

Earshot Jazz is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization

EARSHOT JAZZ

A Mirror and Focus for the Jazz Community

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Seattle, Washington

A close-up portrait of Benjamin Hunter, a man with a beard and mustache, smiling. He is wearing a patterned headwrap with orange, white, and blue designs. He is also wearing a grey jacket over a blue and white checkered shirt, and a necklace of orange and green beads. The background is dark.

Benjamin Hunter Standing at the Crossroads of Music and Community

Photo by Daniel Sheehan

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MISSION STATEMENT

To ensure the legacy and progression of the art form, Earshot Jazz cultivates a vibrant jazz community by engaging audiences, celebrating artists, and supporting arts education.

Letter from the Director

Black History is NOW!

As we celebrate Black History Month, especially this February, it's important to consider the word "history" in active terms. More than just a study of the past, history offers an opportunity to consider today's realities in a larger arc with tomorrow's possibilities. It can be a call to action. Realizing our own active role in history, we can more easily understand our responsibility to it. And with a year like 2020 still looming large in our rearview mirrors, the road ahead is equally clear. Black history is in front of us, not behind, and we all have work to do.

Jazz music is a cultural treasure of Black America. Simply put: no Black America, no jazz.

And jazz has an equally fluid relationship to history. To consider jazz as something that has already happened does it a grave disservice. Jazz history is a living history, and its deepest threads have always been about Black experience and Black innovation. Creative Black Music, Liberation Music, Black American Music (BAM), Black Arts, and what the Art Ensemble of Chicago advanced as "Great Black Music" have inspired and powered the art form through the years, in spite of cultural appropriation, white privilege, and the unbalanced power dynamics of the marketplace.

The Earshot Jazz organization is proud to have presented Seattle concerts by many of the legends of the Black avant-garde. In its early years, with the artistic vision of co-founder Gary Bannister, Earshot stepped right in with concerts by Cecil Taylor, Don Cherry, Sun Ra, Michele Rosewoman, Bobby Hutcherson, Butch Morris, James Blood Ulmer, Don Pullen, Jimmy McGriff, Horace Tapscott, Andrew Hill, Henry Threadgill, and the World Saxophone Quartet, among others.

Over the ensuing years, Earshot has offered Seattle stages to vanguard artists like the Art Ensemble of Chicago, Ornette Coleman, William Parker, David S. Ware, Sam Rivers, Pharoah Sanders, Amina Claudine Myers, Dewey Redman, Steve Coleman, Billy Bang, Wayne Shorter, David Murray, Kahil El'Zabar, Carmen Lundy, and Wadada Leo Smith. Earshot has presented artists close to the African diaspora, such as Abdullah Ibrahim, Randy Weston, Somi, Bheki Mseleku, Omar Sosa, and Hugh Masekela, as well as jazz poets Amiri Baraka, James McBride, Ishmael Reed, Paul Harding, and Kamau Da'ood.

Earshot continues its commitment to creative Black arts by presenting forward-looking artists of the movement, often for their first time in Seattle, like Jason Moran, Christian Scott aTunde Adjuah, Darius Jones, Marquis Hill, Burnt Sugar, Nicole Mitchell, Matthew Shipp, Jazzmeia Horn, Joel Ross, Makaya McCraven, Brandee Younger, Ambrose Akinmusire, Craig Taborn, and many others. As always, we invite your suggestions and support. Now, more than ever.

Finally, and I think bears repeating: Happy New Year! We have a long way to go, to be sure, but it finally feels as if we're unstuck, and at least inching it forward. Congratulations! Let us know how we can help.

Be safe out there.

—JOHN GILBREATH, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



John Gilbreath photo by Bill Uzmay

Correction

In the January 2021 edition of *Earshot Jazz*, we published an album review with incorrect information. The *Postponed Parade* album review credited Geoff Harper as the soloist on the song “Shoreline”—Michael Glynn is the correct soloist. We apologize for this error.

SMASH Healthcare

Seattle Musicians Access to Sustainable Healthcare provides comprehensive healthcare, emphasizing prevention and wellness, to musicians in the local community. Musicians can join SMASH for free and access free and low-cost care including mental health therapy, hearing screenings, as well as preventative dental services and healthcare. To be eligible musicians and music teachers must live in King or surrounding counties and meet income guidelines. SMASH also accepts donations. Visit smashseattle.org for details.

Save Our Stages Act Passed

A \$15 billion package was signed by the U.S. Congress on December 27, 2020, as part of a \$900 billion COVID-19 stimulus bill (Economic Aid Act) that sets funding aside for independent venues including live music venues and promoters, theatrical producers, performing arts organizations, nonprofit museums, and motion picture theaters. Grants may be used for payroll,

rent, utilities, and other business expenses. Applicants can apply for two grants: an initial grant, which will provide 45% of 2019 gross earned revenue, and a supplemental grant. Once the Small Business Administration has established regulations to administer the program, applications are anticipated to be accepted on or after April 1, 2021. For more details visit nivassoc.org.

