

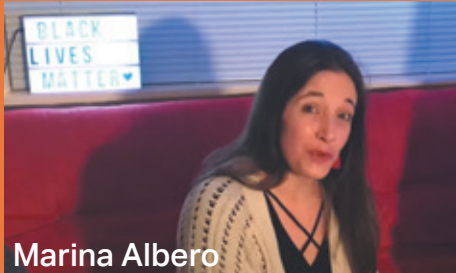
EARSHOT JAZZ

A Mirror and Focus for the Jazz Community

April 2021
Volume 37, No. 04
Seattle, Washington



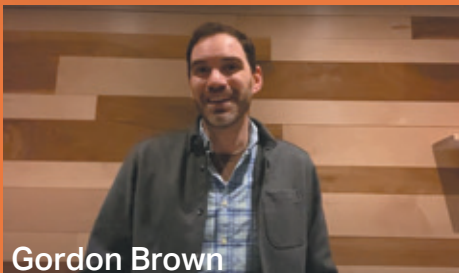
Hans Teuber



Marina Alberio



Max Holmberg



Gordon Brown



Josh Hou



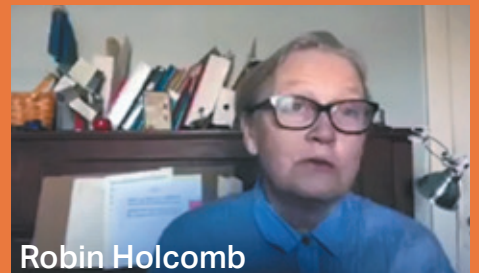
Alex Chadsey



Alex Dugdale



Johnaye Kendrick



Robin Holcomb



Moc Escobedo

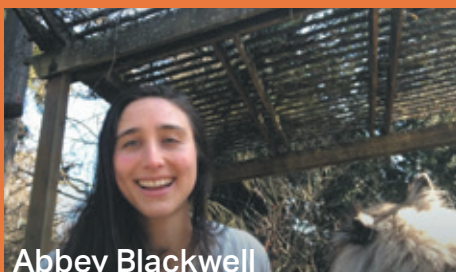


Ahamefule J. Oluo



Sundae + Mr. Goessl

2020 Golden Ear Awards



Abbey Blackwell



Ryan Burns

We're Golden

As you can see by the collage of screen grabs on this month's cover, the recent Golden Ear Awards party from the Royal Room (and people's living room) was a great success. The collage also illustrates the circumstances of this past year: that many individual artists, living and creating on their own, make up one of the most vibrant jazz communities in the country.

The Earshot Jazz organization is dedicated to supporting, enriching, and documenting Seattle's incredible jazz scene. For 30 years, the annual awards ceremony has provided a setting to pause and celebrate the work of Seattle artists. Over and above the individual categories and recipients, the event signifies to the greater Seattle cultural community that something very special exists here, and that the artists who live and work among us deserve recognition.

The first Golden Ear and Seattle Jazz Hall of Fame Awards party took place in 1990, warming the stage at Lofurno's, the cherished and well-patinaed Italian restaurant and jazz club at the south end of Ballard Bridge. Originally conceived by Earshot Jazz cofounder Gary Bannister, the awards program has endured as an important annual event to honor the significant work done by Seattle's established and emerging artists.

Those original Hall of Fame recipients were Floyd Standifer, Al Hood, Chuck Metcalf, and Ernestine Anderson. Over the years, the Hall of Fame has grown to include Seattle legends Buddy Catlett, Don Lanphere, Bud Young, Melody Jones, Jabo Ward, Hadley Caliman, Vonne Griffin, Lola Pedrini, Overton Berry, Julian Priester, Gaye Anderson, and so many others who, collectively, have built the structure of Seattle's jazz legacy. We're privileged to help that structure grow through the arc of our own history, understanding that any of today's artists can be the legends of tomorrow.

Moreover, Seattle's jazz scene is a shining example of the excellence and multiplicity of approaches that make this such an exciting time for jazz around the world. The Earshot Jazz organization has always embraced an expansive view of the art form, with an enduring commitment to our home community. Earshot's 36-year presenting history is full of names of the adventurous seekers who have helped to pave the way for the richness of today's scene, much as the artists we'll present in the coming months are blazing a trail to the future.

We invite you to join us. Support your local artists. Even in a world segmented by circumstances, jazz is alive and thriving here in Seattle.

See you out there.

JOHN GILBREATH, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



John Gilbreath photo by Bill Uznay

A Mirror and Focus for the Jazz Community

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NOTES

New Public Art Program Manager

Amy Nguyen joins the Seattle Office of Arts, as their new Public Art Program Manager. Nguyen will be managing the city's investments in artmaking in the public realm. The Public Art Program integrates artworks into a variety of public settings; the Civic Art Collection currently includes more than 400 permanently sited and integrated works and nearly 3,000 portable works in parks, libraries, community centers, on roadways, bridges, and other public venues. Prior to joining ARTS, Nguyen spent over 10 years as a public servant and nonprofit leader with roles at the Seattle Department of Transportation, Seattle Department of Neighborhoods, and as a Legislative Aide for a Seattle City Council member. Nguyen also has experience in policy analysis, nonprofit management, and community organizing in New York City and New Orleans. Visit artbeat.seattle.gov for more details.

