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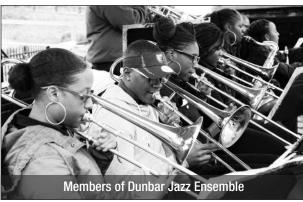
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**VOLUME IX** 

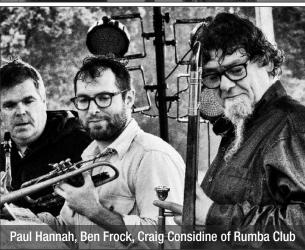
**ISSUE VII** 

THE BJA NEWSLETTER

WWW.BALTIMOREJAZZ.COM







ALL BJF PHOTOS by STEVE ONEY

# Reflections on the First Baltimore Jazz Fest

By Ian Rashkin, BJA President

The first Baltimore Jazz Fest, presented in Druid Hill Park by the Baltimore Jazz Alliance, in partnership with the Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks, has come and gone, and I'm pretty sure that all those who were there will agree that it was a magical day. Despite some truly terrible weather, all the performers carried on and played with great energy; the vendors and crew all kept a positive attitude and made everything flow perfectly, even while we were constantly asking ourselves "do we need to shut this down?"; and a couple of hundred people stuck it out for hours, even the whole day, dancing in the rain, cheering on the bands, and keeping everyone's spirits up on a day that could easily have been a disappointment. Of course, a lot of folks were kept away by the rain, and understandably so—I can tell you for sure that no one went away dry. But those who braved the elements for this special day showed without a doubt that there is strong support for an event like this, and that the Baltimore jazz scene is strong and dedicated.

Those who made it also know that history and vitality were on display. From Rosa Pryor's exhibit on the history of Baltimore jazz to the representation on stage of three generations of Baltimore jazz musicians, we wanted to highlight both the Baltimore jazz scene's rich past and its diverse and exciting present and future. Among the performers and audience members were people who remember bygone days when jazz thrived in spots like the Sportsmen's Lounge, the New Haven Lounge, and the Famous Ballroom, among many others. Notably, our headlining act, the Baltimore Legends band, put together especially for this event, showcased some of the great talent that has been gracing the Baltimore scene for decades. We also featured folks who are frequently on the scene at such current hot spots as Caton Castle, An die Musik, Germano's Piattini, Jazzway, Liam Flynn's, and Sign of the Times—the new vanguard of Baltimore jazz, if you will. Plus, we got off to a great start with the students of the Dunbar High Jazz Ensemble, whose talent and enthusiasm gave a

(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.

#### **BIA 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 for information about our accomplishments and future goals.

### Baltimore Jazz Alliance

847 North Howard Street Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Please direct your questions and comments to: webmaster@baltimorejazz.com

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## JAZZ JAN 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

**Amy's Place** – Every other Monday featuring house band SPICE. 5517 Ritchie Highway, Unit B, Brooklyn Park. 8 pm. 410-725-9131 or 410-725-9193

**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

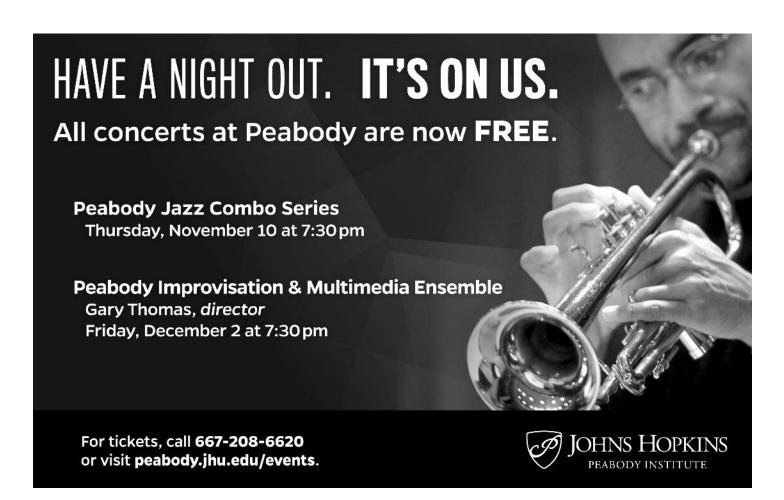
**The Place Lounge** – Jam session/open mic hosted by Spice. 315 W. Franklin Street. Musicians and vocalists are welcome. 7-10 pm. 410-547-2722

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

If any of the jazz jam sessions listed are discontinued, PLEASE INFORM THE EDITOR at: jazzpalette@gmail.com

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

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## **Reflections on the First Baltimore Jazz Fest**

(continued from front page)

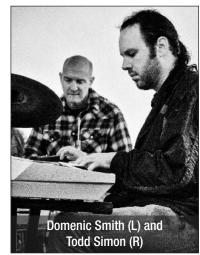
hint of the next generation of up-and-coming artists. In other words, we have a lot to celebrate and enjoy—past, present, and future—in this scene of ours, and the Baltimore Jazz Fest was a great way to appreciate that richness.

