

## BALTIMORE JAZZ ALLIANCE

# December 2016

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THE BJA NEWSLETTER

WWW.BALTIMOREJAZZ.COM

## BCJS Presents the Arturo O'Farrill Quintet



From left: Arturo O'Farrill, Ivan Renta, Carlo De Rosa, Jim Seeley, Vince Cherico

### By Gail Marten

At 5 pm on Sunday, November 13th, the Arturo O'Farrill Quintet graced the stage of the Meyerhoff Auditorium at the Baltimore Museum of Art. Thanks to the Baltimore Chamber Jazz Society, jazz aficionados have enjoyed the opportunity to see and hear five exceptional jazz concerts by nationally known artists every season since 1991.

The extensive credentials of multi-Grammy award winner Arturo O'Farrill are impressive, and equally remarkable are those of his superb bandmates: Jim Seeley, trumpet; Ivan Renta, saxophone; Carlo De Rosa, bass; and on drums another multi-Grammy award winner, Vince Cherico.

Leading into the concert O'Farrill engaged the sizable audience with his observation, "It's been a hard week" (clearly

referring to the national election with its unexpected result and aftermath). He promised not to comment further about his disappointment at these events before reciting four lines from "Anthem," a poem written by revered Canadian poet/songwriter/performer Leonard Cohen, who had passed away just the day before.

Ring the bells that still can ring  
Forget your perfect offering  
There is a crack in everything  
That's how the light gets in.

The first musical selection was an American spiritual first published in 1899, "Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?" O'Farrill opened with a simple, poignant piano preface that progressed into an increasingly passionate and

(continued on page 3)

The Baltimore Jazz Alliance is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization.

The Baltimore Jazz Alliance (BJA) is a grass-roots organization of jazz aficionados, musicians and venues dedicated to enhancing and promoting jazz in Baltimore and the surrounding areas. New members sharing this passion are always welcome as the BJA continues its efforts to build a stronger and better networked jazz scene. Together we can help this music thrive in the region and reward listeners and musicians alike.

#### BJA Priorities

- To develop new audiences for jazz
- To strengthen communication within the jazz community
- To improve media relations on behalf of the jazz community
- To bring greater visibility to the entire array of jazz offerings in the Baltimore region
- To provide greater access to performance opportunities for Baltimore-area jazz musicians

Visit [www.baltimorejazz.com](http://www.baltimorejazz.com) for information about our accomplishments and future goals.

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# JAZZ JAM SESSIONS

Where the cats congregate to groove and grow!

**\* NOTE: As these events may be subject to change, it's always a good idea to CALL AHEAD for CONFIRMATION!**

## MONDAYS

**Liam Flynn's Ale House** – Monday night jam sessions hosted by Hot Club of Baltimore, mostly Django Reinhardt music, 1930s-'40s & standards. 22 W. North Avenue. 8-midnight. 410-244-8447

**Sign of the Times** – Clarence Ward III presents The Session. 139 N. Belnord Avenue. All are welcome to come out and express themselves. No cover, one drink minimum. Come on in and swing with us. 8:30-11 pm. 410-522-0600

## TUESDAYS

**Randallstown CC** – Open Jazz Jam Sessions/Book and Poetry Readings every Tuesday at 6-8 pm. Hosted by Derrick Amin. 3505 Resource Drive, Randallstown. Musicians and vocalists are welcome. Sponsored by BJA. 410-887-0698

**The Judge's Bench** – Charlie Schueller leads informal jam sessions on the first Tuesday of each month from 8:30 pm-midnight. 8385 Main St, Ellicott City. 410-465-3497

## WEDNESDAYS

**49 West Café** – FIRST and THIRD Wednesdays. "Starr's Jazz Jam" at 49 West Street, Annapolis. Hosted by John Starr and house band. Musicians and singers very welcome! Delicious and reasonably priced food and drink available! \$10 cover. 7-10 pm. Reservations 410-626-9796

**Homeslyce** – Todd Marcus leads jazz jam sessions every Wednesday. Musicians and singers welcome. 336 N. Charles Street. 8-11 pm. 443-501-4000

