



For Immediate Release
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Contact: [Russell Blair](#)
(860) 559-4873

HARTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY ANNOUNCES 19TH SEASON OF BABY GRAND JAZZ SERIES

First show scheduled for Jan. 2, 2022

(Hartford, CT) – Hartford Public Library’s popular Baby Grand Jazz series will return for its 19th season on Sunday, Jan. 2, 2022.

Jazz concerts will run Sundays at 3 p.m. in January, February, March and April (except Easter Sunday, April 17). The performances will be held in the Center for Contemporary Culture at the Downtown Library, 500 Main St., Hartford. In-person seating will be limited and registration is required, but the shows will be streamed online on HPL’s Facebook page (facebook.com/HartfordPublicLibrary) and YouTube channel (youtube.com/hplct).

“Baby Grand Jazz is one of our most popular offerings and we’re happy to once again host a lineup of talented musicians from throughout the region,” said Bridget E. Quinn, Hartford Public Library president and CEO.

Close to 15,000 viewers from around the world watched virtually during the 2021 season.

“We’re pleased to be able to offer an in-person live music experience this year, and hope to continue fostering community and connection for Hartford area music lovers,” said Liz Castle, Hartford Public Library programming and events manager.

This season the library is offering a wide array of jazz expression. From covers to jazz classics to innovative fusions of styles and instrumentation, the Baby Grand Jazz series has something for everyone.

Baby Grand Jazz at Hartford Public Library is sponsored by the Kaman Foundation. For more information, visit: www.hplct.org/classes-seminars-exhibits/baby-grand-jazz

2022 Season Schedule

Jan. 2: Sounds of A&R | S.O.A.R.

Jan. 9: Joshua Bruneau

Jan. 16: Dana Lauren

Jan. 23: Quartet 95

Jan. 30: Noah y Maurizio

Feb. 6: Emery Austin Smith

Feb. 13: Trevor Davis' Jazz Affair

Feb. 20: The Colin Walters Quartet

Feb. 27: Mary DiPaola Trio

March 6: The DeChamplain/Anick Quartet

March 13: Carl Testa's Sway

March 20: Michael Carabello Trio

March 27: Nando Michelin

April 3: The Sherry Winston Band

April 10: Allegra Levy

April 17: No show (Easter)

April 24: Ronnie Burrage & Holographic Principle

About The Artists

Sounds of A&R | S.O.A.R.

Jan. 2

Award-winning duo Sounds of A&R aka S.O.A.R. is the brainchild of vocalist April May Webb and trumpeter Randall Haywood. Partners in music and life, April and Randall have come together creating a distinct sound that fuses aspects of swing, cool, hard bop and avant-garde while exuding pure soul and R&B. April May's unique vocal approach draws from a wide range of influences such as Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan and Dinah Washington. She sings with a rustic warm tone and strong articulation. Randall utilizes the trumpet with great emotional expression. His sound continues to look towards the future, while paying homage to Fats Navarro, Clifford Brown, Clark Terry and Miles Davis.

Joshua Bruneau

Jan. 9

From a young age, Josh was drawn to different genres of music including classical, big band and after being introduced to the trumpet, jazz. Over the years, Josh has shared the stage with artists such as Harold Mabern, Mike LeDonne, Eric Alexander, Joe Farnsworth, Carl Allen, John Webber, Ken Fowser and Larry Willis to name a few. September 2011 brought Josh to the Detroit Jazz festival with another of his great mentors, Curtis Fuller. Early 2013 found Josh travelling with Curtis on his European tour, frequenting jazz clubs in Zurich, Basel, Lausanne and Luzern Switzerland, Vienna, Paris, Amsterdam and Athens. In 2014 Josh released his

debut album, "Bright Idea" (Cellar Live) featuring Steve Davis and Ken Fowser. Additionally, Josh is often found on records with the Ken Fowser Quintet ("Standing Tall," "Now Hear This" and "Don't Look Down") and most recently on Davis' chart-topping release "Correlations," the editor's pick in the April 2019 issue of Downbeat Magazine.

Dana Lauren

Jan. 16

Dana Lauren is an award-winning and critically acclaimed vocalist and songwriter. She has toured and recorded with legendary Grammy Award-winning trumpeter Arturo Sandoval, singing at some of the nation's most famed jazz venues. Her 2008 album release "Stairway to the Stars" (featuring and produced by Sandoval), hit the top of the jazz charts and received rave reviews from some of the most prestigious jazz publications in the country. Her second album release in 2010 "It's You or No One," was self-produced and features Christian McBride on bass. That same year, Dana was selected as a semifinalist in the Thelonious Monk International Jazz Vocal Competition. Her show is a collection of beloved jazz standards and fresh original compositions that is not to be missed!

