

★ the ★ *Open at 7pm!*  
**DJANGO**  
*This Month!* ★  
*Live!*

FRI 6/1	<b>KEN FOWSER QUINTET</b> <b>TONY HEWITT &amp; THE JOHN COLIANNI GROUP</b>	7:30PM 10:30PM
SAT 6/2	<b>RAY GALLON TRIO</b> <b>EYAL VILNER BIG BAND</b>	7:30PM 10:30PM
TUE 6/5	<b>DOM SALVADOR</b>	7:30PM
WED 6/6	<b>PASQUALE GRASSO SOLO GUITAR</b> <b>DJANGO JAM</b>	7:30PM 10:00PM
THR 6/7	<b>STAFFORD HUNTER &amp; CONTINUUM</b> <b>"RITA" FT. BRENDAN SKIDMORE &amp; BRUCE HARRIS</b>	7:30PM 10:00PM
FRI 6/8	<b>KEN FOWSER QUINTET</b> <b>LEZLIE HARRISON</b>	7:30PM 10:30PM
TUE 6/12	<b>JAINARDO Y SU KUMBATRIO</b> <b>LOS HACHEROS</b>	7:30PM 10:00PM
WED 6/13	<b>PASQUALE GRASSO SOLO GUITAR</b> <b>DJANGO JAM</b>	7:30PM 10:00PM
THR 6/14	<b>FREDDY DEBOE BAND</b> <b>IAN HENDRICKSON-SMITH</b>	7:30PM 10:00PM
FRI 6/15	<b>KEN FOWSER QUINTET</b> <b>DANNY JONOKUCHI &amp; THE REVISIONISTS FT. ALEXA BARCHINI</b>	7:30PM 10:30PM
SAT 6/16	<b>DONALD VEGA</b> <b>MIKE SAILORS BIG BAND</b>	7:30PM 10:30PM
WED 6/20	<b>PASQUALE GRASSO SOLO GUITAR</b> <b>STEVEN FEIFKE BIG BAND</b>	7:30PM 10:00PM
THR 6/21	<b>BRANDON BAIN</b> <b>MARK WHITFIELD</b>	7:30PM 10:00PM
FRI 6/22	<b>KEN FOWSER QUINTET</b> <b>HUDSON HORNS</b>	7:30PM 10:30PM
SAT 6/23	<b>DWAYNE CLEMONS QUINTET</b> <b>PROFESSOR CUNNINGHAM &amp; HIS OLD SCHOOL</b>	7:30PM 10:30PM
TUE 6/26	<b>LATIN GROOVES</b> <b>WITH GERARDO CONTINO</b>	7:30PM
WED 6/27	<b>PASQUALE GRASSO SOLO GUITAR</b> <b>NEW ALCHEMY JAZZ ORCHESTRA</b>	7:30PM 10:00PM
THR 6/28	<b>DAVID GIBSON QUINTET</b> <b>CHRIS TURNER</b>	7:30PM 10:00PM
FRI 6/29	<b>KEN FOWSER QUINTET</b> <b>ANDROMEDA TURRE</b>	7:30PM 10:30PM
SAT 6/30	<b>DIDA PELLED</b> <b>"KING" SOLOMON HICKS</b>	7:30PM 10:30PM

*Reservations* (212)519.6649  
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**CRAFT COCKTAILS, SMALL PLATES & LIVE JAZZ!**  
 LOCATED IN THE ♥ OF TRIBECA