## THURSDAYS

**Liam Flynn's Ale House** – Jam sessions led by Ben Grant, 22 W. North Avenue. 8-11 pm. 410-244-8447

**The Place Lounge** – Jam session/open mic hosted by Spice. 315 W. Franklin Street. Musicians and vocalists are welcome. 7-10 pm. 410-547-2722

**If you know of local jam sessions, please share the information with our readers by emailing the details to the editor at: [jazzpalette@gmail.com](mailto:jazzpalette@gmail.com)**

**If any of the jazz jam sessions listed are discontinued, PLEASE INFORM THE EDITOR at: [jazzpalette@gmail.com](mailto:jazzpalette@gmail.com)**

**Help us support live jazz in Baltimore by becoming a member of BJA. See page 11.**

# BCJS Presents the Arturo O'Farrill Quintet

(continued from front page)



O'Farrill soloed with a simple, poignant preface that progressed into an increasingly passionate and dark treatment of the hymn . . .

dark treatment of the hymn as the other musicians joined him. There was a nano-moment of silence before they swung into "Guajira Simple" from the CD *Cuba: The Conversation Continues*, recorded by Arturo O'Farrill and the Afro Latin Jazz Orchestra in Havana just 48 hours after President Obama announced his plan to normalize relations between the U.S. and Cuba.

O'Farrill then announced "Compay Doug," a piece about relationships written by O'Farrill's good friend Doug Rice. The music began with a long bass solo by De Rosa before shifting into a dynamic arrangement that switched back and forth from quiet and nuanced to powerful and explosive.

O'Farrill introduced his bandmates to the audience and

launched into a piece inspired by Seeley's girlfriend, entitled "Little General," an uptempo, celebratory, occasionally dissonant composition. Seeley's focused, exquisite trumpet solo was followed by O'Farrill's lengthy mixed-mood piano excursion. A virtuoso at the keyboard, O'Farrill is also a master of harmonic invention. Drummer Cherico's impeccable and diverse Afro-Latin polyrhythms drove the arrangement to a great big finish. Throughout the concert De Rosa provided constant support, his speed and technique shining during dazzling solos.

The bandleader told us of his gratitude for music, "Every morning I'm awakened by Mrs. Steinway, who says, 'Let's dance.'" He added that he has grown to love composing as much as playing, and that he has found composing to be cathartic. O'Farrill observed that all our lives are constantly changing, marked by the clumping and unclumping, the coming together and separating of families, friends, associates, governments—which was the perfect lead-in to the next song "Clump, UnClump." (or "Trump, UnTrump," as he commented).

The maestro led off the second set with a highly technical and wild piece about action and reaction by Brazilian composer Livio Almeida. "All this craziness is crazy. I feel like slowing it down from this craziness," said O'Farrill, in introducing the piece. "We all have a life of the mind, a life of the spirit. As long as we persevere and cultivate what is inside us . . . You bring us love and energy. . . . What happened here today . . . this exchange, can never be repeated. Thank you for letting us be a part of your lives." We were then transported by music that sounded a lot like hope and beauty (I didn't catch the title) and featured a gorgeous solo by Renta.

After a lovely rendition of Mal Waldron's standard "Soul Eyes," the concert closed with the joyous "Con Chica," and the magic of the music lifted the audience to a plateau of glorious bliss. Muchas Gracias! See BCJS concert schedule on page 5.



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Ticket Link: <http://www.jazzway6004.org/products.html>



# Baltimore Chamber Jazz Society

## Current Season



### THE DAVID BINNEY QUARTET

Sunday, January 29, 2017 5 pm

David Binney, saxophone / Jacob Sacks, piano

Dan Weiss, drums / TBD, bass

\$35 General Admission | \$33 BMA Members/Seniors | \$10 Students



### LOUIS HAYES and THE CANNONBALL LEGACY BAND featuring Vincent Herring

Sunday, February 26, 2017 5 pm

Louis Hayes, drums / Vincent Herring, saxophone

The rest of the line-up TBD!

