

BALTIMORE JAZZ ALLIANCE

FALL 2019

INSIDE THIS EDITION

Jam Sessions	2
Susan Alcorn: Pedal Steel Guitar Free-Improviser	6
The Common Roots Jazz Ensemble: <i>Dance of the DNA</i>	9
Rodney Kelley: Consummate Entertainer	12
BJA Member Benefits	14

VOLUME FIFTEEN + ISSUE FOUR + THE BJA NEWSLETTER + WWW.BALTIMOREJAZZ.COM

Tell Me More and Then Some

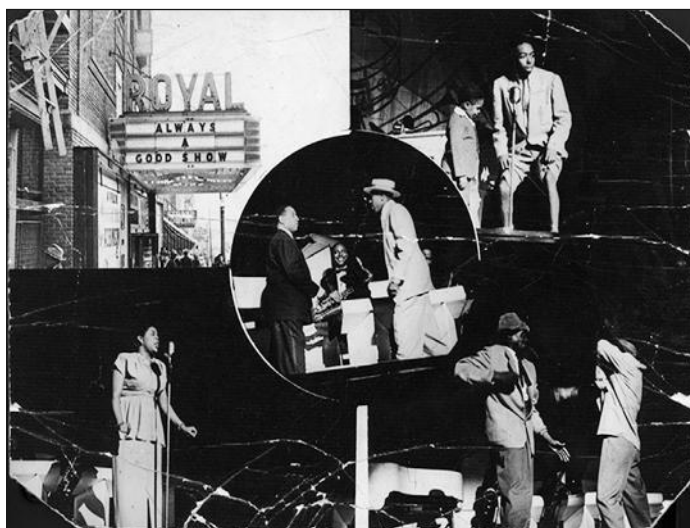
Documentary takes a deep dive into Baltimore jazz history and traces the music's evolution in Charm City

By Mitch Mirkin

So you think you're up on Baltimore jazz history? Ever heard of Bubby Johnson and his Plantation Orchestra? How about Edward A. Prettyman and the Municipal Colored Park Band? Obscure though they may be, those bands from the 1930s are among the many Baltimore-based jazz artists of yore—and of the present—whom you'll meet in *Tell Me More and Then Some*, a 2018 documentary produced in part by Baltimore jazz vocalist Marianne Matheny-Katz and her husband, Howard Katz.

Some might know the Katzes through Jazzway 6004, the cozy performance venue that the couple hosts out of their stylish stone-facade home on Hollins Avenue in Baltimore, looking out on Lake Roland. The Katzes are involved in local jazz in a variety of ways, and *Tell Me More*, they say on the film's main YouTube page, was produced to "help preserve the history and legacy of black music and culture in Baltimore City."

(continued on page 3)



Baltimore Jazz Fest Thanks You

By Ian Rashkin, President, Baltimore Jazz Alliance



Ebban Dorsey

PHOTO CREDIT: STEVE ONEY

This past Father's Day, BJA presented Baltimore Jazz Fest, a free day-long festival that featured some of the best jazz in town. I say the BJA presented, but in reality, this was truly a community effort. When we first presented Baltimore Jazz Fest in 2016, at Druid Hill Park, we also had great support, but it was a big effort for our small organization, and while we tried to repeat it the following year, we didn't have the resources to make it happen. We kept hearing from people, "When are you going to do it again?" and "How can I help?" So when St. John's Episcopal Church in Waverly approached us with the idea of holding a Father's Day event on Greenmount Avenue, the Fest was reborn.

See photos of participating musicians at
Baltimore Jazz Fest on Page 4.

St. John's, a beautiful, historic church with multiple buildings and outdoor areas, is interested in participating more in the surrounding community. A neighborhood resident, Linda Richardson of LCR Jazzy Productions, put them in touch with us, and worked with both of us to plan and organize. But it takes a lot of time, money, and connections to produce an event like this, and it was more than BJA and these partners could take on alone. Luckily, we didn't have to. We contacted our friends and partners in the jazz community and secured their help in hiring—and paying—the performers, giving them a chance to promote their organi-

(continued on page 5)

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
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

BJA BOARD

Tyrone Crawley
Alice Downs
Liz Fixsen, Secretary
Jean Farnsworth
Vernard Gray
Robin Houston, Treasurer
Ian Rashkin, President
Theresa Sise
Rená Sweetwine, Vice President
Barry Glassman, Founder and Emeritus
Camay Calloway Murphy, Emerita
Mark Osteen, President Emeritus

NEWSLETTER

Gail Marten, Jazz Palette
Editor/Designer

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!**

SUNDAYS

Germano's – 7-10

Weekly jazz jam hosted by Mike 'n' Ike.
Instrumentalists and vocalists are welcome. 300
South High Street. 410-752-4515

MONDAYS

An die Musik Live! – 7:30-9:30

409 N. Charles Street. Jam sessions **SECOND**
and **FOURTH** Mondays co-hosted by Alex
Meadow and Christian Hizon. \$5 for musicians and
\$8 for others.

The Avenue Kitchen – 7-10

911 W. 36th Street. Hosted by Hot Club of
Baltimore, mostly Django Reinhardt music,
1930s-'40s and standards. Room for dancing.
Full bar with extensive draft beer selection and
food menu. No cover. 443-961-8515

Terra Cafe – 8:30-11:30

101 E. 25th Street. Monday straight ahead jazz
jam hosted by Clarence Ward III. All are welcome
to come out and express themselves. No cover,
one drink minimum. Come on in and swing with
us. 410-777-5277

TUESDAYS

NEW! Keystone Korner – Starts at 9 after
the Collective's set. Hosted by the Baltimore
Jazz Collective (Sean Jones, Kris Funn,
Quincy Philips, Todd Marcus, Matt Stephens,
Brinae Ali). 1350 Lancaster Street, Baltimore.
Musicians and vocalists are welcome.