Paycheck Protection Program Included in Economic Aid Act

With the passing of the COVID-19 stimulus bill, which includes more funding for the PPP, the Small Business Administration has released information about how to apply for the program. First priority goes to first-time PPP borrowers, including minority-owned, veteran-owned, woman-owned, and businesses in underserved markets. At least 60% of PPP funds must be used for payroll while the remaining funds can be used for mortgage interest, rent, utility, and covered operations expenditures. Additional uses for this round of funding include certain operational expenses for computing, human resources, accounting, supplier costs pursuant to a contract for goods, and personal protective equipment. To find the nearest advisor in Washington state, visit the website wsbdc.org/contact-an-advisor; email washington@wsbdc.org; or phone 833-4WA-SBDC.

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SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Seattle Jazz Artist Relief Fund—Second Round

Seattle Jazz Artist Relief Fund is a program, administered by Earshot Jazz, that will provide direct financial relief to individual jazz artists most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Thanks to the generosity of the Raynier Institute and Foundation, Earshot Jazz will be able to make 30 \$1,000 gifts directly to individual artists in this second round.

Only applicants who are in the Greater Seattle area, are at least 18 years of age, and are experiencing extreme financial hardship due to the impact of COVID-19 will be considered. We ask that applicants self-evaluate to determine whether they are experiencing dire financial emergencies in order to make space for those who are most in need. Due to the unprecedented nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, we define “dire financial emergencies” as the lack or imminent endangerment of essentials such as housing, medicine, caretaking, and food. We are asking those artists who are currently employed or not facing severe circumstances to refrain from applying.

Round two of the Seattle Jazz Artist Relief Fund will open on February 1, with guidelines and applications available on earshot.org. The application opens on February 1 and closes February 28, with the goal to deliver the funds in early March. Individuals who received funding in the first round are eligible to apply again.

Understanding that today’s conditions are untenable for many populations, we realize that this fund is limited in scope. However, we are sincerely grateful to the Raynier Institute and Foundation for their generosity and making this emergency support program possible for Seattle jazz artists.



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THANK YOU!

Thank you to all the generous donors who have supported Earshot the past year, either by donating back tickets, giving via GiveBIG or one of our Fund Drives, or donating during our livestreamed concerts. This list acknowledges donations made between May 21 and December 31, 2020. We are humbled and grateful for your investment in our jazz community, and we thank you for being part of our Earshot family. Please contact info@earshot.org with questions or corrections.

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John Adams	Elizabeth and Michael	Akerman	Jania Garcia	Colleen Hayward
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GOLDEN EAR AWARDS

Each year, the Golden Ear Awards recognize and celebrate the outstanding achievements of the previous year in Seattle jazz. With the pandemic, the continued fight for racial justice, and threats to American democracy, 2020 has been a difficult and very different year. We acknowledge the heavy toll that shuttered venues and restrictions on live performances have taken on our community. Many artists have struggled to perform and create under these challenging circumstances, and we thank all the artists for everything they've contributed to the Seattle jazz community this past year. Furthermore, we want to thank everyone who sent in nominations this year. Now, we look forward to hearing from you. Vote online at earshot.org, by email to vote@earshot.org, or mail your selections to Earshot Jazz, 3417 Fremont Ave N, #221, Seattle, WA 98103. Ballots are due March 1.

2020 GOLDEN EAR AWARDS BALLOT

NW Recording of the Year

- ☐ Sundae + Mr. Goessl, *Fun & Fancy*
- ☐ Duende Libre, *The Dance She Spoke*
- ☐ Ray Larsen, *Songs to Fill the Air*
- ☐ Thomas Marriott, *Trumpet Ship*
- ☐ Ryan Burns, *Postponed Parade*
- ☐ Other _____

NW Acoustic Jazz Ensemble of the Year

- ☐ Jacob Zimmerman Trio
- ☐ Thomas Marriott Quintet
- ☐ Sundae + Mr. Goessl
- ☐ Bill Anschell Trio
- ☐ EarthtoneSkytone
- ☐ Other _____

Emerging Artist of the Year

- ☐ Josh Hou
- ☐ Abbey Blackwell
- ☐ Tony Lefaive
- ☐ Dylan Hayes
- ☐ Xavier Lecouturier
- ☐ Other _____

Alternative Jazz Group of the Year

- ☐ Bad News Botanists
- ☐ RAE
- ☐ Ryan Burns
- ☐ Electric Circus
- ☐ Amy Denio
- ☐ Other _____

NW Jazz Instrumentalist of the Year

- ☐ Neil Welch
- ☐ Alex Dugdale
- ☐ James Falzone
- ☐ Kate Olson
- ☐ Ray Larsen
- ☐ Other _____

NW Vocalist of the Year

- ☐ Kate Voss
- ☐ Johnaye Kendrick
- ☐ Ayesha Brooks
- ☐ Elnah Jordan
- ☐ Chava Mirel
- ☐ Other _____