International Jazz Day 2021

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the International Jazz Day (IJD). In November 2011, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) officially designated April 30 as International Jazz Day to highlight jazz and emphasize its ability to unite people worldwide. IJD is led by UNESCO Director General Audrey Azoulay and jazz legend Herbie Hancock. The Herbie Hancock Institute of Jazz organizes and promotes the annual celebration.

Inclusion in IJD is open to individuals and organizations who organize any sized jazz event, from a jam session, to a social media tribute, to a multi-day festival. To promote and register an event, visit jazzday.com/register. To view the 2021 IJD event map visit jazzday.com.

Seattle Jazz Artist Relief Fund Update

Earshot Jazz is sincerely grateful to the Raynier Institute and Foundation for their generosity in making this emergency support program possible. With their support,

fifty gifts of \$1,000 each were distributed to resident artists most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Thank you to the handful of patrons who designated funds to this program—with your support, we were able to distribute two additional awards.

Recipient demographics included 73% BIPOC, 13% LGBTQ+, 20% women artists, and 20% artists with disabilities. We're honored to have been chosen to administer this program and to help provide some financial relief to artists experiencing financial hardship.

Artist Relief Offers New Grant Funds

Artist Relief, a coalition of national arts grantmakers have reopened their artist relief grant application from March 8 to June 23. Thanks to generous gifts from Robert Rauschenberg Foundation, Lily Auchincloss Foundation, The Willem de Kooning Foundation, and others, Artist Relief will distribute \$5,000 grants to artists facing dire financial emergencies due to COVID-19. To be eligible, you must be a practicing artist, 18 years or older, who has lived and worked in the U.S. for the past two years. More details and application can be found at artistrelief.org.

Live Concerts Stream Changes Name to LoudSwell

Live Concerts Stream, a streaming platform that began in March 2020 as a way to provide musicians a means of reaching audiences after the pandemic-induced shut down of venues, recently changed its name to LoudSwell, citing the increase in demand for use of their platform and a desire to create an organization with more business potential. It plans to offer more features in the coming weeks. Visit loudswell.com for details.

Racer Sessions Online

Racer Sessions, the local organization that showcases experimental music, continues their monthly first Sunday sessions online. Helmed by Seattle arts organization, Table and Chairs, the Racer Sessions is dedicated to composition and improvisation. Every

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

Deems Tsutakawa, Soul of Seattle Sound

One of the brightest threads running through the Seattle music tapestry over the years has been funky R&B, whether you're talking about Gene Argel and Dave Lewis in the '60s, Kenny G and Robert Damper in the '70s, Michael Powers in the '80s or today's B3 organ phenom, Delvon Lamarr. Perhaps the most beloved of all our funk-jazz figures, however, was the groovy, good-natured keyboard man, Deems Tsutakawa, who left us prematurely this past February, dying of cancer at the age of 69.

Deems worked primarily on the local scene, though at one point he enjoyed heavy radio play in Minneapolis, where he also performed. Other tours included Hawaii, Florida, Alaska, California, Tokyo, and London. He was a hard-working, motivated player who almost always found work, whether at a humble Denny Regrade lounge like the Warwick or at the 2018 Earshot Jazz Festival. He did all his own bookings and produced his own albums—all 17 of them—on his own label, J-Town.

Born in 1952, Deems was one of four children of the world-famous sculptor George Tsutakawa. Attending Franklin High School in the '60s—a few years before the award-winning Franklin Jazz Lab band with Kenny G got started—Deems started on classical piano at age five but was soon pulled into the soulful eddies of Oscar Peterson, Wes Montgomery, Ramsey Lewis, and Cannonball Adderley.

From the start, Deems made no bones about his “smooth jazz” outlook.

“My father's more of a pure artist,” he told Patrick MacDonald of *The Seattle Times*, in 1983. “I'm a pop artist, a commercial artist.”



Deems Tsutakawa photo by Daniel Sheehan

As early as 1970, Deems was playing a steady gig at the Mikado restaurant with his brother, Marcus (who would go on to a stellar career directing the Garfield High School orchestra). In the '70s, Deems could be found at other International District venues such as the Silver Dragon and China Gate; Central District clubs like Latiff's, Thompson's Point of View, and Heritage House; downtown, at Benihana of Tokyo and Asuka; and in Pioneer Square, at the New Gallery Garden, Ernestine's, and Merchants Café. He also played at the old Opera House for the 1983 Bumbershoot festival and was one of the few Seattle musicians to headline at Jazz Alley, in 1993.

The intrepid pianist kicked off his record label with a 1977 single, “Okashi Na,” and released his first eponymous album in 1982, selected by *Jazz Educators Journal* as one of the top 20 albums of the year.

His second effort, *Living Deems* (1986), featured the catchy, riff-based tune, “Tough Tofu,” which became a signature. Playing sleek guitar lines on that album and many subsequent projects was Franklin Jazz Lab alum David Yamasaki, who would go on to play with Pete Escovedo and Tito Puente and become a regular instructor at the Stanford Jazz Workshop.

“I met Deems through Marcus, who was the bass player in jazz band,” recalled Yamasaki from Honolulu, where he has lived since 2002. “Deems invited me to jam in the basement of his house in Seward Park. Some of the best musicians in Seattle hung out at Deems' sessions—Steve Banks, Wayne Rabb, Steve Kim—but he was like a teacher, teaching us about the Seattle sound, that kind of mixture of jazz and soul

music that kind of permeated the Central District at the time.