Marie Louise Bistro – 8-11

904 N. Charles Street. Hosted by Tom Lagana. No
keyboard at this session. 410-385-9946

The Judge's Bench – 8:30-Midnight

8385 Main Street, Ellicott City. Charlie Schueller
leads informal jam sessions on the **FIRST**
TUESDAY of each month. 410-465-3497

Randallstown Community Center – 6-8

3505 Resource Drive, Randallstown. Open Jazz
Jam Sessions/Book & Poetry Readings. Hosted
by Derrick Amin. Musicians and vocalists are
welcome. 410-887-0698

WEDNESDAYS

49 West Café – 7-10

49 West Street, Annapolis. Hosted by John Starr
and house band. **FIRST & THIRD Wednesdays.**
Musicians and singers very welcome! Delicious
and reasonably priced food and drink available!
\$10 cover. Reservations 410-626-9796

HOMEslyce – 8-11

336 N. Charles Street. Todd Marcus leads jazz jam
sessions **FIRST Wednesdays.** 443-501-4000

THURSDAYS

The Place Lounge – 7:00-10:00

315 W. Franklin Street. Jam session/open mic is
hosted by Spice every **THIRD THURSDAY.**
Musicians and vocalists are welcome.
410-547-2722

*If you know of other local jam sessions
that should be listed, or any that have been
discontinued, please let us know.*

Tell Me More and Then Some

(continued from page first page)

To produce the 103-minute documentary, the Katzes partnered with Paratime Pictures and Nanny Jack & Co., the archives and consulting agency of local historian, writer, and collector Phillip J. Merrill, who provides commentary throughout the film. Jonathan Bevers, who now uses the professional name Jon Henry, wrote, directed, and co-produced the film.

Through archival photos and film clips and interviews with local musicians and historians, accompanied by a swinging soundtrack featuring dozens of local artists, the movie tells the story of Baltimore jazz from the first half of the last century through today. “[Baltimore] was a place that was the perfect blend of America’s north and south,” notes the film’s website. “This was a place that would give rise to many of America’s great jazz legends. It would prove to be a fertile landscape for America’s black culture to thrive and it would lead to the development of great arts and entertainment.”

The film devotes considerable time to exploring the social phenomena and communal institutions that have intertwined with Baltimore’s black music scene over the years: the church, music education in black schools during segregation, and the turbulent Civil Rights Era—including the riots triggered by the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. As such, the film should appeal both to music lovers and to devotees of African American history. Make that *American* history—this is an important and fascinating chapter in the history of this nation at large, not just a tale of one demographic group and its particular musical heritage.

One of the local luminaries appearing in the film is Camay Calloway Murphy, the daughter of Cab Calloway and co-founder of the Eubie Blake Center on North Howard Street. She and Merrill describe the roots of the local jazz scene, in people’s homes and local churches, such as Bethel A.M.E. on Druid Hill Avenue and Ebenezer A.M.E. in South Baltimore. “Many of the musicians that go on to play jazz, and bebop, and swing, and early stride piano players, they learned their craft by going to church, by going to Sunday school, or by being taught by an organist or pianist from the church,” explains Merrill. “You can’t talk about jazz without talking

about the role of the black church in any urban area.”

The film’s title comes from a song that Billie Holiday recorded. The soundtrack opens with a cover of the tune by vocalist Integriti Reeves and homegrown Baltimore players Warren Wolf, Kris Funn, John Lamkin III, and Craig Alston. Holiday, like Calloway, spent most of her youth in Baltimore. The two, along with Eubie Blake, are among the iconic artists featured in the film. The segment profiling Lady Day opens with a grainy photo of her as a toddler. Even at this tender age, her expression somehow betrays the hardship she had likely already endured. Merrill says that in Holiday’s music,

“you could feel the essence of the struggle. You could feel the essence of the pain.” The film describes how

Lady Day, despite what she endured, or maybe because of it, helped break down racial barriers and spur social change.

It goes on to depict the rise and fall of “The Avenue,” i.e., Pennsylvania Avenue, the once-bustling two-mile strip that was home to many clubs and served as Baltimore’s black-music hub. The producers of *Tell Me More* had hoped to raise enough money to release their work through the film festival circuit, but so far they have had to be satisfied with airing it on YouTube, split into five episodes. Their hope is that as it reaches folks in Baltimore and beyond, “it will help arm people with the knowledge to preserve history, know their community and give back and create.”

The documentary ends optimistically, highlighting educators who are using music to help launch inner-city kids toward success. One example is the B-Sharp Music Enrichment Academy at Timothy Baptist Church in West Baltimore.

Tell Me More is engaging and enlightening in its own right. But by viewing it, you’ll also honor the local legends who helped make jazz what it is today. You’ll likewise recognize those they mentored, the young and older lions performing in Baltimore’s jazz venues in 2019 who are keeping that legacy going strong.

To find the five segments on YouTube, use search term “Tell Me More and Then Some documentary.”

Mitch Mirkin is a writer and editor with the research program of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. He contributed to the recent BJA series of profiles on local big bands. Seven of Mitch’s jazz compositions appear on The Common Roots Ensemble’s recent CD, *Dance of the DNA*.