NW Concert of the Year (live or livestream)

- ☐ Seattle Repertory Jazz Orchestra, "Tribute to Billie Holiday" at Benaroya Hall (02/01/2020)
- ☐ Ahamefule J. Oluo: Music from Susan, streamed at the Earshot Jazz Festival (10/18/2020)
- ☐ Marc Seales Quintet at Jazz Alley (02/24/2020)
- ☐ Cuong Vu and Ted Poor at Cry & Roar X, Café Racer (01/24/2020)
- ☐ Bad Luck fundraiser for Wa Na Wari streamed via Live Concerts Stream (08/25/2020)
- ☐ Other _____

Seattle Jazz Hall of Fame

- ☐ Steve Kim
- ☐ Robin Holcomb
- ☐ Jim Knodle
- ☐ Hans Teuber
- ☐ Moc Escobedo
- ☐ Other _____

Seattle Jazz Hall of Fame Inductees

1990 Ernestine Anderson Al Hood Chuck Metcalf Floyd Standifer	1994 Clarence Acox Bud Young	1999 Vonne Griffin Red Kelly	2004 Gaye Anderson Hadley Caliman Robert Knatt	2008 KBCS 91.3 Phil Sparks	2012 Scott Brown Dave Peck	2016 Bill Anschell Jay Clayton
1991 Buddy Catlett Don Lanphere	1995 Jerome Gray	2000 Bud Shank Chuck Stentz	2005 Gary Steele Mack Waldron Woody Woodhouse	2009 Marc Seales Stuart Dempster	2013 Bill Frisell Bert Wilson	2017 Patty Padden Skerik
1992 Jabo Ward Jim Wilke	1996 Norm Bobrow William O. (Bill) Smith	2001 John Dimitriou Julian Priestler	2006 Jim Knapp KPLU	2010 Chuck Deardorf Wayne Horvitz	2014 Amy Denio Greta Matassa	2018 Bob Hammer Helen and David Marriott Sr. Wally Shoup
1993 Fred Greenwell Melody Jones	1997 Lola Pedrini Bill Ramsay	2002 Paul de Barros	2007 John Bishop Dean Hodges	2011 Overton Berry Jeff Johnson Jovino Santos Neto	2015 Ruby Bishop Sonny Booker Randy Halberstadt	2019 Michael Brockman Suzanne Weg Gary Bannister
	1998 Jan Stentz Leon Vaughn	2003 Ronnie Pierce Jay Thomas				



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Benjamin Hunter: Standing at the Crossroads of Music and Community

PAUL RAUCH

Benjamin Hunter is an artist in constant motion. Every time one might attempt to designate a title to define his contributions as an artist, he somehow shapeshifts and appears at another nexus of Seattle's cultural landscape. His award-winning duo with Joe Seamons has enjoyed national acclaim and has taken city jazz fans back to the roots of America's most original art form. As a violinist, mandolinist, vocalist, and songwriter, Hunter's musical identity acts as a living, breathing ethnomusicological force, bringing together jazz, blues, folk, and rural Black string band music. His introduction to his instrument, however, was through European classical music.

"I was raised as a classical violinist. Reading music off the page, and thinking about it in very specific, instructed ways. But also, I was lucky at a young age to travel the world, my mom really valued travel. I was raised with that appreciation for things outside of my norm, including music," recalls Hunter.

That curiosity and fascination in music and culture has never ceased, resulting in the growing contributions Hunter is making to the rapidly changing culture surrounding the Seattle music scene.

"This convergence of culture, art and community and how they all play a role to shape the society that we live in. It's what brings me to this idea of arts and culture being one of the most important aspects of our society. It's what ultimately makes us human," he observes.

While being keenly focused on the constant evolution of his art, Hunter's role as a community organizer has also captured the city's attention. His work as one of 33 partners in the soon-to-be-opened Black and Tan Hall encapsulates his vision for music and the arts acting as a stepping stone to creating businesses that place people over profits. After five years of renting



Benjamin Hunter photo by Daniel Sheehan

the space on Rainier Avenue in Hillman City, the increasing amount of repairs and associated legal hurdles created an unsustainable model for the cooperative to sustain itself. The recent purchase of the building now fully justifies completing the remaining work needed to be done in order to open the hall by the end of 2021 or early 2022. The accomplishment is even more remarkable when considering the sizable number of participants involved in the decision-making processes within this cooperative organization.

"By virtue of having a variety of voices, we are checking ourselves constantly. It means we are hearing voices that also would be voices from the rest of the community," says Hunter. "My role with Black and Tan is Director of Arts and Culture. It's my role now to try to figure out how to develop an entertainment, arts and culture strategy,

not only for this year, but in preparation for when we open. We want to make sure that what we are doing as a business is something the community can be proud of, because they see themselves being represented in the structure of it all."