\$35 General Admission | \$33 BMA Members/Seniors | \$10 Students



### VOCALIST JACKIE RYAN

Sunday, March 26, 2017 5 pm

Jackie Ryan, vocals / Harry Allen, saxophone / Bill O'Connell, piano

\$35 General Admission | \$33 BMA Members/Seniors | \$10 Students



### LINDA OH: SUN PICTURES

Sunday, April 30, 2017 5 pm

Linda Oh, bass

The rest of the line-up TBD!

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Baltimore Chamber Jazz Society  
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(410) 385-5888

**BUY TICKETS ONLINE:** <http://www.instantseats.com>

BJA Members receive a \$2 discount off the general admission price!  
Just indicate your affiliation when ordering tickets.

The Baltimore Chamber Jazz Society is a non-profit organization and is supported by a grant from the Maryland State Arts Council, an agency dedicated to cultivating a vibrant cultural community where the arts thrive.



**Buy A Ticket! Make A Donation! Join Our Email List!**

[www.baltimorechamberjazz.org](http://www.baltimorechamberjazz.org)

# An Interview with Roland Dorsey



PHOTO COURTESY OF ROLAND DORSEY



PHOTO BY ROLAND DORSEY



PHOTO BY ROLAND DORSEY

## By The Editor

For decades Roland Dorsey has been one of the most in-demand bass players in the Baltimore area, performing in a wide range of jazz and Latin jazz ensembles. He teaches bass at Harford Community College. In the '90s Dorsey also started performing on percussion.

*When and how did your interest in music begin?*

My interest in music started in high school. A friend who lived across the street from me played guitar, and when I received a guitar as a Christmas present I began to play bass lines with him.

*At what age did you start playing professionally?*

I played saxophone with The Dynamics in the '60s when I was 17. Part of our repertoire included covers of Junior Walker tunes. The group was started by classmates from Central Consolidated High School, the last all-black high school in Harford County. I learned to play bass in California, at Los Angeles Community College, where I earned an AA degree.

*What are you up to right now, music-wise?*

I am currently playing in a few bands: Full Circle with Dave Leoni, Jack Gussio and Nick Costa at Costas Inn, in Dundalk, on the third Wednesday of every month; Tres Jaz, a Latin trio that I co-lead with Jack Gussio and Jim Hannah, on the first Tuesday of every month at SoBo Cafe in South Baltimore; and with The Phil Butts Big Band occasionally. I also enjoy free-lance gigs.

*What's the most unusual place you've ever played a show?*

I played at a furniture store once. That was a first for me.

*Lately what musical periods or styles do you find yourself most drawn to as a listener?*

Recently I have been drawn to Latin, samba and reggae—mainly because of the feel of the music as opposed to the chord progressions.

*Name a band or musician, past or present, whom you flat-out LOVE and think more people should be listening to.*

I can name three: Manual Valera, Morgan Heritage and Jon Lucien.

*As you create more music, do you find yourself getting more or less interested in new music made by other people?*

More. I love to hear new artists and the direction they are taking music. You should to be open-minded with music.

*I know that you're a gifted photographer as well as a gifted musician. And I know how dedicated you are to both artistic endeavors. In what ways do these talents come together?*

As a photographer and as a musician I am sharing what I see or what I hear with the observer or to the listener. My camera and bass are just the instruments I use to accomplish that.

*Who most influenced you as a musician, and how?*

My high school music teacher Robert Paige, in Harford County, was my greatest influence. He introduced me to my first jazz tune, "Swinging Shepherd Blues." That was it: I loved jazz.

*What is it about jazz that makes you prefer it to other types of music?*

When I play jazz, I so love the fact that I am given a map, and I can play

what I want (within the context of that map), and I can play it differently each time. My freedom to create is limited only by me. I am loving and learning to play Latin jazz.

*What does playing jazz mean to you?*

I love the fact that the music I play can actually excite and move people. I love making the music swing. Jazz has to swing. "It don't mean a thing if it ain't got that swing!!"

*What instrumentalists have influenced your style the most?*

I must give some local musicians their props—Amy Shook, Jeff Reed, Michael Raitzyk, Dennis Michaels, Orlando Cotto and Jay Delaney—to name just a few.

*What music are you currently listening to?*

I listen to Latin jazz most of the time.

*Do you still take lessons?*

Earlier this year I studied with percussionist Orlando Cotto, a great teacher.