PHOTO COURTESY OF JAZZWAY 6004

SOUND TRACK ARTISTS
L to R: Warren Wolf, Kris Funn, John Lamkin III,
Integriti Reeves, Craig Alston

“It don’t mean a thing, if it ain’t got that swing!” – Duke Ellington



Photographs by: STEVE ONEY

Shown here are just some of the musicians who played at Baltimore Jazz Fest

Baltimore Jazz Fest Thanks You

(continued from page first page)

zations and also to highlight artists with whom they have a special relationship.

Some of Baltimore's premier jazz presenters answered the call: Contemporary Arts, Germano's Cabaret, Jazzway 6004, and Keystone Korner all sponsored performances, making this truly a community effort. We deeply appreciate these organizations, not only for assisting us in making this event a reality, but for standing together to help launch an event that belongs to the whole Baltimore jazz community. We also are deeply grateful to the many other supporters of this event, including the Maryland State Arts Council, 32nd Street Market, Mid-Atlantic Drums, AAPS Productions, UrbanThink Media, Chamber Music America, and the many individuals who volunteered time and resources to make it a success.


Thanks again to all our performers, sponsors,
audiences, vendors, and volunteers.

We'll see you next year at Baltimore Jazz Fest!

And indeed it was a success! First off, despite the threat of rain, the weather held and gave us a beautiful day to perform and enjoy live jazz. We had a steady stream of audience members, from our opening with the amazing Baltimore School for the Arts Big Band to the rousing closing act by Rufus Roundtree and Da B'more Brass Factory. Each artist put on an amazing show. In addition to those above, The Todd Marcus Jazz Orchestra, the Kings of Crownsville, the Eric Kennedy Ensemble, and the Women of Baltimore Jazz Collective all dazzled the audience with a variety of styles and excellent musicianship. Over and over I've heard how much people enjoyed every single act, and the atmosphere definitely reflected the value placed on great music, with audience members coming from all around the area and mingling with neighbors from the surrounding blocks to enjoy the sun, sounds, and company of the jazz community.

Baltimore Jazz Alliance, along with St. John's and LCR Jazz Productions, are committed to continuing this event and helping it to grow with the support of the community. To any who want to see it grow or who have ideas to improve it, please reach out to us! While BJA serves as the organizing force, this is truly a grassroots effort, and it will continue to blossom as we all continue to lead it. Thanks again to all our performers, sponsors, audiences, vendors, and volunteers. We'll see you next year at Baltimore Jazz Fest!

Ian Rashkin works as a software developer by day, and plays bass any chance he gets, with Mike 'n' Ike, the Liz Fixsen Trio, and other local artists. He has served on the board of the Baltimore Jazz Alliance since 2014 and is its current president.



Germano's
PIATTINI
Contemporary Italian Kitchen and Bar

in the heart of Little Italy
Celebrating our 10th year as
Baltimore's premiere cabaret venue.

300 S.High St. • 410.752.4515
germanospiattini.com

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

Venues and Businesses:
**Do you have a discount to list in the
BJA Member Benefits column?**

Please email us at jazzpalette@gmail.com to let us know
what you have to offer. Our next issue be distributed at the
beginning of December 2019.



*unified jazz
ensemble*

**EVERY TUESDAY NIGHT
at 49 WEST CAFE**
(for more than 20 years)

49 West Street in Annapolis
410-626-9796
www.49westcoffeehouse.com
\$6 cover



PHOTO COURTESY OF SUSAN ALCORN

SUSAN ALCORN

Pedal Steel Guitar Free-Improviser

By Liz Fixsen

Continuing our focus in our last newsletter on the free improv scene in Baltimore, I recently interviewed pedal steel guitar player Susan Alcorn. A national and international performer (she is currently on a tour in Germany), Alcorn has become part of Baltimore's free improv scene. She played at the 2004 High Zero Festival of Experimental Free Improvised Music in Baltimore, with multi-instrumentalist, composer, and improviser Joe McPhee and French drummer LeQuanh Nin. Later, she connected with trumpeter Dave Ballou and bassist Michael Formanek, both known for their work in free improv.

She most recently appeared at Artscape with The Shroom Pickers. She tends to play at small, quirky venues such as Fadensonnen, a biergarten, natural wine and sake bar in Baltimore's Old Goucher neighborhood, and the Red Room, a volunteer-run space in Baltimore dedicated to mind-expanding experimental culture, headquartered at Normal's Books and Records. She also used to perform at the Wind-Up Space in Station North. In April 2019, she played a concert at An die Musik with saxophonist Derrick Michaels's Blood Moon Quartet. (Hear the show on YouTube).

Alcorn's musical background, from her years in Texas, was in country music—the genre in which pedal steel guitar is usually played. But as she began to study twentieth-century classical music, visionary jazz, and world music in the 1980s, she began to stretch the boundaries of her instrument, and today has made a prominent name for herself in the realm of free improvisation.

"A certain kind of free improv," says Alcorn, "started in

Alabama," of all places. In fact, Wikipedia has an article on Alabaman Davey J. Williams (1952 - 2019), a free improvisation and avant-garde music guitarist who in 1981 co-founded *The Improviser*, a journal of experimental music, with violinist and pianist LaDonna Smith (b. 1951).

But free improv also had a genesis in Europe, among musicians who didn't necessarily have a background in jazz, unlike musicians who play "free jazz." In fact, Davey Williams and LaDonna Smith played a type of free improvisation that is not joined to the hip with jazz—some call it non-idiomatic free improvisation. Alcorn is a recognized name in the European experimental or free improv community and regularly performs in European venues.