When we open. Those three words elicit a collective sigh from all of us eager to get back to the business of creating and performing music, and engaging in the fellowship that accompanies it. While the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have been catastrophic financially for area stages, it has also been a catalyst—generating new ideas on how to conduct the business of presenting performing arts in Seattle going forward. Hunter has taken that all to mind when looking at ways to assure the success of Black and Tan Hall.

"Not just better, but different. The creative industry situation in Seattle has been in a

decline for a number of years because of development overshadowing and taking people out of the ballgame. It helped make people realize that this system we had that worked for a long time, might not be the

“Folk music is like a river stone, it gets polished each time somebody touches it.”

best system for everybody. We might need to find new ways outside of these traditional ways to explore how we engage with the arts,” says Hunter.

The name of the hall pays tribute to the iconic Black and Tan nightclub opened in 1922 by black entrepreneur, E. Russell “Noodles” Smith. The basement club at the corner of Jackson Street and 12th Avenue was fully integrated, and saw the likes of Charlie Parker, Earl Hines, Lena Horne, and Duke Ellington grace its stage before closing in 1966. Ellington’s classic early piece, “Black and Tan Fantasy,” was based on his experience at the Jackson Street night spot.

Hunter is the founder of Community Arts Create, an organization that explores the crossroads between art, community, and culture. It provides an alternative to traditional music education, celebrating the oral traditions that have generationally enabled jazz, blues, and folk music, with each generational passing both benefiting

from, and adding to, the unique and multicultural fabric that is American music.

“Folk music is like a river stone, it gets polished each time somebody touches it,”

he points out. “It’s about trusting the fact that there are people out there that already have these traditional arts in their bones, in their culture, and in their homes. What happens when you bring those people together to engage in that environment for a folk experience to exist?”

Hunter wrote the musical score for danc-

“By virtue of having a variety of voices, we are checking ourselves constantly.”

er/choreographer Dani Tirrell’s extended dance piece, “Black Bois.” The effort culminated with a performance at the Moore Theatre on February 14, 2020, just before the pandemic restricted live shows. Tirrell describes the work that includes Hunter’s music and spoken word by J Mase III, as “a dance piece that is a ceremony to our ancestors, and a thanksgiving to our past, present, and future.”

While the year 2020 has been an uphill battle for most, Hunter has seen some benefits strangely arise from the wreckage. For one, he became a first-time father, and is now the proud dad of a nine-month-old son. He has worked hard on adding guitar to his repertoire of instruments, and exploring new directions in music. While Hunter’s violin style seems almost indigenous to roots forms, his classical upbringing and intimate knowledge of jazz music, present an unlimited musical palette moving forward. His playing to date touches terra firma stylistically with Stuff Smith and Eddie South. His mandolin identity presents what he refers to as “anti-violin,” enabling chordal and rhythmic contributions. This combined with an artistic desire to explore beyond roots jazz and blues is something for Seattle jazz fans to keep an eye on in 2021.

“What I’m trying to explore is music from the Black Diaspora and how to put it all together. I’ve spent the last couple of years studying West African music, Caribbean music and music that has come out of the United States—blues, jazz, funk, soul, and R&B. Some of the stuff that I did for Earshot is kind of in the vein of what it looks like to put that all that together, and see what it sounds like.”

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Westerlies Fest

**February 4–7
Online**

“We’re living in an incredibly dark time,” says Willem de Koch, trombonist and co-founder of The Westerlies. “We could all use a boost right now. I find that music always has the ability to lift my spirits when I’m feeling low.”

de Koch and The Westerlies plan on bringing us all a boost with their coming Westerlies Fest.



“We created Westerlies Fest to give back to the community that raised us,” says Westerlies cofounder Andy Clausen. “To get into local schools and encourage students’ passion for music, to give opportunities to artists we believe deserve wider recognition, and to forge lasting relationships with collaborators, community organizers, and audiences.”

But what if you can’t get into local schools because of COVID-19? What if you can’t be on stage with live audiences because of pandemic restrictions? How do you give opportunities when opportunities become decidedly more challenging with each quarantine and lockdown? With that, the 2021 Westerlies Fest will take place February 4–7, 2021. It will all be online and it will all be free.

“Hopefully the artistry of this incredible lineup of musicians will provide comfort to our audiences,” de Koch says. “This year’s lineup is so rich and varied, we’re confident there’s something for everyone, whatever your musical inclinations may be!”

The Westerlies are a Seattle-bred, Brooklyn-based brass ensemble that NPR Music says are “folk-like and composerly, lovely and intellectually rigorous.” Along with de Koch and Clausen, trumpeters Riley Mulherkar and Chloe Rowlands round out the quartet. The coming festival will be their third annual, all streaming on their YouTube channel.

If there’s a silver lining to the pandemic, de Koch says, it’s that their festival can reach more people this time around. “We’ll be able to reach new audience members who otherwise wouldn’t have been able to attend. We’ve been doing some livestream performances throughout the pandemic, and it’s been incredible to see folks tuning in from all around the world.”

