

## BALTIMORE JAZZ ALLIANCE

## October 2016

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Mike Weber



David McGarvey



Jim Deshler



Jim Martino



Charlie Schueller & Tom Kitchen



Franklin Wade

PHOTO CREDIT: LIZ FIXSEN

# Jazz Jams at the Judge's Bench in Ellicott City

By Liz Fixsen

Main Street in historic Ellicott City has been pretty quiet since the flood disaster in July. The picturesque town has long been a popular destination, with its historic buildings crowded along Main Street among the steep, rocky cliffs, and with the rushing Patapsco River on its east end. The street is usually buzzing with activity as people visit its numerous restaurants, art galleries and specialty shops. But since the flood, much of Main Street has been closed while repairs proceed.

However, the Judge's Bench tavern, located at 8385 Main Street, on its west end, was fortunate to escape serious damage, and was able to resume its monthly jazz jam session as of September 6th. The jam is hosted by pianist Charlie Schueller and his ensemble, which includes Tom Kitchen on guitar, Walter Heber on bass, and Jim Deshler on drums.

The jam began almost two years ago,

and is held on the first Tuesday of each month from 8:30 pm until midnight. It's an informal jam—there's a sign-up sheet, but it is mostly for the purpose of introductions. The house band will usually warm up with a few tunes and then invite jammers as they appear. For the most part, the band focuses on tunes from the first three volumes of the *Real Book*, but guests are always welcome to bring their own lead sheets for all instruments. When there is a big crowd, Schueller will suggest whose turn it is to play; otherwise, it's easy to just join in. Although the jam draws mainly instrumentalists, vocalists are also welcome.

Schueller has played in a number of bands in the DC area in genres ranging from jazz, rock and country to Celtic. In addition to the jam at the Judge's Bench, his current projects include a gypsy jazz quartet called Djangolaya, a female vocal quartet called Yazoozazz, and a worship band at Brookmont Church in Bethesda. He also co-leads the DC Gypsy Jazz

Meetup. He is a regular participant at Django in June.

Kitchen has played both jazz and classical in a variety of venues in and around DC. In addition to the Judge's Bench, he also works with his own quartets, trios, and duos, including The Slightly Strange String Duo and The Tommy Tritone Trio, as well as the Thomas Kitchen Quartet and Quintet.

The Canadian-born Heber has for the last eight years played jazz, blues, R&B, gospel, and rock with numerous groups throughout the Maryland and DC areas. From 2009 to 2012 Heber played bass for the Mount Vernon Swing Band in Northern Virginia. In 2014-15, he played with DC jazz vocalist Chuck Holden. Since 2013 Heber has played for The Rockin' Gospel Choir at Wesley United Methodist Church in Washington, DC.

Deshler grew up in Los Angeles during the 1970s and began playing drums

(continued on page 8)

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.

#### Baltimore Jazz Alliance

847 North Howard Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Please direct your questions and comments to:  
[webmaster@baltimorejazz.com](mailto:webmaster@baltimorejazz.com)

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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

**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

**NEW! Club 347** – Every Monday jam session/open mic hosted by Dawoud Said, Johnny Jones & Jesse Powers. 347 N. Calvert Street. Musicians/vocalists are welcome. 8 pm-1:30 am. 443-506-7200

**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. 410-887-069

**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.**

# What's It Like Playing Music in Restaurants?

By Gail Marten

Restaurants have become such a large proportion of the venues for jazz (e.g., over one-third of those in Baltimore City) that we thought we would ask musicians about their experiences playing jazz in that environment.

"Here's my take. In a restaurant, music should augment and enhance the dining experience. Dynamics are extremely important. Our trio at The Prime Rib is a good example. We play whatever we want—the full spectrum of the Jump-street repertoire. But it always fits the room. We play with great intensity at a volume level that does not overwhelm patrons. It has really made for an elegant dinner club feel, but the star is the world-class restaurant. And if you don't understand that, you will not have that gig.

This is evidenced by owner/restaurateur "Buzz" Beler's ongoing support for live jazz in his restaurants. And these are gigs with longevity! It is very rare indeed to have a "house" gig. Especially in Baltimore. So we take great pride in our charge to uphold the standards of this fine establishment . . . as well as our own."