Almost everyone I've talked to says, "you have to do it again," "next year is going to be great," and so on. Indeed, I think we showed that there is a strong desire for this event to become a part of Baltimore jazz life. Many people have ideas of how it can be better, more inclusive, more varied, more successful; we welcome all these ideas and hope that IF we can turn this into an annual event, those ideas will help it to continue to grow, improve, and be a source of pride for our community.

But that's a big IF. Honestly, it was a tremendous amount of work to make this festival happen. Much of the credit goes to BJA founder Barry Glassman, whose idea it was and who did the lion's share of organizing and arranging. But Barry made it clear from the start that he was not prepared to take on that role more than once. Of course, a lot of work was done by our board members, by our partners at BCRP, and by our advisors and volunteers, including one of our sponsors, Paula Phillips, at Jazz Beyond Borders. And thankfully, now that some of the groundwork is laid, certain tasks will become eas-

ier. But some challenges are ongoing, and others will continue to evolve as we work to include the best performers and the most exciting experience we can. In short, we're going to need more help—more sponsors, more partners, and more volunteers.

If you want to be part of this effort, make sure to let us know, especially if you have skills or experi-



ence in fundraising, organizing, or promoting. I won't go into specifics here, but watch your email, and our website (baltimorejazz.com) for details about what it takes to make this fest happen, and how you can help. We also would love to hear your feedback—positive and negative—about the event, particularly from those folks who were there at the first (annual?) Baltimore Jazz Fest.

Please direct questons and comments about Baltimore Jazz Fest to info@baltimorejazzfest.com

BALTIMORE JAZZ ALLIANCE PAGE 3 / NOVEMBER 2016

### **SUPER BEBOP**

## **Carl Grubbs Ensemble/Celebrating Coltrane at 90**

### **By Steve Monroe**

### ON A MOSTLY CLOUDY SUNDAY AFTERNOON

in late September, jazz fans eagerly entered the Eubie Blake Cultural Center and moved toward the elevator to go upstairs for the concert. But they were told organizers were still setting up for the Carl Grubbs Ensemble's "Celebrating Coltrane's 90th Birthday" concert and had to wait a little while. So the museum-like downstairs area—adorned with Eubie Blake artifacts—became crowded, allowing more than a few would-be listeners to check out the remembrances of Baltimore's legendary music maker.

The air of anticipation was thus heavy as the crowd was finally let upstairs, and soon a capacity crowd was smiling, bobbing their heads and tapping their feet as Grubbs and company delivered stirring sets of John Coltraneera tunes. Grubbs, still enjoying the glow of the July Artscape performance by his jazz/string ensemble when they celebrated the release of his latest CD, Inner Harbor Suite Revisited: A Tribute to Baltimore, led the way with his edgy alto sax riffs that were complemented by the superb playing of band mates Rene McLean on alto sax; Eric Byrd, piano; Blake Meister, bass; and John Lamkin, 3rd on drums.

The ensemble opened with a fiery "What's New," behind Grubbs and McLean on the horns and Meister's heavy blues lines on bass. "'Round Midnight" featured McLean's smoky, bluesy riffs on his alto sax. The group dazzled also on "Blue Train," "Equinox" and others, with Byrd a consistent highlight with his insistent melodic runs on piano. "Resolution" featured Grubbs and McLean trading hot, blaring, squawking alto riffs before Byrd took over with a majestic, melodic solo.

Grubbs later recounted his warm remembrances of learning from Coltrane, a cousin by marriage, as a youth while



L to R: Wendel Patrick (poet), Eric Byrd (piano), Carl Grubbs (saxophones), Rene McLean (alto saxophone), Blake Meister (bass)

growing up in Philadelphia. McLean's presence added more history. Grubbs said he and McLean, son of alto legend Jackie McLean, "go back to the 1960s. When my brother [the late Earl Grubbs] was living in New York, I went to visit and went to hear Rene's rehearsal band." Rene McLean studied with his father and with Sonny Rollins, and has played with Tito Puente, Sam Rivers, Lionel Hampton, Hugh Masekela and others. Grubbs says he likes to work with McLean because "I'm at that age now that I just want to be able to get straight to the music, without going through any changes, and that's the way it is with Rene."

