souls, and Nigerian food will give us that euphonious and palpable experience of what it was like to be immersed in a sultry and live music setting again.

Oluo expounds, "The beauty of virtual reality is that you get to feel like you're immersed somewhere, and wouldn't it be great to be at a really cool party with live music and amazing food and just capture that particular event in a really beautiful way?" Most definitely. The majority of us show-goers are craving these sacred moments again because they offer us—to quote Industrial Revelation's bio—"human emotion...unbridled energy, excitement, passion, beauty and the enjoyment that coincides."

Even though it was recorded in 2016, the footage of this 21:30-minute, unfettered time capsule is just now being unearthed because it was simultaneously in production while *Thin Skin*—Oluo's full-length film adaptation of *Now I'm Fine*—was in production. Oluo was just waiting for the right time to release it. He says, "It's a really beautiful film...it's something I've always been really proud of and I've always wanted to find the right place to put it out and now it seems like, in the context of COVID, where it really is impossible to go to a party like that...it just seemed like a really amazing time to put out this little moment from the past."

Oluo concludes by threading his three festival events together by being "as immersive as possible because it's really one of the main things that's missing is that kind of connection...right now I think connectiveness is what we need." Agreed, I think we're ready for the Revelation.

—Zach Frimmel



AHAMEFULE J. OLUO PHOTO BY NAOMI ISHISAKA

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Royal Room Staycation Online Festival: Concerts in November

Peter Monaghan

It's hard to keep thinking of all this... this situation... as just a break from the normal, let alone an opportunity for a "staycation." But it is. The virus situation is going to end, and meanwhile the fine Rainier Valley venue, The Royal Room, which has done so much for the Seattle scene, is providing opportunities for us to help performers, and ourselves, to keep on keeping on until it does.

In lieu of in-person programming, The Royal Room is hosting its ongoing Staycation Online Festival. For now it's a fine way, a perfectly fine way, to hear and view performances. The musicians play from the club, live. Working with the nonprofit South Hudson Music Project which supports The Royal Room's presentation of music, the club has set up its live-streamed shows in accordance with all Washington State Department of Health guidelines.

That's more than worthy of our patronage—and the music is great. All events stream live from the Royal Room stage, and can be viewed on the Live Concerts Stream or the Royal Room Facebook page. (Simply to to the Royal Room website to jump onto the links.)

Tarik Abouzied's Fusion Spectacular

Friday, November 6
8:30-9:40pm

A "fusion spectacular" is a thrilling prospect even before you specify that these four aces will be lighting it up: Tarik Abouzied is a veteran drummer,



TARIK ABOUZIED PHOTO BY DANIEL SHEEHAN

and Earshot Golden Ear Awards Instrumentalist of the Year nominee, who has provided the drive for Happy Orchestra and McTuff, two of the happiest, toughest combos Seattle has seen.

He has on board Portland bass ace Damian Erskine, seemingly ubiquitous Seattle bassist RL Heyer, and fine Seattle saxophonist player Jory Tindall.

From Abouzied you can expect music that "gets intricate, but never loses sight of the gritty, soulful truth inherent in a deep groove," as has been said before in these pages.

His qualifications to launch a fusion spectacular include his participation in several projects. These include Pocket Change, a funk septet in the vein of Tower of Power; Hardcoretet, an appropriately named instrumental jazz quartet; McTuff, the light-it-up funk/jazz Hammond organ trio; and Happy Orchestra, deservedly nominated

by local jazz listeners for the Golden Ear Northwest Recording of the Year gong.

Saxophonist Jory Tindall has been pressing his claim on the local scene after studying with one of the region's sax greats, Mark Taylor, and graduating a decade ago from the nationally prominent Mountlake Terrace High School jazz program. There he took several soloist awards, including Most Outstanding Alto Saxophonist at the 2008 national Essentially Ellington competition. He went on to take similar titles at the University of Northern Colorado, including *Downbeat Magazine's* Most Outstanding Undergraduate Saxophonist. While playing in Seattle with the Seattle Hard Bop Collective and other projects, he joined friends in starting the nonprofit Downbeat Academy, to pass it on to rising jazz players.