Alcorn is always inspired to try new things. She plays in a state of heightened awareness to the other ensemble members' playing, not slavishly following them but aiming to give context to what they are playing. Her 2004 High Zero concert was totally free-improvised, based on "musique concrète," using a recorded montage of sounds and effects from musical instruments, the human voice, and the natural environment, as well as sounds created with synthesizers and computer-based digital signal processing.

While a lot of free improv players tend to focus on pure sounds, Alcorn says she likes to play notes with recognizable

She says she thinks Baltimoreans are a little "goofy"—we see things a little bit differently.

"After all . . . Baltimore's history includes people like Edgar Allan Poe and John Waters."

pitch. She is also aiming for a level of emotional expression. Often, she says, the emotional intensity of the music brings her almost to tears.

The pedal steel guitar has assets and liabilities as an improvisational instrument. It has at least twenty different ways to produce the same note—each with a different timbre. Although playing the instrument requires engaging hands, feet, and knees, the real challenge is the precision required to pluck the strings and engage the volume pedal at just the right moment, with more pressure as the note decays, comparable to the volume pedal on a Hammond B3 organ. This feature is most responsible for the expressiveness of the instrument.

She comments that Baltimore audiences have been the best she has experienced anywhere—a lot better than in Texas, for sure. "Why do you think this is?" I asked. She says she thinks Baltimoreans are a little "goofy"—we see things a little bit differently. "After all," she observed, "Baltimore's history includes people like Edgar Allan Poe and John Waters." Dan Deacon and the group Matmos, world-famous in "experimental music," also live in Baltimore.

Alcorn explains that now there is a political dimension to

her music. As an artist, she can't not be political these days. Between pieces, she will talk about the songs and tell stories. For example, when she was in Chile, she played songs by Victor Jara, a popular folk singer who was murdered during the 1973 coup that installed late dictator Augusto Pinochet. In a concert in Italy, which has taken a turn to the right, she started by playing "Bella, Ciao!" a song that is significant for those who fought against fascism in WW II. She may play Oscar Peterson's "Hymn to Freedom" or Pablo Casals's "Song of the Birds," a tribute to refugees and immigrants all over the world.

Extensive additional information about Alcorn can be found on her website. Let me sum up by saying that Susan Alcorn has made a unique and valuable contribution to Baltimore's musical community with her work in free improv, which we embrace in the wide arms of that genre we call "jazz."

Liz Fixsen is a jazz pianist, jazz vocalist, jazz enthusiast and church musician. She has written numerous articles and reviews for the Baltimore Jazz Alliance and serves on the BJA board. Liz teaches English as a Second Language through Howard County Library and taught Professional Writing at University of Maryland for many years. She works with Jazz Beyond Borders promoting jazz and world-music artists.

DEBORA GALÁN RETURNS TO THE EAST COAST



Following her smash success at Blues Alley last summer, the singer/songwriter returns to the East Coast with amazing vocals and songs reflecting her jazz sensibilities and Spanish/Cuban heritage.

Featuring poignant lyrics, lilting melodies and compelling rhythms, her music is heard around the globe. *The San Diego Troubadour* says, "With a powerful voice and soul in spades, Debora Galán is a true talent."

Enjoy tunes from her groundbreaking CD *All About Love* and new album *They Call Me Big* New York with Christian de Mesones.



November 8 at 8 & 9:30 PM
AN DIE MUSIK LIVE
Baltimore, MD

November 15 from 8 -11 PM
MR. HENRY'S
Washington, DC

with Todd Simon, Julian Berkowitz and Leonardo Lucini

Carl Filipiak Jazz Quartet

Carl Filipiak on *guitar*
Robert Shahid on *drums*
Paul Hannah on *sax*
Steve Zerlin on *bass*



Oct. 2, 2019 8 p.m. Costas Inn, Dundalk, MD
Nov. 6, 2019 8 p.m. Costas Inn, Dundalk, MD
Dec. 4, 2019 8 p.m. Costas Inn, Dundalk, MD

Nov. 16, 2019 7 p.m. Music Land, Bel Air, MD
Gregory Thompkins Tribute to John Coltrane

Visit www.carlfiliplik.com for more upcoming shows.



Stanley Cowell Quintet **LIVE!**

**Saturday, October 5th
7:30 & 9:30 pm**

**Sunday, October 6th
5:00 & 7:00 pm**

KEYSTONE KORNER BALTIMORE

1350 Lancaster Street, Baltimore, MD 21231

TICKETS: 410-946-6726

www.keystonekornerbaltimore.com

InstantSeats.com

Join Stanley Cowell's Quintet's odyssey through his musical career featuring:
FREDDIE HENDRIX, trumpet; BRUCE WILLIAMS, saxophones; TOM DICARLO, bass;
VINCE ECTOR, drums; and SUNNY COWELL, vocals.

"A pianist of deep authority and resolute purpose." – Nate Chinen, *New York Times*

"...one of those virtuoso pianists whose hands have covered a staggering amount of ground, always moving with certainty and curiosity." – Chris Richards, *The Washington Post*

"His music is unique. It's not like anyone else's that I know, says [Jimmy] Heath. He's got his own voice in this world." – Michael West, *Jazz Times*

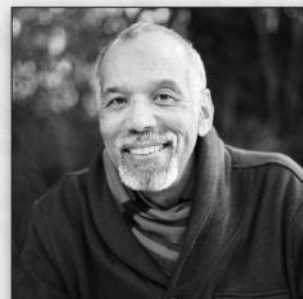
Stanley Cowell, pianist/composer, is Professor Emeritus of Jazz Piano at Rutgers-Mason Gross School of the Arts. A professor for 33 years and a Steinway Artist, Cowell has performed and recorded worldwide as a solo pianist. He has performed with diverse ensembles from duos to orchestras in jazz venues and concert halls and is listed on hundreds of recordings as soloist and/or composer.