“He was a great mentor. The main thing I learned from him was that you just have to completely try to be yourself. And the main thing he loved was staying in the groove, in the pocket. That's a lesson we both got from [fabled Seattle teacher] Jerome Gray. And if someone in the band wanted to play a lot of technical notes or a lot of harmonic expansions, he was fine with it.”

Deems Tsutakawa had other career highlights, including an award for jazz album of the year in 2018 by the Hawaii Academy of Recording Arts for his album *Deems & Friends Live in Hawaii*.

A memorial is in the works but at this writing details have not been announced.

—Paul de Barros



Paul Taub, one of the most admired and valued figures in Seattle music, died suddenly of a heart attack on March 13, at the age of 68.

and contemporary music in the Pacific Northwest taught in the music department at Cornish College of the Arts from 1979 to 2018, and was the coordinator of the classical/new music program for almost 10 years. He served as president of the Cornish Federation of Teachers, and performed often as a soloist and in chamber groups and orchestras nationally and internationally.

As a founding member and longtime executive director of the Seattle Chamber Players, Paul advocated energetically for contemporary composition and performance. He performed and recorded numerous American and world premieres by renowned composers from around the world, and participated often in world premieres including commissions he initiated from John Cage, George Crumb, Sofia Gubaidulina, Toru Takemitsu, Peteris Vasks, and Seattle-based Wayne Horvitz. He performed tirelessly in the Pacific Northwest and on four continents and brought many international composers to Seattle.

His recordings included his solo CD, *Oo-Ee* (Periplum, 2000) with 10 commissioned works by Northwest composers, and *Edge:*

Flute Music from the Periphery of Europe (Present Sounds, 2011), which included a commission he made on behalf of the National Flute Association: “Quintet for flute and string quartet” by Giya Kancheli.

Over the years, Paul was an administrator at such organizations as the Seattle Flute Society, the National Flute Association, Chamber Music America, Seattle Chamber Players, Town Hall Seattle, and Seattle's Goodwill Arts Festival.

Paul Taub was born in New York City in 1952, studied at Rutgers University and California Institute for the Arts, and came to Seattle and Cornish in 1979. In an on-line tribute, James Falzone, Department Chair of Clarinet, Improvisation Ensembles at Cornish, wrote that Taub's "legacy at Cornish, in Seattle, and on the flute world in general, is deep and lasting. His advocacy on behalf of students is a lesson for all educators. Thank you for the clear roundness of your tone that came out of your flute but seemed to flow directly from the deepest recesses of your heart."

—Peter Monaghan

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FEATURED ARTISTS

Cascadia Groove
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Danny Quintero
Deseo Garmin
Dmitri Matheny
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Greta Matassa
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GOLDEN EAR AWARDS

The 2020 Golden Ear and Seattle Jazz Hall of Fame Awards



Alex Dugdale FADE Quartet performing at the Awards Ceremony: Greg Feingold (bass), Alex Dugdale (saxophone), Max Holmberg (drums), and not pictured here John Hansen (piano).
Insets: Emcees Eugenie Jones and Abe Beeson

BY PAUL RAUCH

Earshot Jazz celebrated Seattle jazz on the evening of March 12 with its annual Golden Ear Awards, broadcast virtually from the stage of the Royal Room. The evening recognized the art of jazz in Seattle during the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

With the pandemic and the fight for racial justice front and center, nominated artists had to create under extraordinary circumstances the past year, with live, in-person performances limited to the first ten weeks of the calendar year. With the music largely studio bound, a variety of access points for livestream concerts were created, and the release of significant jazz recordings reflecting the social narrative of this epic time in history were released.

The 31st annual awards, recognizing a year of achievement on the Seattle jazz scene, were presented virtually this year due to social conditions necessitated by the pandemic. A limited crew presented the livestream from the Royal Room, with winners accepting their awards virtually by submitting videos.

Earshot Jazz Executive Director John Gilbreath got the evening swinging by introducing The Alex Dugdale FADE Quartet, who offered up a first set in their signature hard bop style. The opener, “Just in Time,” saw Dugdale grinding on tenor saxophone supported by the ace rhythm section of John Hansen (piano), Greg Feingold (bass), and Max Holmberg (drums). He then elegantly tap danced his way through “Tea For Two,” paired with Holmberg on drums.

KNKX host Abe Beeson and vocalist Eugenie Jones shared emcee duties for the evening, presenting the nominees and announcing the winners. Gilbreath acknowledged jazz radio icon and longtime Golden Ear Awards emcee Jim Wilke, with the esteemed veteran viewing safely at home. With that, Jones and Beeson took the reins, and revealed this year’s winners of the Golden Ear and Seattle Jazz Hall of Fame Awards.

NW ACOUSTIC ENSEMBLE OF THE YEAR: SUNDAE + MR. GOESSL

Sundae + Mr. Goessl features vocalist Kate Voss and guitarist Jason Goessl. The duo blends trad jazz with country and pop overtones, incorporating humor, wit, and an abundance of charm. Nonetheless, within the nostalgic backdrop of their performances is serious musicianship and dedication to craft. The married couple have produced six albums, and have performed over one thousand shows.

“We are so honored to be among such insanely awesome talent,” offered Voss, with Goessl gesturing humorously beside her.