RL Heyer plays guitar in many kinds of bands, too many to list. But they

include Cracker Factory, RL Heyer's Sweet Action, and the Bob Curnow Big Band.

Similarly, bassist Damian Erskine is all over the scene. An adjunct professor at Portland State University who regularly teaches in Shanghai, Bangkok, and other world cities with Jazz Education Abroad, his list of musical collaborations is a mile long.

Robin Holcomb & Wayne Horvitz: Solos and Duets

Sunday, November 8
7:30-8:30pm

Two cherished Seattle-based pianist composers on the same bill. The prospect of hearing each play always is enticing. To hear them together is a guaranteed great treat.

They will perform improvised and composed music for solo piano, and piano with Holcomb's voice.

Each is expansively distinctive, highly expressive, and hugely accomplished. They have made music together since they met in 1975 at UC Santa Cruz. On the so-called Downtown Scene in Manhattan, they collaborated with a who's who of musicians from those circles: Bill Frisell, John Zorn, Bobby Previte, William Parker...

They have been in Seattle since 1990, always at the center of fertile musical growth in the city.

Horvitz's accomplishments are many and varied. Among recent ones is his premiere of a concerto for the Seattle Symphony featuring guitarist Bill Frisell. If you're on the Seattle jazz scene at all, you don't need a detailing of all he has done — you'll just log on and listen.

Similarly with Robin Holcomb. Composing for several artistic genres, recording on major labels, she creates what the *New York Times* has called a "new American regionalism, spun from many threads—rock, minimalism, Civil War songs, Appalachian

folk tunes, even the polytonal music of Charles Ives."

International Playstory Trio

Sunday, November 15
6:00pm

If Cooper-Moore is not the best known of piano innovators, it's probably because he has kept company with many of the edgiest, exploratory forward thinkers. That began when he was in Boston in the late 1960s and formed a band with tenor titan David S. Ware and drummer Marc Edwards.

Between then and now he has remained in that mode—often playing improvised instruments of his own design, he has performed and recorded with the likes of saxophonist Daniel Carter and William Parker's In Order to Survive. Susie Ibarra, Darius Jones, more than a dozen albums under his own name... It's a long list.

Cooper-Moore's accomplishments were recognized in 2017 with a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Vision Festival in New York.

In International Playstory Trio, he is with bassist Clayton Thomas, organizer of Sydney's cutting-edge NOW now festival, and baritone saxophonist Dave Sewelson, a fixture of expansive jazz circles in New York for decades,

working with William Parker's Little Huey Creative Music Orchestra and many other space-creating vanguard-jazz projects.

KNKX presents Piano Starts Here: The Music of Bud Powell/Count Basie

Wednesday, November 18
7:30-8:40pm

If you're talking piano style, you go through Count Basie, who was as stylish as any, and Bud Powell, who was among the first of the great innovators in the expansions of the art form from the 1950s on.

That's the history celebrated by KNKX radio in its series Piano Starts Here. This month, it's offering a schooling in the roots and emergence of swing with the music of Count Basie. But it's also providing guidance on bebop and beyond, through the virtuoso "Charlie Parker of the Piano." Channeling those titans, on the Royal Room's Steinway B grand piano, will be Matt Williams, Casey MacGill, Jake Sele, Tim Kennedy, and Alex Guilbert.

For more information, please visit the-royalroomseattle.com



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New Music from Women in Jazz



One of the many pandemic-induced disappointments for Seattle jazz lovers was the cancellation by the Maria Schneider Orchestra (which features Spokane-bred trombonist Ryan Keberle) and the new, all-women's super-group, Artemis. Luckily, both ensembles have released new albums. In the spirit of honoring jazz women, here's a look at those albums as well as a newly retrieved live set by Ella Fitzgerald.