Quartet 95

Jan. 23

Named for the highway that connects the East Coast, these dynamic musicians have been playing consistently together for more than 10 years, becoming veterans of the New York and Connecticut jazz scenes and performing with Curtis Fuller, George Coleman, Cyrille Aimée, Joel Frahm, Steve Davis and many more. Together, they continue developing a common language steeped in the tradition and pushing boundaries into modern jazz.

Noah y Maurizio

Jan. 30

Noah y Maurizio is a Boston-based band that comes out of the vibrant musical environments of the Berklee College of Music and the Acoustic Music Seminar at the Savannah Music Festival. The individual members of the group are widely recognized as emerging artists in the acoustic music scene, but come from varied musical backgrounds: traditional and contemporary, Appalachian and Venezuelan, Brazilian and jazz influences combine to give Noah y Maurizio a unique sound and broad appeal. Their debut album "Acoustic Travelogue" is out for streaming on Spotify, Apple Music and Tidal, and out for purchase on iTunes, Bandcamp and Amazon Music.

Emery Austin Smith

Feb. 6

Emery Austin Smith was born, raised and still lives in Hartford. He studied piano with Lillian Johnson Pierce and theory/composition with Clyde Wesley Board. Emery played locally with saxophonist Harold Holt and Percy Nelson. He was the leader and arranger/composer of the Emery Austin Smith Quintet, performing in schools, colleges and museums, lecturing and demonstrating the art and culture of jazz. Emery was a co-leader with Lou West of the Progressive Arts and Culture Company 15-piece band which performed at the first Arts Festival in Hartford. Smith is strongly influenced by Thelonious Monk and Bud Powell. Smith worked in New York with Charles Shavers, Howard McGhee, Coleman Hawkins, Tina Brooks, Dizzy

Gillespie and many more. Presently, Emery performs in New York and New England. The presentation will be a mix of jazz (bebop and standards) and popular songs with accompanying historical commentary. He has appeared at The Baby Grand series in the past to rave reviews!

Trevor Davis' Jazz Affair

Feb. 13

By age 17 Trevor was playing drums professionally five nights a week with a regionally successful rock band, one of whose members went on to lead the Saturday Night Live studio band and serve as band director for David Bowie, Bob Dylan and George Harrison (GE Smith). After a year of steady gigs, it was on to study and record jazz with a big band at Johnson State College, now Northern Vermont University, and following that a period of freelancing back in central Connecticut when he played live and studio sessions and with dozens of different bands at every imaginable venue from clubs to country clubs to country western clubs, and the full range of private social events. During this period he also played with Michael Bolton, and later managed and played with a leading Connecticut band, Fountainhead.

The Colin Walters Quartet

Feb. 20

A native of Connecticut, Colin Walters is a dynamic and innovative saxophonist, woodwind doubler, composer and educator. Colin discovered his passion for the saxophone at an early age and credits his exposure to listening to jazz, classical, gospel, R&B and reggae while growing up. Colin tours and performs regularly in a wide variety of ensembles and genres, including the Funky Dawgz Brass Band, Victor Rendon and the Bronx Conexion, Scott Wenzel Big Band, New London Big Band, New Haven Symphony Orchestra, Waterbury Symphony Orchestra, Juilliard Jazz Orchestra, Earl MacDonald 10tet and the Colin Walters Quartet. Through performance, education and diverse community engagements, he strives to inspire others to appreciate the cultural aesthetic experiences of music. He is an active clinician and performer advocating music and its importance to the next generation of musicians. He is an elementary band director in the Darien Public Schools. Colin was most recently a Morse Teaching Artist Fellow, Gluck Community Service Fellow, Samuel L. Jackson, Jr and Irene Diamond Scholarship recipient at The Juilliard School. He holds dual degrees in jazz saxophone performance, music education and earned an MA in curriculum and instruction from UConn. In June 2021, Colin completed his MM in jazz studies from The Juilliard School