Voss, a protégé of Seattle Jazz Hall of Famer Greta Matassa, draws from her extensive experience in jazz and western swing, while Goessl’s intricate support playing and stylish soloing are squarely rooted in traditional jazz guitar. The duo wins an award that has largely gone to more eclectic, instrumental ensembles, a valid recognition of their attention to progressive detail within the conceptual character of a bygone era.

NW RECORDING OF THE YEAR: DUENDE LIBRE, *THE DANCE SHE SPOKE*

Following up on their 2018 Golden Ear nod, Duende Libre has once again been so honored for its album blending West African dance rhythms and vocals in the Maninka language with jazz. As was the case in their first two recordings, the band uses jazz as a launchpad into world music culture. The core trio of Alex Chadsey (piano), Farko Dosumov (electric bass), and Jeff Busch (drums and percussion) looked to vocalist Frank Anderson to deliver the concept for the album, drawing on his studies of West African dance. Anderson and Chava Mirel provide the vocals and present the idea that music and dance are so closely connected that one can “see the music, and hear the dance.”

Bandleader Chadsey spoke to the role that music has played during these difficult times. “When so much is taken away, you learn to appreciate what you have. When the going gets tough we need music and musicians more than ever. Music wouldn’t mean anything without a community to share it with,” he said.

EMERGING ARTIST OF THE YEAR: ABBEY BLACKWELL

Multi-talented double/electric bassist Abbey Blackwell has been emerging as a bright star on the Seattle jazz scene for several years now, all the while creating a diverse portfolio in jazz, rock, improvised music, and classical forms. Working within the immense social obstacles of COVID-19 in 2020, Blackwell released the debut album of her new trio, RAE. *Internal Volume* introduced us to her trio featuring guitarist Ronan Delisle and drummer Evan Woodlee. While casual listeners may refer to the music of RAE as avant-garde, the trio clearly works within the parameters of rhythm and melody, the elements most important to the bassist/composer/bandleader. The music of RAE speaks directly to Blackwell’s direction as an artist, utilizing the double bass as both an anchor in the rhythm section, and a powerful solo instrument. Her elegant tone, and marvelous facility present an original and articulate musical voice. In her acceptance remarks, Blackwell expressed recognition and gratitude to our dedicated jazz community for working through these difficult times.

“Most importantly, I want to thank everyone who has been able to continue to support live and recorded music this year, as well as those who have still been able to make live and recorded music in this the toughest of all years,” she said.

ALTERNATIVE JAZZ GROUP OF THE YEAR: RYAN BURNS

Keyboard wizard Ryan Burns has long held a reputation for being a bit of a musical mad scientist. His work early on with Matt Jorgensen +451 featured his work on a variety of electric keyboards, from Rhodes to vintage Moog. With his roots planted firmly in the jazz piano tradition, Burns has taken his considerable chops into a variety of musical worlds. When the pandemic hit, Burns conceived of a way to use technology to make a high quality recording completely remotely, with each participant sequestered in their own home studio.

Featuring an all-star Seattle cast, the ensemble wins this award without the benefit of live performances, existing entirely as a virtual entity. Burns is joined by Seattle stalwarts Skerik, Steve Treseler, Mark Taylor, Matt Jorgensen, Cole Schuster, Brian Monroney, and Thione Diop among others.

With the seven Burns originals released as singles at first, Burns assembled the tunes into an independently released album titled, *Postponed Parade*. The project is one of the truly remarkable tales to tell of the past year on the Seattle jazz scene. It shines as a triumph of creative intuition under the weight of arduous social circumstances.

“I’m humbled and appreciative,” said Burns. “This inspires me to keep making music with my friends.”

NW JAZZ INSTRUMENTALIST OF THE YEAR: ALEX DUGDALE

Alex Dugdale’s time in the Seattle Repertory Jazz Orchestra clearly delineates his prowess as a saxophonist. Over time, he has played alto, tenor, and, most recently, baritone saxophone as part of the acclaimed ensemble. While his performance on all three instruments has highlighted his profound virtuosity, it fails to tell the full story of his contributions to the band, as Dugdale is also a top-shelf tap dancer, initially showing those skills performing Duke Ellington’s *Sacred Music* with SRJO.



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Photo by Richard Walker

Dugdale's working quintet features him fronting the band on tenor for the first set, and alto the second. In between, he may take a solo or two on trumpet without dropping a beat. He will then incorporate tap as a vehicle for jazz improvisation in the same context as he would a musical instrument.

In his acceptance remarks, Dugdale thanked Earshot, the Seattle jazz community and area venues that have kept the torch lit by staging streaming live performances. Live performing is what the talented Dugdale looks forward to most.

"I can't wait until we can share stages again and go hear each other play," he remarked.



NW VOCALIST OF THE YEAR: JOHNNAYE KENDRICK

The artistry of vocalist Johnaye Kendrick has long been established in the Seattle community through her stunning live performances and two highly acclaimed albums. She has been providing real-life mentoring as a professor at Cornish College of the Arts, carrying with her the credibility of being an engaged artist of the highest caliber. Kendrick has grown before our eyes in Seattle, into a bright light in the jazz world on an international scale.

Just before the world shut down due in 2020, Kendrick joined a unique vocal ensemble named *säje*, featuring four female voices singing original tunes and arrangements. Seattleites Sara Gazarek and Amanda Taylor joined, along with Los Angeles resident Erin Bentlage. In early 2020, they arranged and recorded "Desert Song," their first effort as a unit. Remarkably, that debut recording granted them a Grammy nomination for Best Arrangement, Instruments and Vocals.