The coming Fest’s performances will have that worldwide flavor with a plethora of performers. There will be performances by Morgan Henderson (Fleet Foxes, Blood Brothers), Michael Mayo, and Margaux; an

evening of chamber music co-presented and curated by ChamberQUEER, an LGBTQ+ chamber music series based in Brooklyn, New York; and world premieres of four new pieces commissioned by The Westerlies and written for the ensemble by Henderson, Mayo, Kalia Vandever, and Anthony Harvey. “The pieces are in progress as we speak,” de Koch says, “and I can’t wait to hear the results!” The Fest also includes workshops, guided listening sessions, and an open Westerlies rehearsal.

The headlining begins February 4, when Margaux takes the virtual stage. The 21-year-old singer-songwriter, from Seattle and currently residing in Brooklyn, writes lush intimate music. Her debut EP is *More Brilliant is The Hand that Throws the Coin*. On February 5, multi-instrumentalist Morgan Henderson performs. February 6 brings jazz vocalist Michael Mayo, who has collaborated, or taken the stage with, such luminaries as Herbie Hancock and Josh Groban. The festival performances conclude on February 7 with ChamberQUEER when Danielle Buonaiuto, Brian Mummert, Jules Biber, Andrew Yee, and Kevin Devine are set to play.

Regardless of social distances and quarantines, The Westerlies are committed to bring us together with their upcoming festival. Music has a way of doing that.

–JONATHAN SHIPLEY

**TUNE IN
“Westerlies Fest”**
February 4–7
westerliesfest.org

Nightly performances on YouTube are free with RSVP. The Westerlies will host a free community JAM-boree on Sunday, with activities for musicians and non-musicians alike. For details and links to register, visit westerliesfest.org.

18th Annual Biamp PDX Jazz Festival

February 18–27
Jack London Revue,
Portland, OR and online

For its eighteenth year, Portland's annual Biamp PDX Jazz Festival continues with a mix of live performances and real-time web streams. Though state rules to slow the spread of COVID-19 have canceled some performances and postponed others, the festival will take place with limited in-person capacity at a newly overhauled Jack London Revue, where it will be broadcast online, February 18 to 27. Featuring a selection of films, premieres from Northwest artists, and a debut of commissioned work, the festival's sure to give audiences a chance to listen to music truly of this moment.

Streamed for free on the web, an opening night celebration kicks off the festival on February 18. The celebration features a cabaret performance from Northwest cosmopolitans Pink Martini, featuring Thomas Lauderdale and China Forbes. The songwriting team behind the popular group, Lauderdale and Forbes have led the group's global sound since writing the surprise hit album *Symphonique*, released in 1997.

February 19, the multifaceted trumpeter Cyrus Nabipoor leads a group off his latest release and debut as a bandleader, *Live at the Marigny Opera House*, a "quietly revealing debut with a keen sense of smoldering tradition and youthful investigation" (All About Jazz). The same day, pianist and composer Harold López-Nussa will broadcast directly from Havana, Cuba. His latest album, *Te Lo Dije*, mixes his straight-ahead jazz with contemporary sounds from the island from the likes of Afro-Cuban superstar CimaFunk and reggaeton vocalist Randy Malcolm.

A former protégé of Prince and collaborator with John Legend, vocalist Judith Hill will perform February 20. Hill has backed artists like Stevie Wonder and Michael Jackson, and has a new album due this year. Oregon gospel singers Saeeda Wright, Alonzo Chadwick, and Arietta Ward follow

on February 21, for what's sure to be a powerful performance.

Local performances will continue February 22, when cofounder of the Portland Jazz Orchestra Lars Campbell leads the PDX Jazz All-Star Pandemic band, a big band playing favorite arrangements, and February 23, when Portland group greaterkind will feature the music of Gil Scott-Heron and Brian Jackson on February 23. Heron and Jackson's classic 1974 album *Winter in America* "still resonates loudly in America today" (Pitchfork).

February 24, the festival will debut its newest education program, "The American Refrain: Jazz and Modern Music," an hour-long performance arranged by Noah Simpson, which narrates the formation of jazz and its current role in popular music. Bassist Marcus Shelby will also celebrate the history of Black music with his quartet, featuring Tiffany Austin, Darrell Grant, and Carlton Jackson, February 26.

Seattle favorites appear throughout the festival—Ted Poor and Cuong Vu perform on February 25. Showcasing jazz's brave new world, Wayne Horvitz will lead his Royal We ensemble, currently a sextet featuring Skerik (sax), Alex Guy (violin), Geoff Harper (bass), Iván Galvez (percussion) and Andy Roth (drums), on February 27th. Also, on the same day take a look behind the scenes as Kassa Overall crafts his signature sound in his lab at a "Beats Workshop" in Brooklyn, followed by a Q & A with Giovanni Russonello.

For a grand finale, February 26 and 27, South Africa's freshest musical talent will stream live from Johannesburg, to showcase music recorded for a new compilation celebrating South African improvised music, *Indaba Is*, to be released 2021. These artists include the performance art ensemble the Brother Moves On, genre-defying guitarist Sibusile Xaba, and others, sure to be festival highlights.