— Terry Battle, Baltimore-area bassist

"My favorite kind of restaurant to play in is the one that has as much respect for the music as they do for the food."

— John Clayton, internationally known bassist and band leader

"For the most part, this has been a rewarding experience for me, especially when I play solo. I've found that I can mix my straight-ahead compositions in with standards and no one seems to mind. Of course, it's not really a listening audience, but every now and then someone will ask about a tune if they've never heard it before. Sometimes it's the help.

And then there's the occasional tip, especially if one nails a request. It's especially nice if the piano (if there is one) is in decent shape and reasonably in tune. I've plenty of anecdotes about that.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE C.W.B. TRIO

From left: Terry Battle, Jeff Wilson and Brad Collins continually attract jazz lovers and gastronomes to Baltimore's Prime Rib Restaurant.

Volume is perhaps the biggest issue with an ensemble. Owners want a "jazzy" ambience, and they expect you to provide it without infringing on the diners.

The worst scenario is when a restaurant is trying jazz for the first time. It seems as if they want instant results. Several months ago I experienced this. The group leader had an established following. An experienced and engaging vocalist was up front. We got lots of applause. In spite of this, the owner canned us, saying that business was bad. That's show biz."

— George Spicka,  
Baltimore-area pianist/composer

"It can be a lot of fun if you can get a bunch of your friends to come or at places that are willing to hire you on evenings when they typically have a lot of diners. However, from my experience it's BYOC (Bring Your Own Crowd) at most places. Very tough to sustain. I once told a restaurant owner, on a slow night, that if I could fill up a restaurant by playing live jazz, I'd own a restaurant.

The truth is I've been to many shows at Blues Alley when the early show was less than half sold and they gave away

the late show to entice people to stay, and that was to see some of the best players in the world." — Anonymous

"My experience in restaurants is to be prepared to receive a variety of audience responses on any given night. It really depends on the crowd. Some nights you'll have respectful silence, where they are hanging onto every note of a pretty ballad. Other nights, the people will be talking so loud that you'll be banging on the keys hard to be heard. It really does vary that much. Especially if it's a hotel restaurant, and they have a transient clientele. It doesn't mean that they enjoy you any less if it's a loud crowd. For them you're background music. They will still turn in as many positive comment cards to management as the quiet listening audience. When it comes to performing in restaurants, it pays to be aware of your audience and to listen to what they want out of you."

— Tom Reyes, Baltimore-area pianist

"Next to jazz music, there is nothing that lifts the spirit and strengthens the soul more than a good bowl of chili."

— Harry James

# Todd Marcus: 2016 JJA Baltimore Jazz Hero

Baltimore is one of many cities from which Jazz Journalists Association (JJA) selects a local “jazz hero” each year. This year we are especially proud of JJA’s selection, since Todd Marcus has served faithfully on the BJA board for many years.

## By Don Palmer, JJA Board Member

Todd Marcus is a bass clarinet specialist, a composer and leader of bands, including a trio, a quartet, a quintet and a nonet he calls his Jazz Orchestra. Self-taught in jazz theory and composition, he incorporates classical and Middle Eastern influences—the latter reflecting his Egyptian-American heritage—into lyrical, free-swinging compositions. His most recent recording, *Blues for Tahrir*, inspired by the hopes of the Arab Spring, was named one of 2015’s Top 40 jazz releases by *JazzTimes*. In 2014, Marcus received a Baker Artist Award from the Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance for exemplifying mastery of craft, commitment to excellence and a unique, compelling vision.

But it is not principally his musical activities that make Marcus a Baltimore Jazz Hero. Yes, he holds a weekly jam session at Homeslyce—a pizza parlor—where he encourages young Baltimore musicians to work on their jazz chops. But most impressively and productively he is a community activist—the administrator for Intersection of Change (formerly Newborn Holistic Ministries), a twenty-year-old grassroots nonprofit focused on community development in west Baltimore that he organized with Elder C.W. Harris.