While highly acclaimed internationally, this marks the first Golden Ear Award for Kendrick.

"I have been nominated several times and this is the first time I have actually won," she said. "It's an honor."

NW CONCERT OF THE YEAR: AHAMEFULE J. OLUO, THE MUSIC FROM SUSAN, STREAMED AT EARSHOT JAZZ FESTIVAL 10/18/2020

It goes without saying that 2020 was a lost year for live, in-person performances. With venues shuttered on March 18, musicians had to figure out a way to reach their audience virtually. With hardship came innovation, and livestreaming became the norm. Such was the case with the 2020 Earshot Jazz Festival, and its artist-in-residence, Ahamefule J. Oluo.

Oluo can be best described as a storyteller, employing a skill set that includes stand-up comedy, screenwriting, composing, and, of course, playing the trumpet. His theatrical work is based on the highs and lows of his life. For the festival, Oluo led a seventeen-piece band performing the music from his stage show *Susan*, a soul-baring dark comedy about his mother. *Susan* debuted at On the Boards in December of 2019, three months before the pandemic shut down live performances. The festival concert gave Earshot patrons the opportunity to experience this music that was to be performed at the Paramount Theatre in the spring of 2020.

"What a complete honor to win concert of the year, especially in a city with so many incredible musicians making so many incredible things in the face of such incredible odds," offered Oluo.

SEATTLE JAZZ HALL OF FAME: HANS TEUBER

Multi-reedist Hans Teuber came to Seattle from his native South Carolina more than thirty years ago to visit a friend he had met while performing with Buddy Greco in Atlantic City. That friend, jazz drummer and now Origin Records principal John Bishop, introduced Teuber to the active jazz scene in Seattle. Over the past three decades, Seattle jazz fans have become acquainted with Teuber's original style on saxophone, clarinet, bass clarinet, and flute. Teuber has doubled as music director for the zany cabaret dinner theatre Teatro ZinZanni, playing literally any instrument the music required.

Teuber isn't known for releasing his own recordings as a leader. His mark has more been left breathing life, literally and figuratively, into the music of his fellow artists in his very personal style. Trumpeter Thomas Marriott perhaps describes Teuber's style and sound best.

“One of the things I have always admired most about Hans’ playing is that he always sounds like himself. It doesn’t matter what kind of gig he’s playing, or what style of music, he always sounds exactly like Hans Teuber. That’s very hard to do when you are a journeyman musician and play a lot of different music.”

Teuber’s tenure performing within the cross currents of Seattle’s vibrant music scene, and contributions to the city’s unique and original sound make him worthy of standing with the best of Seattle’s jazz legacy. On receiving this honor, the humble and somewhat reticent Teuber remarked simply, “Thank you to my family and all my beautiful friends who I love to play music with. Hopefully, I’ll see you out there soon.”

SEATTLE JAZZ HALL OF FAME: ROBIN HOLCOMB

Robin Holcomb in many ways is the embodiment of the broad definition of jazz music that Earshot Jazz has traditionally employed. Her work is an amalgam of the American musical experience, employing elements of country, folk, jazz, gospel hymns, and minimalism. Her music has been compared favorably to the polytonal music of Charles Ives. Holcomb began her professional career in New York City, in the thick of an avant-garde scene there that included her future husband Wayne Horvitz, John Zorn, and Eugene Chadbourne. Her work is chronicled on seven albums as a leader.

“I’d like to thank all of the musicians in Seattle, those I’ve played with and those I’ve listened to. You’re endlessly inspiring,” said Holcomb.

Holcomb continues to forge forward into new territory. She was awarded a commission by the League of American Orchestras in 2017 that resulted in her composition, “No Thing Lives to Itself,” a piece that premiered in January 2020 by the Portland Symphony in Maine.

SEATTLE JAZZ HALL OF FAME: MOC ESCOBEDO

Seattle jazz education legend Moc Escobedo has just about seen it all in his twenty-six-year tenure at Eckstein Middle School in North Seattle. A man of boundless dedication to his students, he directs three jazz bands, a concert band, and a vocal ensemble. Some of Seattle’s most prominent jazz artists have passed through his program over this time. Sara Gazarek, Alex Dugdale, Santosh Sharma, and Max Holmberg are among his students who have taken what they gathered under his direction before evolving into professional musicians. His students arrive from a variety of social and economic circumstances, with Escobedo embracing them all.

What he hadn’t seen before 2020 was a pandemic. The challenges presented to teachers in this time have especially hit music programs hard, without the ability to bring together music ensembles that can amount to more than thirty students. Escobedo has always prioritized equity in his program, understanding that some kids just need more time to accomplish goals set. Students with economic challenges during these times are especially impacted. Escobedo’s outstanding work in implementing equity throughout his program over decades of time is worthy of high praise, never more so than in 2020.

While most years include a trip to the Monterey Next Generation Jazz Festival, or festivals in Reno and Idaho, Escobedo’s focus now is simply getting instruments into the hands of his students. Oftentimes he will lend out one of his own instruments to get a student started. This important work is a major point of light illuminating the future of jazz music in Seattle. For Escobedo’s students, it is so much more. He looks forward to the challenges going forward, stating, “I am grateful and humbled to be able to work

in a community that is so supportive. It has been a wonderful, constantly changing experience. Stay positive!”