The festival will also feature three film debuts: beginning February 18, festival



Cyrus Nabipoor photo by Mary Katherine Leslie

goers can view Nick Capezzer and Sam Osborn's *Universe*. The documentary follows the late trumpeter Wallace Roney's performance and recording of Wayne Shorter's orchestral suite of the same name, written for Miles Davis. Filmmaker Adam Kahan interviews a living legend in *Buster Williams: Bass to Infinity*, streaming February 21. February 25, audiences can also view director John Scheinfeld's *Herb Alpert is...* which features rare footage and interviews about the trumpeter and recording artist.

—IAN GWIN

TUNE IN
"18th Annual Biamp PDX Jazz Festival"
 February 18–27
pdxjazz.com

Changes to ticketing and attendance this year include the ability to view most concerts virtually, with the option of viewing some of the concerts in person at the Jack London Revue, in downtown Portland. Shows will be available to view for 48 hours and films will be available for 72 hours. PDX Jazz Members watch all concerts online for free, while non-members can buy livestream tickets for as low as \$5 per show. For details visit pdxjazz.com.

Jackson Street Jazz Walk 2021

Saturday & Sunday, February 27–28, 2021, 7pm PST
Livestream: Facebook & YouTube

Mark your calendars for Jackson Street Jazz Walk's 2021 virtual concert, which will be streaming online February 27–28 at 7pm simultaneously on Facebook and YouTube (type "Jackson Street Jazz Walk" in either search bar). Like many concerts, Jackson Street's 2020 concert was postponed due to the pandemic, so in turn the concert has pivoted into a virtual experience. Since its conception in 2013, Jackson Street Jazz Walk (JSJW) has featured a diverse array of jazz, blues, and alternative artists with an added commitment to showcasing the talented scope of musicians ever present in the Emerald City. In addition to JSJW's efforts to preserve and educate people about the Central District's roots in jazz and its deep, rich history within the Black community, the fact that the concert will coincide with Black History Month this year, makes it even more impactful.

It's no secret that these days Seattle is a rapidly changing city, making the work that organizations like JSJW have done to hold onto the legacy and cultural identity of the city, even more vital. And at a time in this country where the threat on Black

lives remains real and constant and hate drives us apart, JSJW Executive Producer, singer, and songwriter, Eugenie Jones so gently reminds us. "Historically, and unlike the redline areas of Seattle—Central Seattle and venues like the Black & Tan were the birthplace of artistic inclusivity; no matter how dark your skin you could step into the spotlight."

And, step into the spotlight they shall. While the joy of experiencing music live again is still a ways away, what audiences can look forward to are two full nights of a dynamic range of Seattle favorites including performances by Delvon Lamarr Organ Trio, Eugenie Jones Jazz Band, Lewis vs. Lewis Drum-off (featuring three generations: David Lewis, D'Vonne Lewis, and Donovan Lewis), Alex Dugdale, Julio Jáuregui, Rafael Tranquilino, Darrius Willrich Trio, and more. Word even has it that Jones will be premiering a new original song speaking to the racial injustices that continue to exist in the entertainment industry, with nods to icons such as Quincy Jones, Ray Charles, Ernestine Anderson, and Dave Lewis, who all made names for themselves right here in Seattle before sharing their talent with the world. It was moments like these—the familiar energy of a packed club, neck



Eugenie Jones photo by Pamela Eaton-Ford

bobbing vigorously to the beat, frozen in a single, perfect, harmonic moment—that brought us together in the first place. And it's precisely for moments like these that we all take the steps necessary to experience it once again.

In recent years under the leadership of Eugenie Jones, JSJW has integrated a community service component. This year, Jackson Street has chosen to serve the Central Area Senior Center. In lieu of admission fees, Jackson Street is requesting donations, 100% of which will go to this organization's community meal program that delivers meals to homebound seniors during the COVID-19 pandemic. Donations can be made via their fiscal sponsor Shunpike at poweredbyshunpike.org/c/PBS/a/JacksonStreetJazzWalk.

Jackson Street would like to recognize the following sponsors, for which this year's virtual event could not exist without: Vulcan, Inc., Historic Central Area Arts and Cultural District, Langston Hughes Performing Arts Institute, Earshot Jazz, Uncle Ike's, and Shunpike.

—RAYNA MATHIS



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Full schedule and more information available at jacksonstreetjazz.org.

MEET THE BOARD

Ruby Love

Continuing our new series, Earshot Jazz would like to introduce you to our board members. They're a group whose work often goes unnoticed by the broader public, but we value their expertise and their dedication to Earshot Jazz. Each month you'll meet someone new—in February, please meet Ruby Love.