*What makes you want to play a particular song?*

I am drawn to a particular song by the chord progressions, how smoothly they move together and how the melody flows.

Roland Dorsey may be contacted at his place of business G & D Multi Media Production 410-569-3822.



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## UPDATE

### ***Tell Me More and Then Some***

**By Ruby Vincent**

Baltimore jazz fans stepped forward in 2013 via Kickstarter to support a new documentary film project about the history and legacy of jazz in Baltimore, from the days of Billie Holiday and Pennsylvania Avenue all the way to the present. The title, taken from one of Billie Holiday's tunes, is *Tell Me More and Then Some*. The project's crew includes director and MICA filmmaker Jonathan Bevers, producers Howard Katz and former BJA board member Marianne Matheny-Katz (of Jazzway 6004), associate producers Jeff Finch, Jonathan Bevers, and Chuka Jenkins, illustrator Jabari Weathers, and Baltimore historian and associate producer Philip Merrill.

Jazzway 6004 worked closely with the University of Baltimore's Langsdale Library Special Collections' audio/visual archivist Siobhan Hagan, founder of Mid-Atlantic Regional Moving Image Archive (MARMIA). Ms. Hagan provided access to an extensive audio/visual collection of news broadcasts and footage documenting a great deal of Baltimore's musical history.

Featured in the film are numerous interviews with prominent Baltimore-area jazz musicians, educators and personalities, including Cyrus Chestnut, Whit Williams, Earl Arnett and Ethel Ennis, Andy Ennis, Todd Marcus, Eric Kennedy, Lafayette Gilchrist, and Gary Ellerbe. Also featured are Baltimore's jazz families, including the Wolfs, the Funns, the Lamkins and the family of Ruby Glover, who continue their mission to keep Baltimore's jazz traditions alive. A highlight of the film is a reenactment of Billie Holiday singing at a Baltimore club in the late 1930s, performed by present-day Baltimore jazz musicians Integrati Reeves, Warren Wolf, Kris Funn, John Lamkin III, and Craig Alston. Their performance morphs into a vibrant animation of Billie Holiday and her



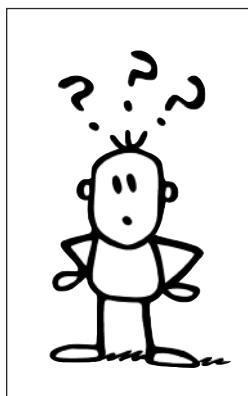
band. When the film is released, a companion DVD will also be available, featuring exciting concert performances by many of the interviewees and including footage from the 2013 BJA/Creative Alliance concert, "Saxophone Colossi."

*Tell Me More and Then Some* not only explores the history of jazz in Baltimore; it also seeks to examine the current state of Baltimore's jazz scene. The film challenges the idea that Baltimore's jazz scene died along with the Royal Theatre and Pennsylvania Avenue. Instead, the film demonstrates that the city is still producing amazing culture and internationally renowned jazz musicians.

The producers are now into post-production and plan to submit the documentary to film festivals when it is completed. See the cast list, photos and trailers at:  
<http://www.tellmemoreandthensome.com>

## BJA Technical Subcommittee Seeking Help

Ian Rashkin, President BJA



Apache. Perl. PHP. Nginx. Ubuntu. Rails. Unicorn. MySQL. DNS. SSL. SMTP. Git. If this sounds like gibberish to you, you're in good company—stop reading this and go put on your favorite jazz record, or head out to hear some live jazz. But if anyone out there has experience with a few or more of these applications, languages, frameworks, and protocols, BJA could really use your help. Our websites, membership