—Paul de Barros

Maria Schneider Orchestra

Data Lords

Artist Share

Any new release by the great composer and bandleader Maria Schneider is cause for celebration, but her new one, *Data Lords*, is especially powerful—and timely, too, given Big Data's frightening control over our world. A long composition in two parts named for competing realities—"The Digital World" and "Our Natural World"—it features some of the darkest, most disturbing music Schneider has ever written. Fans may be startled at first, but will soon discover Schneider is still a brilliant master of reed-brass timbres and developing her themes with a seamless weave of composition and improvisation.

The Minnesota-born musician pierces to the dark heart right off the bat with "A World Lost," a sad elegy for childhood's imaginative world, which she fears

has been superseded by screen time. Fanfare-ish brass, ominously evoking "Taps," continues the mournful message in "Don't Be Evil," a jab at Google, followed by the eerie, outer-space feel of "CQ CQ Is Anybody There?" which Schneider composed using morse code signals as a rhythmic skeleton. Donny McCaslin's braying tenor sax and Greg Gisbert's eerily altered trumpet abet the fierceness. Scott Robinson's incomparably beautiful baritone sax invites us into "Sputnik," another voyage to extraterrestrial territory, this time hearkening back to the innocent optimism of 1957. But not for long. "The Digital World" closes with "Data Lords," which almost seems to luxuriate in the dark side before slowly grinding to a halt, as if the planet had just run out of steam.

But Schneider is an optimist at heart, and would never leave us there. "Our Natural World" offers uplift with "Look Up," especially the singing solo by trombonist Marshall Gilkes; the brief but perky "Braided Together"; and the pastoral "Bluebird," which Gary Versace's accordion explores like a supping bee. Schneider's survey of the organic, pre-disrupted world also features the gorgeous "Sanzenin," named for a thousand-year-old Buddhist garden in Japan; the dancing "Stone Song," with Steve Wilson's soprano landing like flecks on Versace's accordion; and the impressionistic "The Sun Waited For Me," an instrumental reprise of a track from *Winter Morning Walks*, which swells to a close, reassuring us that the natural world is still there to nurture and inspire us. If only we could look up from our phones long enough to see it.

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YOUR 2020

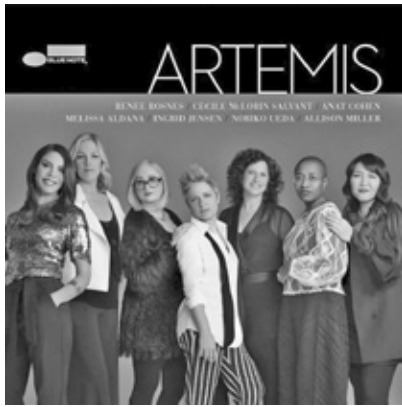
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Artemis
Artemis
 Blue Note

Jazz sisterhood has been growing exponentially the past few years, so the emergence of an all-female band featuring veteran stars Cécile McLorin Salvant (vocals), Ingrid Jensen (trumpet), Anat Cohen (clarinet), Renee Rosnes (piano) and Allison Miller (drums), plus the more recently hailed Chilean saxophonist Melissa Aldana and newcomer Noriko Ueda (bass), is both timely and welcome. Cohen, Aldana and Rosnes contribute to a set list that also features composers Lennon and McCartney, Stevie Wonder, Lee Morgan and Rocco Accetta, who wrote the seldom-sung ballad, “Cry Buttercup Cry,” a Maxine Sullivan choice from the ‘40s covered here with cool clarity by Salvant. Other highlights include Rosnes’ fiercely swinging “Big Top,” which, appropriately, evokes the kaleidoscopic colors of a circus; Ueda’s “Step Forward,” a snappy and singable melody featuring Cohen’s champagne clarinet; and Aldana’s quietly flowing “Frida.” The horn front line sizzles on Miller’s hard-driving “Goddess Of The Hunt” (whom the Greeks called Artemis); McClorin invokes a timely message with Wonder’s “If It’s Magic”; Cohen and Jensen have a spirited conversation on the clarinetist’s “Nocturno” and the trumpeter turns “The Fool On The Hill” into a wonderfully mysterious jazz meditation.