COMMUNITY IN ACTION AWARD: THE QUARANTINE SESSIONS, MARINA ALBERO

When the COVID-19 pandemic closed down local performance venues, four acclaimed female artists from Seattle decided to create and curate a streaming concert series. Dubbed “The Quarantine Sessions,” pianist Marina Albero, and vocalists Jacqueline Tabor, Adriana Giordano, and Chava Mirel presented concerts that were interactive, welcoming the audience to participate. The concerts became a source of healing for both musicians and patrons in these most uncertain of times.

Seated together, Albero and Tabor spoke of the unified efforts of strong women supporters, and the assistance of strong, dynamic men.

“We are nothing alone, so thanks for keeping connected through the hardest of times. Especially the powerful women who from day one were on this journey—Adriana Giordano, Chava Mirel, Serena Dominguez, and Shaina Shepherd. We had some strong, dynamic men that allowed us females to lead as they followed very graciously—Hans Teuber, Jeff Busch, Dean Schmidt, Jerome Smith, and Floyd Reitsma.”

The series began streaming live from the studio, and for the winter months, evolved into a live video program. The sliding scale pay-per-view program strived to provide the vibe of a live, in person performance. TQS donate a portion of its fees to local food banks and BLM Seattle.

COMMUNITY IN ACTION AWARD: JAZZTALK SEATTLE, JOSH HOU AND MAX HOLMBERG

The Seattle jazz scene is a community with a real sense of fellowship. That social connection was all but lost when the pandemic shuttered local clubs and sequestered local musicians and patrons at home. Drummer Max Holmberg and accordionist Joshua Hou hatched an idea to

Nominations for Golden Ear Awards and Seattle Jazz Hall of Fame inductees accepted year round. Email nominations@earshot.org with your suggestions.

launch a podcast that enabled area jazzers to get to know local jazz musicians in an intimate, interview format. Jazztalk Seattle has since interviewed 37 area artists, in nearly hour-long segments.

“I’m so grateful for the opportunity for me and Max to spotlight our community by talking to so many of you about your music and what’s behind it,” said Hou.

Listening to Holmberg and Hou informally interview artists such as Thomas Marriott and Jacqueline Tabor came off like a late night hang at a local club, providing what was essentially missing from streaming concerts. Holmberg, who was “hugely surprised and honored” by the award, understands the social connection the podcast has provided.

“The podcast has been a great way to both share what’s happening on the local scene, as well as learn more about the people behind the projects,” he said.

COMMUNITY IN ACTION AWARD: LOUDSWELL, GORDON BROWN

The past year of social isolation has spurred innovation among local artists to discover new pathways to perform, earn a living and provide music fans with the live music that was missing in their lives. Seattle saxophonist Gordon Brown launched Live Concerts Stream, repackaging it recently as LoudSwell. Brown did not set out to replace live performances, but to provide an alternative during the pandemic, and a resource to compliment live in-person performances post-pandemic.

LoudSwell monetized the program by providing tip contributions, broadcasting on several social media channels, promoting events, and encouraging chat participation.

Going forward, it provides a tool to expand audiences beyond single live performances. Brown turned inspiration into innovation, providing musicians with something to improve their collective lot as professionals now and in the future.

“None of this would be possible without the participation of the musicians who took a chance on us,” stated Brown. “We are grateful to have the opportunity to present your music to the world. It’s a responsibility we don’t take lightly.”



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Earshot Jazz Live at The Royal Room

Each Friday evening our livestream concert series continues, airing directly from the Royal Room and celebrating some of Seattle's most talented musicians. Free on the Earshot Jazz YouTube channel. Check earshot.org for details.



Benjamin Hunter photo by Daniel Sheehan

Friday, April 2, 7:30PM PDT

Benjamin Hunter

The extraordinary multi-instrumentalist **Benjamin Hunter** joins us tonight in a solo performance. Adept as a violinist, mandolinist, vocalist, and songwriter, Hunter seamlessly brings together many musical traditions including jazz, blues, folk, West African, and Caribbean. Hunter's keen interest in history and storytelling, combined with his dedication to creating a more inclusive, vibrant, and compassionate community, informs and enriches his musical artistry.



Xavier Lecouturier photo by Lisa Hagen Glynn

Friday, April 9, 7:30PM PDT

Xavier Lecouturier Quartet

The rising-star drummer, bandleader, and composer, **Xavier Lecouturier** has forged a solid reputation for himself on the Seattle scene. As well as performing in many local collectives, Lecouturier co-leads an octet, DX-Tet, and is part of the ensemble Meridian Odyssey who just released their debut album, *Second Wave*. Joining Lecouturier are talented creatives—vibist **Matt Williams**, pianist **Dylan Hayes**, and guitarist **Martin Budde**.



LaVon Hardison photo by Lisa Hagen Glynn

Friday, April 16, 7:30PM PDT

LaVon Hardison Group

Vocalist and songwriter **LaVon Hardison** infuses jazz and pop standards, and her own original pieces with an irresistible warmth and power to draw her audience in. "She's a multi-talented entertainer who simply lights up a room, raising the roof and bringing down the house," wrote Andrew Luthringer in *Earshot Jazz* (December 2017). Joining Hardison are local stalwarts: pianist **Eric Verlinde**, bassist **Osama Afifi**, and percussionist **Jeff Busch**.