Curated by trombonist Chris McIntyre, the Syncretics Series at Issue Project Room aims to present parallel or complementary universes in music and sound, the connections between not always obvious. For the third installation (May 5th), improvising percussionist Pheeroan akLaff and new music pianist Isabelle O'Connell were presented opposite each other, the latter on a program of four post-millennial works for piano. AkLaff, since the '70s a frequent collaborator of trumpeter Wadada Leo Smith and reedplayers Oliver Lake and Anthony Braxton, was featured in a kaleidoscopic solo recital spanning African and Asian percussion traditions rooted in spirituality and corporeal movement. His drums, tom-heavy and with an array of cymbals, gongs, cowbell and a balafon, took up the center of the room as he entered and did a slow, deliberate dance around the instruments, tapping gongs and delicately eking out dry melodies on the balafon. Moving to the kit, he built snapping, sinewy rock rhythms in a ceremony of economical integration towards a ritual of body, instrument and tradition. Occasionally doling out missives, including on his studies with Fela Kuti, akLaff stitched together Ghanaian highlife, nods to Max Roach and Art Blakey, a resonant exploration of cymbal tunings and bright processions translating hand drumming into fancy kit-work. This exploration filled the Beaux-Arts stone theater and turned it into, as the title of akLaff's debut LP reads, a House of Spirit and Mirth. — *Clifford Allen*



Pheeroan akLaff @ Issue Project Room

It felt a bit like '30s Paris, the brief respite between wars when jazz manouche flowered in the capable hands of Django Reinhardt and Stéphane Grappelli. "Forever Django: Passing the Family Torch", held at Carnegie Hall's Stern Auditorium (May 1st), starred guitarist/violinist Dorado Schmitt, his guitarist sons Samson and Amati, accordionist Ludovic Beier, violinist Pierre Blanchard and guitarist/vocalist Doudou Cuillerier, plus guest spots by clarinetist Ken Peplowski and vocalists Melody Gardot and Veronica Swift. Too often, stagings of the Reinhardt/Grappelli repertoire degenerate into note-fests of flashy runs and fast strum patterns and certainly these were present, but what separated this event was a sense of romance, an emotional awareness that bordered but never crossed over into sentimentality. Each of the principal soloists, especially Beier and the three Schmitts, were firebrands, capable of dazzling feats of finger-play, yet each embraced an ethos of tasteful restraint, most notable in the patriarch's subtle touches behind the singing of Gardot and Swift and in Samson's jazz-tinged playing over his well-wrought originals. The second half featured the patriarch playing his own tunes, first on guitar, then violin; two trio numbers displaying Amati's impeccable fretwork; "Hymne à l'Amour" sung by teenaged Stefi Schmitt, her stadium-sized tone belying her awkward shyness; two covers by sultry chanteuse Swift; then a brisk finale with 13 pairs of hands onstage, all swinging. — *Tom Greenland*



Melody Gardot & Dorado Schmitt @ Stern Auditorium

Trumpeter Ahmed Abdullah has been Musical Director of Bedford-Stuyvesant community center Sistas' Place since 1998, so it's fitting that the storefront jazz room on Nostrand Avenue would fête him for his 71st birthday (May 12th), where his group Diaspora (Dispersions of the Spirit of Ra) performed two sets separated by a rousing champagne toast and delicious strawberry shortcake for all comers. Diaspora in this iteration comprised fellow Sun Ra Arkestra alum Radu Ben Judah on basses (electric and contrabass), guitarist Kelvyn Bell, drummer Ronnie Burrage, tenor saxophonist Don Chapman and vocalist-poet Monique Ngozi Nri. Most of the program featured compositions from the Sun Ra songbook—jubilantly rendered with ensemble vocals, warped guitar chords often approximating Ra's electric keyboard fascination—in addition to Abdullah originals, a rousing cover of saxophonist Marion Brown's AfroCaribbean gem "La Placita" and standards like "Iko Iko". Abdullah's phrasing is crackling and compact, with a fullness and surety of force that projects confident, stirring lines, spurred by the explosive linkages of Radu, Burrage and Bell. Chapman projected a softer insularity, but his multiphonic stir was often goaded into bright embers by the rhythm section's sparring. Yet for all the intense creative interplay, Diaspora presents a view of music that is all-encompassing, rooted in community and participation—there was ample room for hand claps and vocal call and response with the audience. (CA)