And Grubbs said of the audience that day, "The crowd was fantastic. . . . They were really into the music." He said of the venue, "It's a nice spot to work in . . . and more people will come out in town than when we have [concerts] at St. Paul's [the school where Grubbs teaches in Brooklandville, north of Baltimore], because some people don't want to go that far."

One favorite from the concert that Saturday was "Giant Steps," played with chord changes from "Body and Soul" ("the way Coltrane sometimes played it," said Grubbs). The tune turned into a dramatic, melodic journey through a jazz history that was very personal for the veteran listeners that day. After Grubbs and McLean opened the tune harmonizing for a few bars, Grubbs took off with some sizzling melodies, riffing over the throbbing bass of Meister and Lamkin's punctuating raps and rolls. Then Grubbs soloed, with quick, spurting phrases on his alto, before returning to the melody. McLean took over for some hot riffs on his solo before they all took it out, jamming hard. Grubbs's fluttering alto ended it to loud applause and shouts from the crowd, who had enjoyed what Grubbs called some "super bebop."

Steve Monroe is a freelance writer based in Washington, D.C. He can be reached at steve@jazzavenues.com

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# Baltimore Chamber Jazz Society 2016-2017 Season



## THE ARTURO O'FARRILL AFRO/LATIN JAZZ QUINTET

- Sunday, November 13, 2016 5 pm
- Arturo O'Farrill, piano / Jim Seeley, trumpet / Ivan Renta, saxophone
- Carlo DeRosa, bass / Vince Cherico, drums
- \$40 General Admission | \$38 BMA Members/Seniors | \$10 Students



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

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SINGLE TICKETS are also available!

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.

## **NATE HOOK**

## **Progressive Overload**

### By John Thomas

Nate Hook, a recent graduate of the Peabody Conservatory's jazz studies program, has released his debut album. Whereas many young players put together a collection of standards featuring guest stars on their first record, Hook has embarked on an ambitious set of original compositions with his own long-standing group. No mere collection of reharmonizations, Hook's *Progressive Overload* stakes out personal artistic territory. That said, this album isn't for everyone. Some of this music is challenging to listen to, even for avid jazz fans. If you're looking for some happy swinging tenor in the mode of Dexter Gordon, look elsewhere. If you want to follow an individualistic musician's journey, this record is for you.

Hook got his start in Texas, and came east to study at William Paterson University. There he solidified his grasp of jazz tradition and language with renowned alto player Vincent Herring and pianist Harold Mabern. While in the NYC orbit, Hook also studied with iconoclastic composer and alto player Steve Coleman as well as with tenorist Mark Shim before moving south to study with Baltimore tenor icon Gary Thomas. More than just the sum of these esteemed teachers, Hook hints at the darkness of the bass clarinet. Though steeped in jazz tradition, he has developed a distinct approach to composition and improvisation that sets him apart from his peers.

The musical texture of the band on this recording is a departure from standard jazz orthodoxy. With the leader playing tenor and occasional flute, the rest of the band is filled out by electric guitar (Travis Reuter), electric bass guitar (Louis De Mieulle), piano heavily augmented with synths (Billy Test), and a rock-solid drummer (Paolo Cantarella). As a group, they present a heavy sound concept that at times feels more rock oriented than jazzy. The soundscape on this record would be a fitting soundtrack to an '80s cyberpunk film.

These compositions are complicated, dense, and highly organized. There is extensive use of odd and varying time signatures, creating a challenge for both performers and listeners. Just when the groove settles in, the meter will move back or forward by one beat, never letting the listener truly relax. The ever-changing nature of the rhythm seems to limit both the bassist and drummer to playing metronomically throughout much of the album. A notable exception is the slow burn of "20-40 Hindsight," wherein drummer Cantarella comes alive during Hook's solo.



Make no mistake, these performances are strong. Hook's confident improvisations navigate the challenging harmonies and rhythms with aplomb, and Reuter, in particular, finds freedom in this particular groove. However, I feel as if we are closer to the origin of the composer's ideas than to their complete execution. As a musician, I can appreciate the musical challenges that are being met and the technical prowess of the players, but as a listener I want things to be a little more settled. There seems to be a tacit acknowledgment of the weightiness of the work in the last tune. "(No) More Anxiety," a relatively cheerful three-minute jaunt that almost says, "Thanks for listening, you can relax now."