Duende Libre photo courtesy of the artist

Friday, April 23, 7:30PM PDT

Duende Libre Trio

"Duende Libre" translates roughly as "free spirit," and the dynamic Seattle trio's music expresses that notion well. Golden Ear Award-winner for their brilliant new recording, the free spirit of pianist **Alex Chadsey**'s Duende Libre includes adventurous **Farko Dosumov** on bass and the uber-versatile **Jeff Busch** on drums and percussion. It's SO good to be back!



Ahamefule J. Oluo photo by Naomi Ishisaka

Friday, April 30, 7:30PM PDT

Ahamefule J. Oluo: Music From Susan

Help us celebrate International Jazz Day with this reprise of the "Music From Susan" concert, which aired as part of our 2020 Earshot Jazz Festival and recently won the Golden Ear Award for NW Concert of the Year. This recording showcases the up-close footage and immersive jazz excellence while performing the musical *Susan* at On the Boards in Seattle. Composed by the multi-talented musician, composer, and writer, **Ahamefule J. Oluo**, it features the unparalleled vocalists **okanomodé** and **Tiffany Wilson**, saxophonist **Skerik**, and pianist **Marina Albero**.

Royal Room Staycation Shows

The 2021 South Hudson Project Staycation Festival continues, featuring live solo and duo performances by Seattle-based musicians and improvisers. Concerts air every Sunday evening at 7:30pm PDT, livestreamed from The Royal Room via loudswell.com. Donations to artists are encouraged.

Sunday, April 4, 7:30PM PDT

Staycation Solos: Neil Welch, Robin Holcomb, Sheridan Riley

Saxophonist and composer **Neil Welch**, whose work is rooted in improvisation, embraces multiple styles including avant-garde jazz and Soundpainting. Guided by the natural environment, Welch on soprano, tenor, and bass saxophones evokes the extremities and beauty of the Pacific Northwest.

Vocalist, pianist, and composer **Robin Holcomb**, who came to prominence in New York, brings her vast experience performing at such venues Carnegie Hall and The United Nations back home to Seattle. With a style that *The New Yorker* characterizes as “fascinatingly eclectic,” she has “few qualms about mingling folk, jazz, chamber music, and points between and beyond.”

Drummer and percussionist **Sheridan Riley**, known for her work with Sub Pop indie artist Avi Buffalo, utilizes acoustic and electronic textures to explore the contradictions, discomforts, and pleasures that give form to the human condition.

Sunday, April 11, 7:30PM PDT

Music for Solo Guitar: Betsy Olson, Jeff Fielder, Thaddeus Turner

Blues guitarist and vocalist, **Betsy Olson**, originally from Montana, draws from a wide range of influences from Led Zeppelin and Jimi Hendrix to The Black Keys. As well as fronting an all-women blues and rock band—The Betsy Olson Band—Olson is known for her gritty, stripped down music as well as her compelling, ethereal ballads.

Guitarist and producer **Jeff Fielder**, renowned for his work worldwide, has col-



Robin Holcomb photo by Peter Gannushkin

laborated with such diverse artists as Tekla Waterfield, Nick Cave, Sera Cahoone, and Pearl Jam’s drummer Dave Abbruzzese. One of Seattle’s most in-demand artists, Fielders style traverses musical domains from rock to mood-music.

Guitarist and producer **Thaddeus Turner**—front man for Thaddillac—has toured with Shabazz Palaces, Digable Planets, Lauryn Hill, and Dave Matthews, among others. Turner easily blends an array of styles from rock, techno, to R&B and soul. Turner is also cofounder of the local youth mentor organization, Totem Star.

Sunday, April 18, 7:30PM PDT

Staycation Solos & Duos: Remy Morritt and Christian Pincock, and Eric Eagle Solo

Christian Pincock (trombone, electronics) and **Remy Morritt** (drums) are forever seeking to create new means of expression, both through their original composition and improvisation. Combining trombone music and sounds generated through a variety of electronics and technology, Pincock expands the possibilities of his artistry. While Morritt is known for his energy and deft balancing of chaos and order.



Neil Welch photo by Bryan Lineberry

One of Seattle’s most in-demand drummers, **Eric Eagle** is known for his adaptive and fluid approach with an ability to play in a multitude of musical contexts. He has worked with Dave Peck, Jesse Sykes, Kate Olson, Wayne Horvitz, Naomi Siegel, and many others. For this performance, Eagle will present an intimate set of solo percussion.

Sunday, April 25, 7:30PM PDT

Wayne Horvitz’s “Little Pieces For The Piano”

A group of talented Seattle pianists will play from **Wayne Horvitz**’s book of compositions, “Little Pieces For The Piano.” Originally published in 2013, the 2020 edition includes 40 new pieces composed during the first months of the pandemic. Horvitz, known as a musician who creates a “dazzling sonic playground full of some wild rides...[who] stretches the art of sound collage into new frontiers” (NPR), will perform alongside luminaries such as **Cristina Valdés**, **Alex Guilbert**, **Kate Molloy**, **JingCi Liu**, **Robin Holcomb**, **Daisy Zajonc**, and **Alex Guy**.

For more details, visit shmproject.org and theroyalroomseattle.com

Earshot Jazz Live at The Forum

Earshot Jazz and Town Hall Seattle continue their livestream collaboration, which first made its appearance out of pandemic necessity last spring. Hear from resident and nationally renowned artists, every other Saturday. Tickets start from \$15, and free tickets are available for youth 22 and under. All Town Hall concerts are available to watch/rewatch for 5 days from air date. For information go to earshot.org.