Saturday, Oct. 5th and Sunday, October 6th
BE A PART OF THIS LIVE CD AND VIDEO RECORDING. DON'T MISS IT!

STANLEY COWELL, pianist & composer

Artists and audience interviews by ROBERT SHAHID, WEAA-FM
and RUSTY HASSAN, WPFW-FM

Contact Sylvia Cowell (301) 717-0088 or pianochoir@comcast.net



The Common Roots Jazz Ensemble: *Dance of the DNA*

By Matt Belzer

Artistic creations are ideas, and there is nothing like the sound of an idea, also known as music. As creators, we hope that our ideas enter the culture in a substantive and lasting way. In other words, we hope it becomes part of our cultural DNA.

The album *Dance of the DNA*, composed by Baltimore musician Mitch Mirkin, and performed by the recently formed Common Roots Jazz Ensemble, had its beginnings forty years ago when Mirkin was a high school student composing jazz music in a spiral-bound notebook. Imagine letting an idea gestate for years, allowing it to have both the optimism of youth and the wisdom of experience.

Mirkin revisited that music and added freshly written tunes in creating this project. With the help of his teacher, guitarist Yawn Jones, he assembles an impressive group of musicians to bring this music to life. Mirkin accurately describes the joyous experience of hearing his music “being performed with such a beautiful and wholesome spirit and energy by these talented musicians, with such synergy among them.”

The album opens with the light and airy “Sing to Me, Brazil.” This track has a very live and positive feeling to it that permeates the entire album. I can see why it is the first track, for it showcases everyone in the group. Bassist Blake Meister and drummer Byung Kang provide wonderful support, changing textures behind soloists with subtlety and conviction.

After a deceptive cha-cha introduction, the title track launches into a hard-bop style melody. This tune has a nice, long blowing form with an interesting structure, ABABC-CAB, which, come to think of it, could be a genetic code. The musicians clearly enjoy digging into these changes, especially tenor saxophonist Ron Pender. Everyone should strive to play with Pender’s honesty, authenticity, and maturity.

The next track, “Hello, Mr. A,” begins with a keyboard ballad introduction that fooled me into thinking I was getting the typical ballad in the third track slot. I am grateful as always to have my expectations subverted. What we get is a groovy, soulful tune with a nice pocket at the center. Guitarist Jones contributes especially strong accompaniment behind

another fabulous tenor solo, playing rhythmically or floating where needed, all while dancing with the keyboard. Both he and keyboardist Justin Taylor play their strongest solos here. I would love to hear what Taylor could do on a grand piano. It would also be interesting to hear this band play this tune a year from now to see where their imagination takes them. There are hints of exploration here that will undoubtedly emerge in a live environment.

“Rakta Dhatu” and “Waltz for South Fallsburg” both have interesting structures and textures. It is always gratifying to hear a deviation from expected formulae. Both tunes present nice surprises while keeping the spirit of the music lively and free.

There’s nothing like an organ blues to remind us that

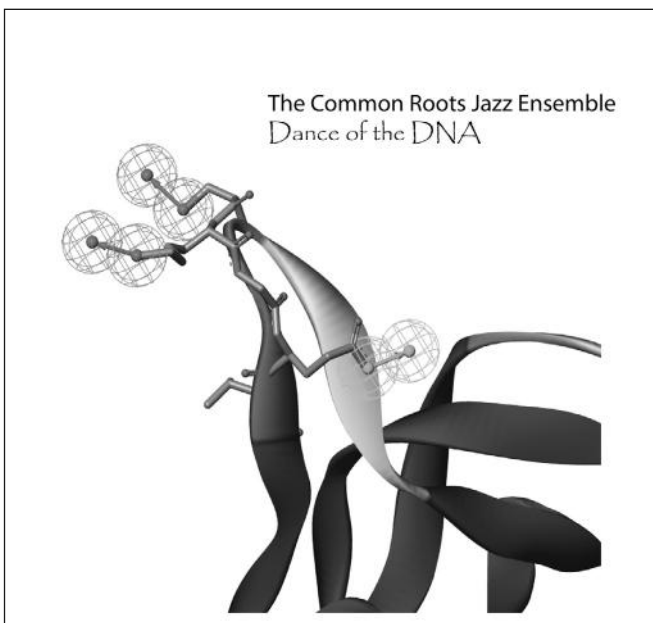
we’re in Baltimore. “Triplin’ the Blues” brings back great memories of when I first moved to town and got blown away by what I heard organ players do. Ian Rashkin steps into the bass chair on this track to keep things swinging nicely: the live vibe is most evident here.

Closing out the album is “That Day at Whole Foods Market.” It must have been a positive experience! Bassist Ian Trusheim lends his talents here, providing just enough space for the music to breathe. And there’s finally a drum solo! Kang sounds like he has spent some time investigating Bill Stewart

and has come to his own conclusions. It is an uplifting way to end your time with the Common Roots Jazz Ensemble. As Mirkin writes in the liner notes, “We are all more alike than different. We share common roots, yet each of us is unique and special. Those are two ideas worth keeping in mind.”