While there were moments on this recording when I was not completely sold on the concept, I can say that Nate Hook is definitely carving out his own path. I can't wait to hear where his journey takes him next.

Musician and educator John Thomas holds a double Masters of Music in Jazz Studies and Saxophone Performance from East Carolina University. Currently, he is pursuing a doctoral degree in classical saxophone performance at the Peabody Institute of Johns Hopkins University. He is the Director of Jazz Ensembles at the Baltimore School of the Arts while maintaining an active private saxophone studio. More information at his website: http://www.jtsax.net

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### JAZZWAY 6004 PRESENTS



JIMMY GREENE Saxophone



JOHN LAMKIN, 3rd Drums



ALLYN JOHNSON Piano



KRIS FUNN Bass

# SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3rd 8 PM THE JOHN LAMKIN 3RD QUARTET

### with special guest saxophonist JIMMY GREENE

- featuring songs from Mr. Greene's CD, BEAUTIFUL LIFE, a celebration of the life of his six-year-old daughter, Ana Márquez-Greene, whose life was tragically taken, along with nineteen other children and six educators, on December 14, 2012 at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut. The album garnered two Grammy nominations: Best Jazz Instrumental Album and Best Arrangement, Instruments and Vocals for Greene's arrangement of his composition "When I Come Home," featuring vocalist Javier Colon.

"I want the music to reflect the way that Ana lived . . . this album attempts to paint the picture of how she lived — lovingly, faithfully and joyfully."

— Jimmy Greene

All tickets include a merchandise raffle, soft drinks and dessert, fruit and cheese buffet. \$38/general, \$33/BJA members, \$22/students Ticket Link: http://www.jazzway6004.org/products.html

#### WWW.JAZZWAY6004.ORG

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"And so it is that this is the most important jazz record of the year. It speaks to the breadth of human emotion, from deepest sadness to greatest joy, in the context of what we all aim to achieve – a connection to the spirit that gives us the courage to forge on in this fragile, temporal life." – Michael Verity, jazz.about.com



Details and tickets for the Jazzway Holiday show with Craig Alston and his group will be posted soon!

WWW.JAZZWAY6004.ORG

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### **FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN**

## NICO SARBANES LIVE IN BALTIMORE

Nico Sarbanes is preparing to release his debut album, *Nico Sarbanes: Live in Baltimore*, featuring the young trumpeter and vocalist in performance with some of the city's most revered jazz heroes—Antonio Hart, Warren Wolf, Winard Harper and Tim Green. The album was recorded at Baltimore's own An die Musik by Charles Street Sound and features five tunes: Billy Strayhorn's "Isfahan," Johnny Burke/Jimmy Van Heusen's "Like Someone in Love," Lerner and Loewe's "I've Grown Accustomed to Her Face," a Sarbanes original, "Somethin' fo' Smitty," and Burton Lane/Ralph Freed's "How About You?"

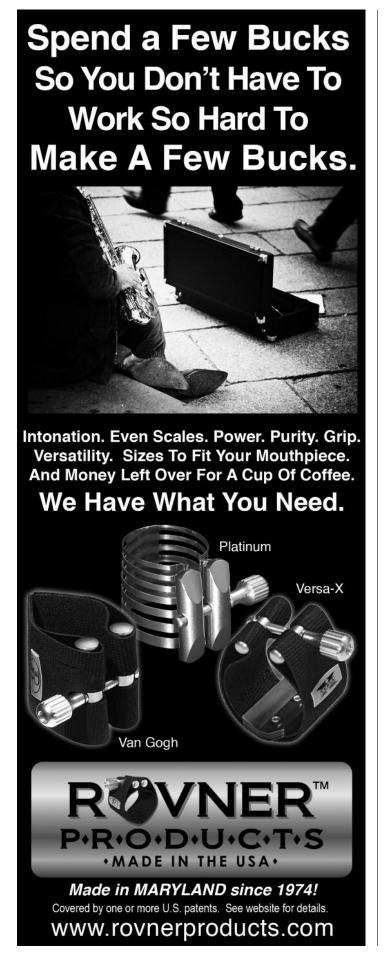
The album also features Todd Simon (piano), Ethan Philion (bass), Blake Meister (bass), Howard Franklin, Jr. (drums), Herman Burney, Jr. (bass), Aaron Seeber (drums), Charlie Sigler (quitar), and Savannah Harris (drums).