Clinton Fearon photo courtesy of the artist



Wayne Horvitz photo by Daniel Sheehan

Saturday, April 10, 7:30 PDT

Clinton Fearon

As part of Town Hall's Global Rhythms series, Earshot Jazz co-presents the Jamaican-born composer, vocalist, and instrumentalist **Clinton Fearon**. After more than a decade as a member of the legendary band the Gladiators, Fearon left Jamaica in 1987 and made his home in Seattle, where he formed the bands The Defenders and Boogie Brown Band. Fearon creates imaginative, poetic, music informed by his reggae roots in the hope of a better world—experience his magical guitar and vocal performances infused with messages from the heart.

Saturday, April 24, 7:30pm PDT

Wayne Horvitz, Ayesha Brooks, Ha-Yang Kim

World-renowned composer, pianist, and master of electronics, **Wayne Horvitz** takes the stage with guitarist and vocalist **Ayesha Brooks** and cellist **Ha-Yang Kim**. Brooks, a contestant on "The Voice," draws from varied inspiration from gospel and jazz, to hip-hop and rock. Kim draws from numerous traditions including Western classical, avant-improv, and East Asian music. This trio, who performed in the recent Earshot Jazz Festival, is not afraid to stretch musical boundaries and ride new sonic waves.

Schedule subject to change. Visit earshot.org, and facebook.com/EarshotJazz, for the most up to date information.

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first Sunday, concerts are aired via Zoom from 5-6pm PDT and feature a new artist who will present a short set, followed by a free-improv-based jam session open to all. The current sessions are a collaborative effort between Racer Sessions and FreeSessions (Missoula). Each month's opening performer also chooses a social justice organization/cause to support. Details about upcoming artists can be found at racersessions.com.

Save the Date for the Lake Chelan Wine and Jazz Festival

The 3rd annual Lake Chelan Wine and Jazz Festival will run from May 20–23. Showcasing both internationally renowned jazz artists and the wineries of Lake Chelan, this four-day festival will be held live. Jazz performances will be held at nine wineries and other venues throughout the area. Festival artists include Dmitri Matheny, Stephanie Porter, the Collin Provence Trio, and the Kobie Watkins Grouptet among others. Net proceeds from the 2021 festival will benefit local charities. For more information, visit chelanwinejazz.com.

SFJAZZ Digital Classes

From April 7–May 26, SFJAZZ will be offering Digital Lab Online courses, with an emphasis on live performance and improvisation. Classes include Intro to Digital Audio Production, Live Looping and Spontaneous Composition, Intro to Logic Pro, among others. Classes are open to older teens and adults, with no experience required and will be held via Zoom. For more information visit sfjazz.org.

Owl 'n Thistle Jam Sessions Resume

In early March, in-person Tuesday night jam sessions resumed at the downtown Seattle pub, the Owl 'n Thistle. Hosted by drummer Xavier Lecouturier, sessions have included sets by numerous local artists. Attendees are required to wear masks. Details about upcoming jam sessions can be found at facebook.com/tuesdaynightowljamsession.

MEET THE BOARD

Maurice James

Continuing our 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. This month, please meet Maurice James.

What is your name, board position, and preferred pronouns?

My name is Maurice James (him/he) and I'm one of the board directors.

How long have you served on the Earshot Jazz board and please mention any other EJ board positions you've held if any?

I joined the Board of Directors as a general member in 2018.

What led you to join the Earshot Jazz board?

Three reasons: 1) I'm a huge fan of the arts here in the greater Seattle area—especially the local talent, 2) Jazz is my “go to” genre when I need to unwind and relax—the soothing sounds and melodic tones put me in just the right mood and 3) Someone asked!—fellow Board Member Ruby Love tapped me on the shoulder and said, “I've got some more work for you to do,” and I gladly said, “Yes!”

Tell us something you're proud of that Earshot has achieved.

Each year, I remain astonished at the caliber of the month-long jazz festival we put on—the talent, to logistical genius that plays out given the numerous venues that play host to the festival and how the city ‘shows up’ and supports the festival; I am especially proud to see the local talent that we highlight and feature throughout the month in addition to the national artists we bring to town; it really is a spectacular production!

Tell us a little about your background—professional qualifications, job, interests, talents.

Professionally I lead brand marketing teams at T-Mobile where I oversee a portion of our social impact initiatives, drive marketing and messaging efforts asserting our leadership in the 5G wireless race, and manage general brand strategy across our

different lines of business. Cultural experiences are very important to me: I travel internationally (pre-COVID) at least 3 times each year all with the intent of experiencing and learning something new.

2020/2021 have been challenging. Is there any other organization or inspirational person you'd like to highlight that stood out to you?

The resilience and tenacity of local nonprofits have astounded me. There are numerous organizations locally—Earshot Jazz—who didn't just throw up their hands in defeat but rather pivoted in innovative ways to sustain their mission and continued to ‘show up’ for the communities they committed to serve. That's the sign of true leadership—and I'm especially proud to serve organizations who stay committed to their work no matter the circumstances!



Maurice James photo by Sean Henderson

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The 2020 Golden Ear Awards and Seattle Jazz Hall of Fame

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