Yawn Jones, guitar; Ron Pender, tenor sax; Justin Taylor, keyboards; Byung Kang, drums; Ian Rashkin, bass (“Triplin’ the Blues,” “Hello, Mr. A”); Ian Trusheim (“That Day at Whole Foods Market”); and Blake Meister, bass on all other tunes.

Matt Belzer keeps busy performing regularly on woodwinds in the orchestra pits of the Kennedy Center, the Hippodrome, and numerous theaters throughout the region. He is creatively active as a member of the Anansi Trio, and his compositions are published on Advance Music and UNC Jazz Press. He is the Director of Jazz Studies at UMBC.



“I merely took the energy it takes to pout and wrote some blues.” – Duke Ellington

Perfect Gift for Jazz



Membership in BJA The gift that keeps on giving!

See page 15 or visit our website:
www.baltimorejazz.com



FREE Online Global Community Musician Directory

Seattle pianist Randy Halberstadt is developing an online global community musician directory, a FREE service. Some big improvements are scheduled for the next few months (such as creating a separate domain, adding self-editability and a search function, etc.), but the cost to the musicians will always be \$0.00.

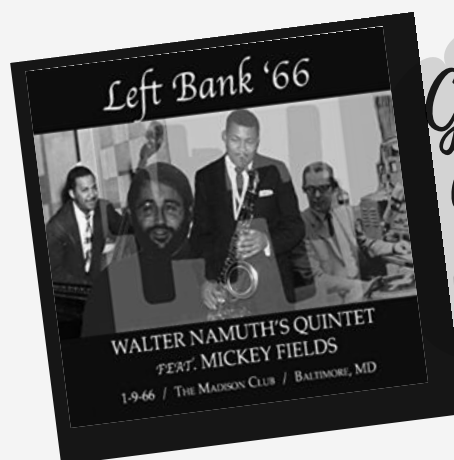
Contact: Randy@randyhalberstadt.com

Website: <https://randyhalberstadt.com/directories/>

The BJA newsletter is delivered by mail to members and several distribution venues including: Keystone Korner, Caton Castle, Jazzway 6004, An die Musik, Eubie Blake Cultural Center, Bertha's, 49 West Cafe, Germano's, Creative Alliance, Reginald F. Lewis Gift Shop, Morgan State University and Dear Globe Coffee.

If you are interested in sponsorship of our newsletter, or if you would like newsletters delivered to you for placement in your establishment, please contact: irashkin@gmail.com

LEFT BANK '66 available from BJA!



Great
gift
idea!

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 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 will then send you the CD by U.S. mail.



Mayor Catherine E. Pugh
& the City of Baltimore

CREATIVE
BALTIMORE
FUND

BALTIMORE
OFFICE OF PROMOTION & THE ARTS
Arts • Events • Film

This project has been funded by Mayor Catherine E. Pugh
and the Baltimore Office of Promotion and The Arts.



Have a night out. It's on us.

All performances at Peabody are **FREE**. Advance tickets may be required. Visit peabody.jhu.edu/events or call **667-208-6620** for information.

Peabody Jazz Combos

Tuesday, October 22

7:30 pm

Sean Jones, director

Peabody Latin Jazz Ensemble

Wednesday, December 4

7:30 pm

Warren Wolf, director

Peabody Jazz Ensemble

Thursday, December 5

7:30 pm

Sean Jones, director



RODNEY KELLEY

Consummate Entertainer

By Liz Fixsen

Every musician is both an artist and an entertainer, but some are more focused on self-expression and creative impulses, performing with the hope that the audience will respond, while others, more focused on what they believe the audience expects, aim to please and entertain. Sometimes the same musician may be more an artist for one situation and more an entertainer for another.

Baltimore-based guitarist Rodney Kelley Sr. is decidedly an entertainer—starting with his flashy clothes. You might find him wearing a trim-fitting suit in dazzling white, with glittery red loafers. Or a gold-lamé jacket. Or an electric-blue jacket and a robin's-egg blue fedora. Or a snazzy suit the color of Dijon mustard. Or he might jazz up a plain shirt and slacks with a pair of sparkling blue shoes.

Kelley's personality is just as sparkling. He seems to just love entertaining and engaging with people: laughter, banter, and good cheer bubble up from his inner self and permeate his music, which spans a range of genres, including jazz, fusion, alternative, progressive rock, reggae, blues, folk, rock, funk, metal, and R & B.

I heard several of those genres the night I attended his show at Costas Inn, in Dundalk, where his band plays on the fourth Wednesday of every month. For example, the band played a Lou Rawls tune, "You're Gonna Miss My Lovin'"; a George Benson number, "Turn Your Love Around"; the Coltrane standard, "Naima"; the bossa nova standard, "Summer Samba"; and the Santana tune, "Europa." Kelley sometimes sings; that night, he sang "Night and Day" and "Fly Me to the Moon." He also sang "Isn't She Lovely" for the birthday of jazz fan Sue Carlin.

Kelley's regular band members are his son Rodney Kelley Jr., keyboard; Russ Lyles, tenor sax; Tony Lunsford, bass; and Spyda on drums. But he often invites friends to sit in, and he is open to just about anything musical. On this night, one big guy sat in to play a sort of country-rock-blues number. A trumpeter and guitarist played a funk tune. One of Baltimore's great drummers, Nick Costa, sat in on the perennial favorite, "Footprints."

Kelley also plays a regular Friday night duo gig at Sullivan's Restaurant at Baltimore's Inner Harbor. The night I visited, some of his musician friends from D.C. turned up unexpectedly; the evening turned into a mini-jam session, in which yours truly played a small part. Kelley seems to revel in musical fellowship.