Ella Fitzgerald
The Lost Berlin Tapes
 Verve

The music on this album was recorded in 1962, but unreleased till October 2020.

One of Ella Fitzgerald’s greatest albums of all time was *Mack the Knife: Ella in Berlin*, a Grammy winner recorded in 1960, and it’s not an exaggeration to say that this new find, done two years later in the same city, is in the same league. Accompanied by her swinging trio—Paul Smith (piano), Wilfred Middlebrooks (bass) and Stan Levey (drums)—Ella’s in top form, relaxed, in consummate control and obviously enjoying herself. The set emphasizes tunes Fitzgerald had just

released on the album “Clap Hands, Here Comes Charlie” and repeats only two selections from the earlier Berlin effort, “Summertime” and, of course “Mack the Knife,” a hit at the time for both Bobby Darin and Louis Armstrong. Fitzgerald notoriously forgot the lyrics of that classic in the 1960 show. This time, she gets them, but can’t remember what city’s she’s in!

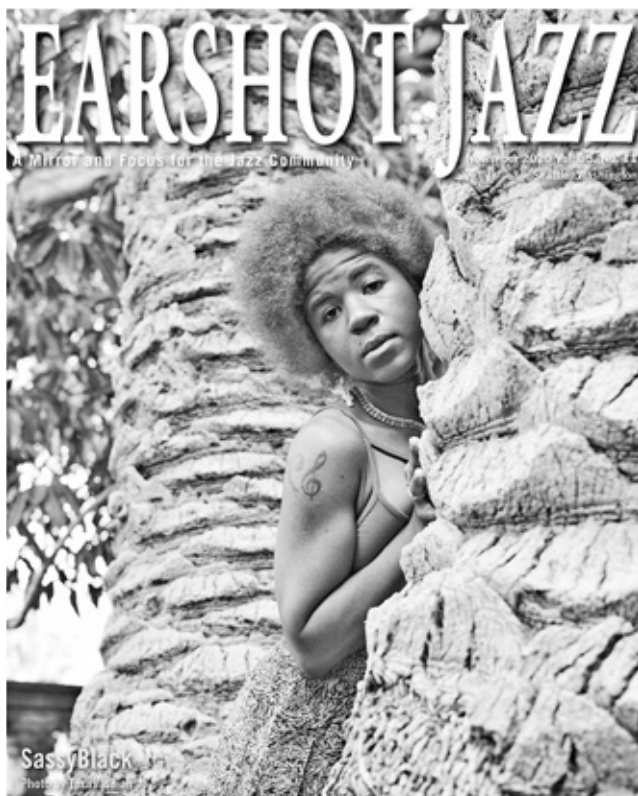
But never mind. Here is one of the greatest jazz singers of all time, in her prime, making you believe there’s nothing better than dancing “Cheek to Cheek,” and that “Taking A Chance on Love” would be just the thing to do. “Cry Me A River” flies into the crowd with trumpet-like force, “Someone to Watch Over Me” caresses the room with pleading vibrato, and “Jersey Bounce” lands with swing-era panache. Ella turns Berlin’s Sportspalast into a revival tent with “Clap Hands Here Comes Charlie,” puts her own sunny stamp on the Billie Holiday signature, “Good Morning Heartache,” and gives Ray Charles extended props on a finger-popping “Hallelujah I Love Him So.” Of course, “Mr. Paganini” gets his turn, too—no crowd would allow her to leave him out – and she ends her set with a rarity for her, a blues.

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