Mary DiPaola Trio

Feb. 27

Mary DiPaola's Trio features the world-renowned Nat Reeves on bass. Mary and Nat have worked together for more than 25 years and along with drummer Kirk Woodard are closely linked to the Jackie McLean Institute at the Hartt School. The trio is looking forward to returning to the piano jazz series at the Hartford Public Library and will present a variety of arranged jazz standards and original compositions of the featured performers. Mary DiPaola began her musical career at the Hartt School, where she received degrees in piano performance: jazz studies (BMus) under the direction of the legendary Jackie McLean, and music education (MMusEd). She has been performing music throughout Connecticut since, and has recorded twice as a bandleader ("Cat's Cradle" and "Seventh Sign"). In addition to performing Mary is an educator, having taught private piano lessons, on faculty at the Hartt School and in East Hartford Public Schools at Sunset Ridge Academy. She currently teaches at Aiken Elementary

School in the West Hartford Public Schools district where she teaches music in grades K-5 and conducts the grades 4-5 choir.

The DeChamplain/Anick Quartet

March 6

The collaboration of Hartford-based pianist Matt DeChamplain and Boston-based violinist Jason Anick started as a tribute to the great Stephane Grappelli and Oscar Peterson. It soon blossomed into a quartet that plays works by various composers such as Horace Silver, Hank Mobley and John Coltrane and original compositions that explore the sonic depths of this unique instrumentation. At 16 years old, Matt was a featured guest in two concerts with jazz legend Dave Brubeck at the same piano. He has performed at venues across the United States such as the Monterey Jazz Festival, Greater Hartford Festival of Jazz, Birks Jazz Festival, New York's JVC Jazz Festival, the Berklee Jazz Festival, The Kennedy Center and Jazz at Lincoln Center. He has played at renowned jazz clubs such as The Regatta Bar, Smalls, Dizzy's Club Coca Cola, The Met Room and Yoshi's and has played in Europe and the Caribbean. He has been both a sideman and a leader in ensembles that opened for Wynton Marsalis, Hank Jones, Dave Brubeck and The Duke Ellington Orchestra. In 2008, Matt was selected for the Betty Carter Jazz Ahead Program at The Kennedy Center under the direction of Dr. Billy Taylor which allowed him to study with Taylor, Curtis Fuller and Winard Harper for two weeks. In 2010, he competed in the Martial Solal Jazz Piano Competition in Paris and in 2018, he was selected as a runner-up in the Great American Jazz Piano Competition in Jacksonville, Florida.

Carl Testa's Sway

March 13

Carl Testa is a multi-instrumentalist and composer at the intersection of improvised music, jazz, electronics, experimental music and new media. As a performer/improviser, he is equally comfortable on string bass, electronics, lighting and combinations thereof. As a composer, he has written acoustic and electronic music for configurations ranging from solo to chamber orchestra, including multimedia pieces that incorporate electronics, lighting, dance and theater. His work has been performed throughout the U.S. and Europe, and is documented on many recordings. In addition to his work as a leader/collaborator, he performs regularly with composers Anthony Braxton, Mario Pavone and Tyshawn Sorey. He serves as the Director of Publishing and Creative Technology for Braxton's Tri-Centric Foundation where he manages all facets of the production of digital and print scores for the organization. He is the production manager for noted jazz venue and record label Firehouse 12.

Michael Carabello Trio

March 20

Pianist Mike Carabello is a multitalented pianist in the tristate area. Mike is a product of the Artist's Collective Youth Jazz Orchestra under master artist in residence Rene McLean, as well as the Jackie McLean Institute of Jazz. He has worked with bassist Nat Reeves, drummer Ronnie Burrage, saxophonist Rene McLean, trombonist Steve Davis, bassist Matt Dwonszyk and has studied piano under pianists Rick Germanson, Andy Laverne and Alan Palmer. He has Performed at The White House for First Lady Michelle Obama, The Ninth Note Jazz Club, Black Eyed Sally's Jazz Club, The Side Door Jazz Club and The New Haven "On The Green" Jazz Festival to name a few. He is also the pianist for a few working projects in the Connecticut area including Erica T. Bryan and the New Mosaic and the Lost Tribe.