Kelley has been playing music since he was 15 years old. He was kept indoors most of the time by a strict aunt who didn't like him associating with the neighborhood kids, so he was listening to music all the time. While he played jazz

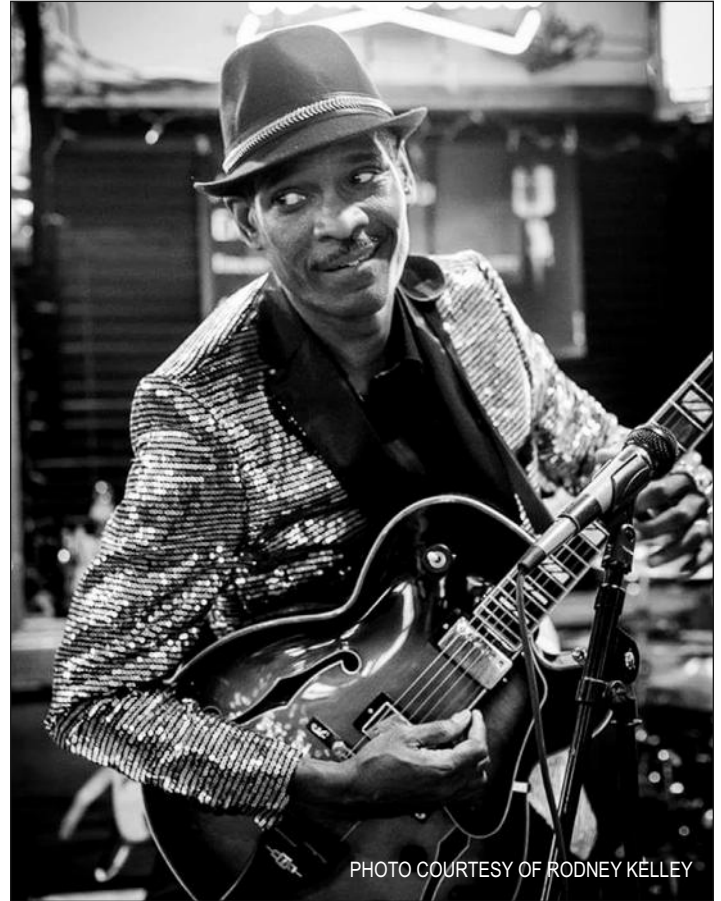


PHOTO COURTESY OF RODNEY KELLEY

at Frederick Douglass High School and studied classical guitar at Baltimore County Community College in Catonsville, he is mostly self-taught. "Most of your better musicians," he says, "were self-taught—because they had to struggle for it. They had no money for lessons. They'd follow bands around town, and some of the cats would show you something (and some wouldn't). Places like the Sportsman's Lounge, you could sit in, and if you couldn't handle it, they'd stop you right in your tracks and tell you 'nicely' to go back home and practice and then you'd be welcome to come back."

Two major influences on his style were guitarists Wes Montgomery and George Benson. But he also mentions Larry Coryell, Lee Ritenour, Carlos Santana, Pink Floyd, Buddy Guy, Charlie Parker, Funkadelic, McCoy Tyner, and Pat Metheny, among others.

His performance history includes many venues around Baltimore, including The Gordon Center for the Performing Arts, The National Aquarium, The Heritage Art Festivals, Cylburn Arboretum, Club 347, Lexington Market, Caton Castle and Artscape. He also led a jam session at the Summer Jazz Moves event on July 25th at Center Stage.

Kelley teaches private students, and if a student can't afford lessons, but shows real interest and dedication, he'll sit down with the student for a spell and show her or him a few things. He has written a number of compositions, and recorded quite a bit, but so far he has not produced his own CD. However, he hopes eventually to produce a CD with his

keyboardist son, with whom he often performs.

At this point, Kelley is just enjoying his musical life. He is comfortably retired from a long career as a computer systems network engineer at the University of Maryland. He is a father of three, married for 37 years. Some of his joie de vivre must come from this long, happy relationship, as well as from his faith. He is a practicing Jehovah's Witness, and as a youth, he read the Bible from cover to cover "many times." He is a man not driven by ambition—no world tours, no six-months gigs on a cruise ship for him. Kelley is happy just teaching and entertaining, and his popularity with audiences is a testimony to both his skill as a musician and to his gregarious and exuberant personality.



**CENTRAL PA FRIENDS OF
JAZZ**



Lucy Yeghiazaryan

"Lucy has it all, an incredible tone, time that drives the band and that other 'something' that makes you say this is the real thing. Definitely one of a kind."
-Grant Stewart

Sunday, October 20, 6 pm
Susquehanna Art Museum

Geoffrey Keezer Trio
feat. Gillian Margot

"Mr. Keezer is...multifaceted, responsive, constantly sifting through colors and shapes, bursting with a personal and sincere enthusiasm."
-The New York Times

Sunday, November 17, 3 pm
WITF Public Media Center



www.friendsofjazz.org
717.540.1010

Find us on
Facebook 







George Spicka

COMPOSER
PIANIST

JAZZ
CLASSICAL
POPULAR
EXPERIMENTAL

JAZZSTREET@AOL.COM / [HTTPS://GEORGEFSPICKA-COMPOSER.WEEBLY.COM](https://georgefspicka-composer.weebly.com)

The John Lamkin "Favorites" Jazz Quintet



John R. Lamkin II – Trumpet and Flugelhorn
Michael Hairston – Saxophones
Bob Butta – Piano
Michael Graham – Bass
Jesse Moody – Drums
Eartha Lamkin – Vocals (Keystone & Caton Castle)