Ruby Love photo
by Daniel Sheehan

When a friend reaches out and asks you to consider following their lead it is always a time that gives me pause. Especially when that friend is an expert and highly respected person who's

asking you to consider following them. Paul Toliver, a revered jazz appreciator, collector, promoter, and historian in our community, extended the invitation to join the Earshot board. He said, "Ruby, I need you to consider taking a leadership role on the Board of Earshot Jazz. I'm relocating out of the area and we need fearless Black leadership to keep our story alive and bring resources to the organization so that jazz thrives in Seattle." That describes how I came to be in service to Earshot Jazz as a member of the Board of Directors.

Now mind you I am not a jazz artist, collector, historian, or producer. Very few in the extraordinary and illustrious jazz community of Seattle would know my name. But that does not preclude the fact that I was raised on jazz in my family by my father and his brothers. From Nat King Cole who stayed at my grandparent's home because he was not allowed a room at the hotels in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, to Herbie Hancock who went to Grinnell College and would visit us in Cedar Rapids. In 2013 I said yes and joined the board and have served as chair, vice-chair, and as a member of the Fundraising and Finance Committees.

Jazz feeds my soul. It fills me with energy. It relaxes me. It soothes me. It makes me sway, snap my fingers, rock in my chair,

dance around the room. Jazz is the music of my soul. When you enter my home there is a large painting of Thelonious Monk. Whether a vocalist, musician, composer, or appreciator of the art form like me, we are all needed to keep jazz vibrant and alive for generations to come. At Earshot Jazz we have worked hard to lift up local jazz artists while bringing the many nationally acclaimed and awarded jazz greats over the years to Seattle. Audiences have enjoyed them at the Earshot Jazz Festival, the Duke Ellington Sacred Music evening and in so many venues and education opportunities over the years. One of the things I'm most proud of is the collection of newsletters over the 38-year history of the organization that has recently been digitized for future reference, retaining the noted history of so many great jazz stories.

As an organization like so many others, Earshot Jazz is taking action on the neglect and damaging omission of Black and Brown voices leading the art form and the

organization in Seattle. I will continue to push the organization to scrutinize who is hired, where concerts are marketed, who are the vendors used, who serves on the board of directors, volunteers and staff, what venues are used, and who we partner with on projects. All of this and more are of greatest importance to me as I continue my relationship with Earshot Jazz. As a board member, I take responsibility and I encourage people to hold me accountable to push for the changes in the organization that will continue to elevate jazz and position it to be available, enjoyed, and supported by all.

Just like everyone else I miss live performances of all the arts. I challenge all my friends to step up and step out to give generously to the organizations and artists as they continue to struggle through this unprecedented time. We will return and we will return with greater love and energy for the arts and for jazz. And remember, stay jazzed!

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FOR THE RECORD

Jay Clayton, Fritz Pauer, Ed Neumeister *3 For the Road*

MEISTEROMUSIC 0020

For two decades starting in 1982, improvising vocalist Jay Clayton was a major force in Seattle jazz, helping shape a generation of forward-thinking students (Briggan Krauss, Brad Shepik, others) at Cornish College, who later took New York's "downtown" scene by storm. Clayton also taught for years at the University of the Performing Arts in Graz, Austria, which set the stage for this delightful 2001–02 recording with fellow instructors Ed Neumeister (Vanguard Jazz Orchestra, Joe Lovano) on trombone and the late Austrian pianist Fritz Pauer, who worked with everyone from Don Byas to Friedrich Gulda.

The album hopscotches between delicately nuanced free improvisations and imaginatively sparse arrangements of standards, plus settings of a couple of poems by e e cummings. Clayton fully owns the win-

some, optimistic sentiments of the poems she chooses, in this case cummings' "Love Is A Place," which she speak-sings with gentle conviction over the trio's exploding rhythmic polka dots. Likewise, she inhabits cummings' determination to be "gay like every lark/who lifts his life/from all the dark," even as Pauer floods the field with darkness. Clayton's love of poetry is no surprise, given her exquisite ability to draw meaning from a lyric. Henry Mancini's "Two For the Road,"—"In the winter we'll drink summer wine"—never sounded like such a thoughtful invitation. That Clayton delivers this bid in a voice both plummy and lucid, with flute-perfect intonation, makes it all the more attractive, as does Neumeister's chipper muted plunger solo, a la "Tricky Sam" Nanton. "It Could Happen To You" makes you think it could, indeed, happen to you, with Clayton's voice bravely exposed and Pauer hopping behind her, first with one hand, then two.

Clayton is world famous for her innovative scat vocabulary and she shows why on the trio's playful rendition of late pianist Larry



Karush's South Indian sounding "Badadadad" and the speedfest, "Fun," which has Clayton sounding like a walking bass. Her solo on her tune "Rhythm Waltz" is a tour de force, evoking everything from birds to Native American chant. But *3 For the Road* is not all dizzy. On Neumeister's "Gobblers Nob," Clayton and the trombonist harmonize long, pretty tones before Clayton's also suddenly bursts out, like a star in the night sky. Thanks, Jay, for giving a glimpse of that and of a 20-year-old session we might never have had the pleasure of hearing.