Marcus and Harris have initiated programs that enrich the economic, social and spiritual lives of people in the Sandtown-Winchester and surrounding neighborhoods, parts of which were at the center of the city’s 2015 uprising in reaction to the death of Freddie Gray while he was in police custody. IOC has created Jubilee Arts, which offers classes in visual arts, dance, ceramics and writing, intending to foster empowerment and strengthen community bonds. It runs Martha’s Place, a state-certified recovery program for women overcoming drug addiction and homelessness. IOC has fully renovated six previously vacant and dilapidated buildings, transformed 18 vacant lots into community green spaces and meditative gardens and enabled the creation of a dozen neighborhood murals.

Marcus is now overseeing the development of a week-long IOC festival for next September, at which the organization will launch its vision of goals for 2020. These include offering addiction care and treatment to another 150 women, engaging more than a hundred teens in a Youth in Business class teaching entrepreneurship, creating ten more community murals and providing classes and community projects to 10,000 youth and adult participants.

Marcus manages all of this while maintaining a busy performance schedule. “My adult life has really been about



PHOTO BY GARY YOUNG

“ . . . my music has allowed me to try to create some beauty that hopefully unites people across all races through its power . . . ”

being a part of and serving my community by day and cultivating my music by night,” he says. “I think I’ve always felt upset by the injustice of inequities in the world and so being a part of my community has allowed me to specifically deal with ongoing issues that stem from systemic racism and poverty. And at the same time, my music has allowed me to try to create some beauty that hopefully unites people across all races through its power.”

He is working that beauty part—making music—all over Baltimore as well as at the Smithsonian Institution, at Dizzy’s Club at Jazz at Lincoln Center in New York City, and as far away as the Cairo Jazz Festival. At the end of March he premiered new work with his Jazz Orchestra at Light City Baltimore (“a festival of light, music and innovation”). With his quintet, he paid tribute to jazz masters John Coltrane and Eric Dolphy on April 21st, 2016 at the Smithsonian American Art museum, and on April 23rd, 2016 at Baltimore’s own Caton Castle. At the latter event Todd Marcus, an asset to Baltimore’s community as well as its culture, will be most appropriately honored as the JJA’s Baltimore Jazz Hero.

This article is reprinted with the permission of Don Palmer and JJA. Read all of the Jazz Hero bios at: [www.jjazzawards/p/2016-jazz-heroes.html](http://www.jjazzawards/p/2016-jazz-heroes.html)

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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 information is coming soon!
- \$35 General Admission | \$33 BMA Members/Seniors | \$10 Students



- **VOCALIST JACKIE RYAN**
- **Sunday, March 26, 2017 5 pm**
- Jackie Ryan, vocals
- The rest of the line-up information is coming soon!
- \$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 information is coming soon!
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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.



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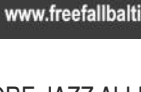
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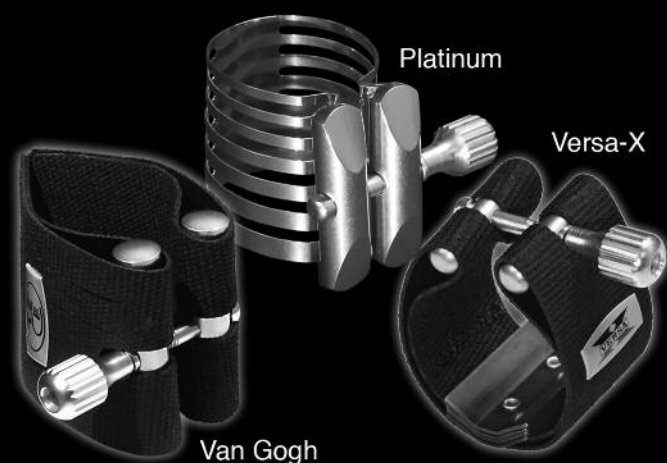
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## **Jazz Jams at the Judge's Bench in Ellicott City**

*(continued from page 1)*

Eventually his career took him to Boston, MA, where he played in a variety of local bands at venues such as the House of Blues in Cambridge. Since moving to DC in 2009, he has connected to the jazz community and he has played with a fusion funk band called Sweater Weather and a jazz trio called Mike 'n' Ike (with BJA's president Ian Rashkin on bass and Mike Banham on guitar).