Saturday, October 19
Jazz In Cool Places, Carroll Mansion
 800 E Lombard Street, Baltimore, MD 21202
 Showtime: 2 until 4 pm

Wednesday, November 13
KEYSTONE KORNER BALTIMORE
 1350 Lancaster Street, Baltimore, MD 21231
 Showtimes 7 & 9 pm
 \$20 Premium Seating / \$15 General Seating

Saturday, November 23
MR. HENRY'S
 601 Pennsylvania Avenue SE, Washington DC 20003
 Showtime: 8 until 11 pm

Friday & Saturday, November 29 & 30
TWINS JAZZ
 1344 U St NW, Washington, DC 20009
 Showtimes: 9 & 11 pm
 Tickets: \$15

Saturday, December 14
CATON CASTLE
 20 S Caton Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21229
 Showtime: 6 until 10 pm
 Tickets: \$15 Advanced Sales / \$20 door

Friday & Saturday, December 27 & 28
TWINS JAZZ
 1344 U Street NW, Washington, DC 20009
 Showtimes: 9 & 11 pm
 Tickets: \$15

BJA Member Notes

WE WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Ron Alexander, Michel Allen, Brandon Born, Zachary Born, Eddie Boyd, Jacqueline Caldwell, Mike Cammue, Stuart Clarke, Otis Collins, Maryanne Dalanon, Analilia Fierro, Paul Frank, Walter Gaylord, Kit Goode, Al Gourrier, Roger Hartley, Daniel Holmes, Franklin Hughes, P.S. Jackson, Lorraine Jacobs, Derek Jones, Elinore Krell, Denise Lewis, Danny McCaffrey, Angela Middleton, Deborah Moir, Ben Morris, Douglas Mowbray, Brian O'Sullivan, Evan Parker, Steve Phillips, Ernest Quarles, Gerald Rameau, William Roberts, Shayna Rose, Adam Rybczynski, Ronald Schuster, Anjan Shah, Josephine Shaw, Brian Sheldon, Dan Tamburrine, Brenda Tilghman, Kyle Vaughan, Ian Wardenski, Kenneth Washington, David Whettstone, Wojtek Zbijewski and Tom Zeller

Phil Ravita

Phil Ravita's group has received a grant from BOPA to present the show Unforgettable, the Music of Nat King Cole in October.

George Spicka

On April 7th, the Baltimore Composers Forum debuted Spicka's eight-minute chamber composition, "Tonian World."

Todd Marcus

In *DownBeat* magazine's 67th annual critics poll, Todd Marcus was selected 16th on clarinet, 3rd as a rising star on clarinet, and 9th as a rising star on a miscellaneous instrument (bass clarinet).

Delandria Mills

Delandria Mills has a full-page photo spread on p. 51 of the August 2019 issue of *DownBeat* magazine, sponsoring Powell flutes.

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 businesses offer discounts to BJA members:

- **NEW! Keystone Korner Baltimore** is now offering \$5 discounts to BJA members for all shows. Discount is available at the door, not for online ticket purchases.
- **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 North Howard Street offers a discount to BJA members on rentals of its performance and events spaces.
- **Germano's Piattini** often offers discounted tickets to specific events for BJA members, announced by email.
- **Jazzway 6004** offers BJA members a \$5 discount on performances at their venue.



IF YOU SUPPORT THE BJA'S MISSION

*Please consider becoming a member,
or renewing your membership
if it has lapsed.*

IF YOU HAVE A PASSION FOR THE BALTIMORE JAZZ SCENE AND HAVE SOME SKILLS TO OFFER

*Consider joining our board of directors
or one of our working committees
or volunteering for one of our events.*

IF YOU ARE A MUSICIAN, PRESENTER OR VENUE

*Make sure your events are listed on our calendar.
It's free and a great way to reach thousands of
viewers every month.*

**For more information contact:
webmaster@baltimorejazz.com**

VENUES & BUSINESSES:

Do you have a discount to list in the BJA Member Benefits column?

Please email us at jazzpalette@gmail.com to let us know what you have to offer. Our next issue be distributed at the beginning of October 2019.

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 display ad* to: jazzpalette@gmail.com

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

AD PLACEMENT RATES AND SIZES:

\$15 for 1/8 page	(3⅝ in. wide x 2¼ in. high)
\$30 for 1/4 page	(3⅝ in. wide x 4¾ in. high)
\$60 for 1/2 page	(7½ in. wide x 4¾ in. high) horizontal ad
\$60 for 1/2 page	(3⅝ in. wide x 9¾ in. high) vertical ad
\$120 for full page	(7½ in. wide x 9¾ 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 (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

Direct questions or comments to:
webmaster@baltimorejazz.com

Do you need a display ad?

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

jazzpalette@gmail.com • 410-290-5638
www.jazzpalette.com

GAIL MARTEN, EDITOR/DESIGNER
BALTIMORE JAZZ ALLIANCE NEWSLETTER
JAZZPALETTE@GMAIL.COM
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)

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

Thank you for joining! Your membership makes a difference!



BALTIMORE JAZZ ALLIANCE

847 North Howard Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

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



FALL 2019

OCTOBER / NOVEMBER / DECEMBER

Dedicated to promoting Jazz in Baltimore!

"Jazz is the only music in which
the same note can be played
night after night but differently each time."
– Ornette Coleman

**Support jazz
in Baltimore.
Join BJA!**

Details on page 15