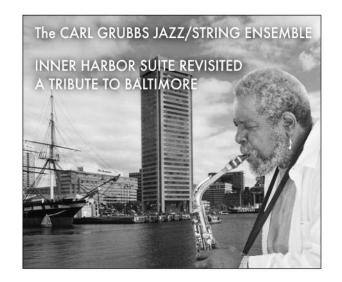
You can help Nico finish the album by visiting his fundraising campaign page:
https://www.indiegogo.com/projects/
nico-sarbanes-live-in-baltimore-jazz,
to contribute and share with friends.

The campaign will run until the first week of December.

JOIN OR RENEW BJA AT www.baltimorejazz.com

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CARL GRUBBS JAZZ/STRING ENSEMBLE

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BALTIMORE JAZZ ALLIANCE PAGE 9 / NOVEMBER 2016

## **BJA Member Notes**

### WELCOME!

New Members: Michael Gold, Bernice Timmons, Bob Belas, JS Brice, Meredith Callanan, Elizabeth Hodnicki, Walter Lane. Theresa Sise, Bernice Timmons, Michael Weber Renewing: Rovner Products, Derrick Thompson

### Seth Kibel

Multi-reed man Seth Kibel was mentioned in the November *DownBeat's* article on percussionist Tom Teasley. They will be performing together at the Washington Jewish Music Festival in April, 2017.

## www.baltimorejazz.com

**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.

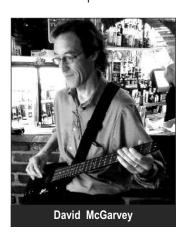
Go to www.baltimorejazz.com, and click on calendar link.

- At the top of the calendar, follow link to OBTAIN USER NAME AND PASSWORD.
- After your ID and password have been confirmed, log on, click on the date on the calendar when the event will occur, and follow the instructions for filling in the fields.

Questions or comments to: webmaster@baltimorejazz.com

### **Corrections**

My apologies. In the October 2016 issue, musicians in two photos that appeared on the front page were misidentified. Here are the photos with corrected captions. – Editor







John R. Lamkin, II, Trumpet & Flugelhorn Mike Hairston, Saxophone / Bob Butta, Piano Herman Burney, Bass / Jesse Moody, Drums Eartha Lamkin, Vocals

\$15 advanced sales / \$20 at the door

20 S. Caton Avenue Baltimore, MD 21229 http://www.catoncastle.com



## **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 Piattini often offers discounted tickets to specific events for BJA members, announced by email.

www.baltimorejazz.com

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## display advertising

### **LOW RATES FOR AD PLACEMENT**

Reach a targeted jazz market by advertising in the BJA Newsletter. Limited space. Reserve early.

### Deadline for ads and payments:

15th of the month prior to the appearance of your ad. LIMITED SPACE. Reserve your ad space EARLY. BJA reserves the right to reject inappropriate copy.

Email your print-ready ad\* to: jazzpalette@gmail.com

\*Ad Specs: Original B&W line/vector artwork in jpg format at 600 dpi are preferred. Pixel-based images should be 300 dpi or higher resolution.

### **AD PLACEMENT RATES AND SIZES:**

\$15 for 1/8 page (3% in. wide x 2% in. high) \$30 for 1/4 page (3% in. wide x 4% in. high)

\$60 for 1/2 page ( $7\frac{1}{2}$  in. wide x  $4\frac{3}{4}$  in. high) horizontal ad \$60 for 1/2 page ( $3\frac{5}{4}$  in. wide x  $9\frac{3}{4}$  in. high) vertical ad

\$120 for full page  $(7\frac{1}{2} \text{ in. wide x } 9\frac{3}{4} \text{ in. high})$ 

Payment (checks only) payable to BJA should be mailed to:

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or via PayPal at www.baltimorejazz.com (click Donate button)

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### BALTIMORE JAZZ ALLIANCE MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please return this form along with your check to: THE BALTIMORE JAZZ ALLIANCE 847 N. Howard Street, Baltimore, MD 21201

Your membership card will be mailed to you or the person named below.

Note: All contributors of \$75 or more get a free BJA baseball cap.



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☐ \$100 Patron ☐ \$200 Corporate	☐ \$15 Stude	ent – (copy of ID re	equired)			
Thank you for	r joining!	Your memb	bership mar	kes a diff	rerence!	

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

BALTIMORE JAZZ ALLIANCE PAGE 11 / NOVEMBER 2016



847 North Howard Street Baltimore, Maryland 21201 BJA is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization



## **November 2016**

## Dedicated to promoting JAZZ IN BALTIMORE!





### THANK YOU!

For making our Fall Membership Drive as **HUGE SUCCESS!!** 

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