Nando Michelin

March 27

This band is a joint collaboration between composers Nando Michelin (Montevideo, Uruguay) and Ebinho Cardoso (Cuiaba, Brazil). In their music, they present songs using poems by João Cabral de Melo Neto, diving into the concrete work of a relatively forgotten poet in his own country. The result is exquisite, impressed by the beauty of the compositions, the quality of the arrangements and the level of the recording. Both composers are very experienced educators as well, Nando being a faculty member at Berklee College of Music and Ebinho having toured with his clinics all around Brazil. The idea of producing this music was the result of Nando's first encounter with Cabral's poetry, so universal, yet Brazilian. "João Cabral's voluntary exile got me even closer to his literary universe, a Brazilian poet living in Spain, just like we are foreigners residing in the US. That triggered in me a deep regard for his poetry, and made me delve into his universe." João Cabral de Melo Neto was a Diplomat who wrote a big part of his body of work in Spain, where he was good friends with Joan Miro and Juan Brossa. "We recorded compositions inspired by some of the most beautiful poems of Brazilian literature, and our main concern was to keep and bring out the beauty of the text in its plenitude," says Nando.

The Sherry Winston Band

April 3

Sherry is a graduate of Howard University's College of Fine Arts, School of Music and is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority. Some of Sherry's awards include the Connecticut Women's Hall of Fame Award; "Women of Power;" the Stamford Urban League; the Links "Impact Through The Arts" award, 2017; the Louis Armstrong Award, 2005; nomination for the NAACP "Image Award," 1989; the "Eubie Blake Award," selected by Billy Taylor, 1991; "Howard University Alumni Award," 1984 and 1989; the Cultural Achievement Award by the National Black MBA, 1996; WBLS's "Quiet Storm Award;" and Alpha Kappa Alpha's "Partner in the Arts award," 2001. Sherry performed at The White House for President and Mrs. Clinton during their last holiday party, and for former President George H.W. Bush at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York City. She has appeared on "Emeril Live," "The Today Show," BET and many other television shows nationally. She hosted six shows for BET TV, with Lou Rawls and Saxophonist Najee at the San Francisco Jazz Festival.

Allegra Levy

April 10

West Hartford native and Jazz singer Allegra Levy released her fourth album on the Steeplechase label entitled "Lose My Number; Allegra Levy sings John McNeil" in August 2020 to rave reviews, despite the inability to perform due to the height of the pandemic. The release featured Allegra's lyrics to legendary trumpeter and composer John McNeil's compositions. Allegra, a rising singer-songwriter based in New York who has been known for her prowess as a lyricist to mostly her own original jazz compositions (rooted in the great American songbook with a nod to the progressive) decided to take a stab at an all lyrics project to McNeil's plethora of tricky tunes. McNeil is not only a longtime friend and mentor, but produced her first two albums – "Lonely City," hailed by The New York Times as "fresh," "exotic" and "far beyond the ordinary," and "Cities Between Us," which prompted JazzTimes to pronounce Levy "a double-barreled talent" and "unquestionably one to watch."

Ronnie Burrage & Holographic Principle

April 24

Drummer, percussionist, keyboardist, composer, arranger, band leader and music educator Ronnie Burrage was born on Oct. 19, 1959, in St. Louis. His style draws most notably from the musical genres of jazz, funk and soul. Burrage sang in The St. Louis Cathedral Boys Choir from ages 7 to 11, and had the opportunity to perform with Duke Ellington, one of the greatest musical figures to ever live, at the incredibly young age of only 9 years old. He was introduced to jazz by listening to music every day, which was typically presented to him by his mother, his uncles and grandparents. He played drums, percussion, piano and vibraphone, and sang in funk, R&B and jazz groups, including The Soul Flamingos, Fontella Bass, The Oliver Sain Band, Third Circuit & Spirit, Rainbow Glass and Expression Jazz Quintet. From the ages of 15-17, Ronnie was a member of No Commercial Potential with keyboardist Mark Friedrich, bassist Darryl Mixon and guitarist Richie Daniels. They served as the opening act for pianist/keyboardist George Duke and Canadian pop singer/songwriter Gino Vannelli. Ronnie played in clubs, concert halls, festivals and other assorted venues, including the annual Afro Day in the Park in St. Louis as a member of The St. Louis Metropolitan Jazz Quintet in the early 1980s.

About Hartford Public Library

Now celebrating its 127th year, Hartford Public Library remains at the forefront of redefining the urban library experience in the 21st Century. With seven locations throughout the city, the library provides education, intellectual enrichment and cultural development for thousands of children, youth and adults every year. Hartford Public Library has also gained local and national recognition for its wide range of new initiatives and partnerships designed to meet the needs of a diverse and dynamic city and region, including immigration services, employment assistance and youth leadership training. www.hplct.org.