—PAUL DE BARROS

Nelda Swiggett Quintet *The Alaska Suite*

SELF-RELEASED

Pianist and composer Nelda Swiggett debuted her 9-song *Alaska Suite* on Earth Day in 2017. Along with her husband, trombonist Clif Swiggett, the bandleader has presented the music in multimedia performances that depict the accelerated climate change in Alaska. Teaming up with her quintet, including Chris Symer (bass), Adam Kessler (drums), and Julian Smedley (violin), Swiggett recorded the suite in 2018 at David Lange's studio.

A set of vibrant lyric pieces for a landscape's sublime degeneration, the result is a well-choreographed combination of Swiggett's colorful arrangements and her group's collaborative electricity. The pianist establishes the tone with her bluesy touch on the opening track, "Alaska," summoning the enormous skyline of the

state. After setting the scene, the group portrays warmed ice in "Melting."

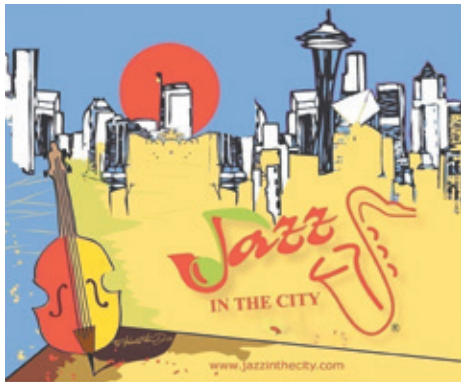
The modal cooker "Burning" depicts extensive fires through Swiggett's brass and Smedley's flaring phrases, tumbling into Kessler's flashing pyrotechnics. But the group really gets going on "Homeless," smartly characterized by its odd tempo (7/4) and unrelenting pace, before a great thematic use of free improvisation's unsuspected synergies on "Havoc."

The last third of the album takes a more psychological turn. "Hope Springs Eternal" flows out before a Weather Report-style groove, a framework that later allows for moody hits between solos (apparently, hope must break ground before it springs). That thing with feathers, "First Flight," follows, a finale that jumps suddenly downwards, then builds back up to a cruising montuno figure. Well-tuned together, the band finishes the "tune without the words" on a chord (D7 flat four) that truly perches on the soul.



But the Swiggett and her band aren't really silent. Given the scope of the issue, musicians certainly have their expressive work cut out for them. Still it's wise of Swiggett to voice, on a spoken word section of "Worry," the wish to go back as we "strive for answers, make goals, then relapse into comforts and denial." Music can hold a mirror to our nature, but it can also give testimony to this fluid now, a story far from past.

—IAN GWIN



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NOTES, FROM PAGE 3

Totem Star Artists Mentor Sessions

Totem Star, a local nonprofit that works with youth to build life skills in communication, collaboration, and critical thinking through their creative pursuits in music production and performance, is offering Winter Sessions which are available for booking from now through Friday, March 19th. These artist mentor sessions are free for youth ages 14-25 years old while in quarantine. To find out about the artist mentors and how to apply for the program visit Facebook @totemstar or totemstar.org.

Piano Starts Here: Mary Lou Williams & Thelonious Monk

Next in this series is an exploration of the works of jazz piano innovators Mary Lou Williams and one of her mentees, Thelonious Monk. This concert will be livestreamed from The Royal Room, on February 17, at 7:30pm, PST and is presented by KNKX and South Hudson Music Project by Live-ConcertsStream. Alex Guilbert, host of the Piano Starts Here series, who has been playing and composing music professionally as part of the Seattle scene for more than 20 years, will be joined by Nelda Swiggert, Ryan Burns, and Ray Skjelbred. For details visit royalroomseattle.com.

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kandace springs, 2018 studio session
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2021 Seattle Jazz as Culture Festival

Now in its second year, Jazz In The City, presents this year's festival as a virtual experience from February 12-14. Jazz as Culture Festival aims to emphasize jazz's roots in African American culture. The festival will be aired across several platforms including The Seattle Channel and social media sites. For details visit jazzinthecity.com.

Jack Straw Winter Online Workshops

Jack Straw Cultural Center continues to offer audio workshops with engineer Tom Stiles, to improve studio skills, or learn more about studio recording and editing. All classes are conducted via Zoom. Classes include Zoom Hosting, Basic Field Recording, Microphone Workshop, and Intro to Digital Audio Editing. Dates are from February 17-March 5. To sign up visit jackstraw.org

Earshot Jazz YouTube Channel Expands

With Earshot Jazz's foray into the digital world of concert programming, we've increased the offerings on our YouTube channel. Over the past few weeks we've added videos created during the 2020 Earshot Jazz Festival. Recent additions include excerpts from the Jovino Santos Neto Quinteto, and the Eugenie Jones Quintet. Stay tuned for more. Explore the music at Earshot Jazz YouTube



Benjamin Hunter photo by Daniel Sheehan

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