Some of the frequent or occasional jammers include Eddie Hyrbyk (bass), Dan Wallace (saxophone), Mike Weber (trombone), Franklin Wade (trumpet), Jim Martino (sax), Tomas Drgon (guitar and vocals), as well as yours truly (keyboard, vocals).

The Judge's Bench is a small tavern where you can greet old friends or make new ones at the crowded bar or at a shared table. They serve a variety of soups, salads, and sandwiches, and feature over 100 different beers in any given month, with daily updates on their webpage to reflect whatever is on tap on that day. It got its name because during the 1800s in historic Ellicott City, it was a grocery store, and the original Howard County Courthouse was just across the street. On summer days, the hot and exhausted judges would cross the street from the courthouse and enjoy cold beverages on benches in the shade outside the grocery store.

For more information, contact Charlie Schueller at: [cschueller@yahoo.com](mailto:cschueller@yahoo.com), and visit [judgesbenchpub.com](http://judgesbenchpub.com) or see the Judge's Bench Facebook page.



PHOTO COURTESY OF JUDGE'S BENCH



**We will have full coverage of  
BALTIMORE JAZZ FEST  
in the November 2016 issue!**



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# BJA Member Notes

## WELCOME!

We welcome our new member Enid Sheeley.

## BOPA GRANT FOR PHIL RAVITA

Longtime BJA member Phil Ravita received a grant from BOPA through Free Fall Baltimore to present a show commemorating Ella Fitzgerald's approaching 100th birthday, in April 2017.

## PRIZE FOR MARK OSTEEN

BJA President Emeritus Mark Osteen has won the 2016 Dorothy Cappon Prize in Creative Nonfiction for his essay "A Man Down There." It will be published in the journal *New Letters* in March, 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.

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1. At the top of the calendar, follow link to OBTAIN USER NAME AND PASSWORD.
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## Left Bank '66



## 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.

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

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BJA reserves the right to reject inappropriate copy.

Email your print-ready ad\* to: [jazzpalette@gmail.com](mailto: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 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. wide x 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. high)
\$30 for 1/4 page	(3 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. wide x 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ 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 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. wide x 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. high) vertical ad
\$120 for full page	(7 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. wide x 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. high)

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

BJA, 847 North Howard Street, Baltimore, MD 21202

or via PayPal at [www.baltimorejazz.com](http://www.baltimorejazz.com) (click Donate button)

Please indicate ad size and month(s) for placement.

## REMEMBER...BJA offers FREE online promotion of your jazz events!

Enter your gigs at: [www.baltimorejazz.com](http://www.baltimorejazz.com)

Direct questions or comments to:  
[webmaster@baltimorejazz.com](mailto:webmaster@baltimorejazz.com)

## \*DO YOU NEED A DISPLAY AD?

JAZZ PALETTE GRAPHIC DESIGN will design your print-ready display ad for a reasonable fee.

410-290-5638 [jazzpalette@gmail.com](mailto:jazzpalette@gmail.com)  
[www.jazzpalette.com](http://www.jazzpalette.com)

Gail Marten, Editor/Designer  
Baltimore Jazz Alliance Newsletter  
[jazzpalette@gmail.com](mailto:jazzpalette@gmail.com)  
[www.jazzpalette.com](http://www.jazzpalette.com)

## 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.**



First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_ Apt/Suite No. \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please DESCRIBE yourself: (just one please) ☐ Music Lover ☐ Musician ☐ Producer/Promoter ☐ Agent

☐ Media ☐ Club Owner/Manager ☐ Non-profit or Educational Institution ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

AMOUNT OF CONTRIBUTION: ☐ \$25 Basic ☐ \$50 Sustaining ☐ \$50 501(c)3 Organization ☐ \$75 Other

☐ \$100 Patron ☐ \$200 Corporate ☐ \$15 Student – (copy of ID required)

*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!



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



## October 2016

*Dedicated to promoting* **JAZZ IN BALTIMORE!**



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October 17th—23rd

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125,000 weekly listeners? Contact us to become an  
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