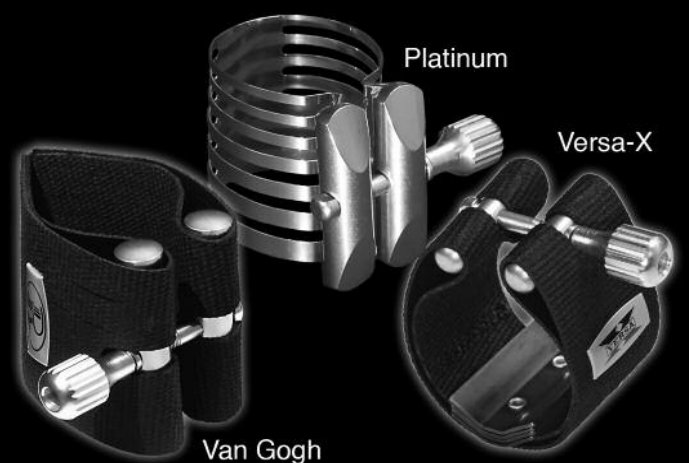
management, email notifications, etc., require regular maintenance; plus, we have many improvements in the works that are taking shape very slowly only because we lack the time to make them. And since most of our board members are not experienced in these matters, we are looking for help from our members—or even from non-members. So if you have a love of jazz combined with some skills in the magical arts of web server administration and/or web development, please get in touch. There's no pay; your only reward will be knowing that you are helping BJA better support the Baltimore jazz community. But if you're like so many of our members, that's reward enough by far. We all want our jazz scene to be strong, and you can help in a very tangible way by making it easier to share information and keep our members (and all our viewers) in the loop regarding upcoming events, opportunities, and more. If you are willing and able to help, please contact me at [president@baltimorejazz.com](mailto:president@baltimorejazz.com). Thanks!

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# BJA Member Notes

## WELCOME!

New and renewing members Bryan Powell, Robert Stonem Steven Everette, Wayne McWilliams

## SINGLE CARROT THEATRE

On December 9th, former BJA board member Todd Marcus will present "Life in West Baltimore," the first in a new series presented by Single Carrot Theatre featuring local Baltimore jazz musicians and new music.

## LEFT BANK '66 CD available from BJA!



You may now buy the CD *Left Bank '66* directly from BJA. Recorded in 1966 at the Madison Club, the CD features Baltimore sax legend Mickey Fields and guitarist Walt Namuth, who joined the Buddy Rich Big Band the following year. These two huge talents

were rarely recorded, adding to the value of this CD. In his *City Paper* review, Geoffrey Himes wrote, "If you care at all about the history of Baltimore music or the history of the jazz saxophone, this is a recording you need to hear."

Six tracks include Sam Jones's "Unit 7," Monk's "Well You Needn't," Miles Davis's "Pfrancin" and "The Theme," Benny Golson's "Stablemates," and Billy Reid's "The Gypsy." Phil Harris is on bass, Claude Hubbard on piano and Purnell Rice on drums. Total playing time = 67 minutes.

To purchase *Left Bank '66*, you may pay \$15 via PayPal at [baltimorejazz.com](http://baltimorejazz.com) or write a check for \$15 to:

BJA, 847 North Howard Street, Baltimore, MD 21201. Please make sure to type or print your street address. We'll then send you the CD by U.S. mail.

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**YOU** (musicians, promoters, club owners, etc.) can now post your own events at any time and also edit or delete previously entered events. It's extremely easy to use, so much so that our instructions are only two sentences.

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1. At the top of the calendar, follow link to OBTAIN USER NAME AND PASSWORD.
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## BJA Member Benefits

Your support is crucial to the success of the Baltimore Jazz Alliance! When you join, membership benefits include receipt of our monthly newsletter, discounts on BJA merchandise, advance notice about all BJA events, and of course the satisfaction of being a part of Baltimore's best source of information and advocacy for Jazz.

**But that's not all!** The following venues and other businesses offer discounts to BJA members:

- An die Musik offers 10% discount for BJA members for music purchases at the An die Musik record store.
- Baltimore Chamber Jazz Society offers BJA members a \$2 discount off the general admission price. Just indicate your affiliation when ordering tickets.
- Eubie Live! at the Eubie Blake Cultural Center at 847 N. Howard Street offers a discount to BJA members on rentals of its performance and events spaces.
- Jazzway 6004 offers BJA members a \$5 discount on performances at their venue.
- Germano's Piatini often offers discounted tickets to specific events for BJA members, announced by email.

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*Thank you for joining! Your membership makes a difference!*

BJA has been granted 501(c)(3) status by the IRS. Anything pledged above the basic \$25 membership is tax deductible and greatly appreciated!



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BJA is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization



**December 2016**

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