Although most rivers are unidirectional, the idea behind Zakir Hussain and Dave Holland's Crosscurrents is that musical cultures, whether borne along the Ganges or the Hudson, can flow both ways. More specifically, as Hussain explained before the concert at Rose Theater (May 5th), he wanted to show what Indian music might offer jazz. With Holland (bass) and saxophonist Chris Potter representing the Hudson; Hussain (tablas), singer Shankar Mahadevan, guitarist Sanjay Divecha, keyboardist Louis Banks and his son, drummer Gino Banks, representing the Ganges; the stage was set for a confluence of waterways. After Holland established a deep, bowed tonic drone, Potter slowly explored the tones of the opening raga in D minor, answered by Mahadevan, entwining their phrases in a beautiful jugalbandi (duet), tablas entering after ten minutes, to end in an exciting triple cadence. Segueing to a funky calypso with earthy rubbings on the low tabla, the band next moved to a curlier theme with solos all around, followed by a Carnatic raga led by Mahadevan, whose short ornamented vocal passages were elegantly answered by Holland, climaxing, after a series of solos, with Mahadevan's similarly inspired exchanges with Hussain. Banks gave a masterful solo drum-kit demonstration of modulating dance-beats before a Bollywood boogie, a workout in tintal (16-beat meter) and Mahadevan's rapid-fire singing on "Breathless" ended the set. The encore sounded like a Nashville ballad—but with lyrics in Tamil. (TG)

It is easy to forget, given the reputation accorded to Anthony Braxton's 1969 solo album *For Alto*, that a few months earlier an equally groundbreaking album by an unaccompanied musician was made: bassist Barre Phillips' *Journal Violone*. And as the former spawned many followers so too did the latter inspire dozens of bassists to try their hand(s) at this most demanding of formats. These have ranged from fairly straightforward readings of standards to wild explorations of extended techniques in free settings. Somewhere in the middle of those two mountains, **Michael Formanek** cut a pastoral valley in his own take on solo performance at 440 Gallery (May 6th). The bassist was there under the auspices of flutist Michel Gentile's monthly *Me, Myself and Eye* solo series and played two sets to a full crowd and confused pedestrians walking by the space's bay windows facing Brooklyn's Sixth Avenue. For his first set, Formanek improvised four pieces, the 15+-minute first and last pieces bookended a pair of 6-minute forays. Anyone familiar with Formanek's recent work as a leader knows him as a melodic conceptualist and it was this methodology at play even when he had no one to lead or support but himself. Generally his sound was pure, occasionally frosted with majestic double stops or inhabiting a trot-like groove. Certain kernels were developed, possibly for use in some later group project. But he also indulged in bold arco, a moody sawing, dirgey and deep, or apocalyptic strums, born of rhythmic motifs.

— **Andrey Henkin**



Michael Formanek @ 440Gallery

This year's long-running **Lost Jazz Shrines** series at BMCC Tribeca Performing Arts Center celebrated the legacies of the jazz venue Fat Tuesday's and vocalist Betty Carter, who performed there regularly, with a program under the musical direction of former Carter pianist Marc Cary. The evening (May 5th) got started with a talk by Cary, who described making his New York Carter debut at the club and the lessons learned during his time with her. The musical portion of the show began with graduates of the Kennedy Center's Betty Carter Jazz Ahead residency mentored by Cary—vocalist Charles Turner III, pianist Arcolris Sandoval, guitarist Andrew Renfroe, bassist Barry Stephenson and drummer Diego Ramirez—delivering an exciting set of originals and standards, which included the late Geri Allen's quirky arrangement of "Sometimes I'm Happy" and Turner's original scat feature "Manhattan". Cary then led a quintet of Carter band alumni with trumpeter Kenyatta Beasley, saxophonist JD Allen, bassist Curtis Lundy and drummer Clarence Penn plus guest vocalist Jackie Gage through a medley of Cary originals into which the band wove Carter's episodic "Sounds" as an interlude between pieces: Cary's intro of "Chalabati" set things up for Gage's singing of the melody, serving as an interlude between Lundy's soulful "Here's The Thing" and "Better Days" and Cary's dramatic "Running Out Of Time". The Jazz Ahead band joined the alumni for the grand finale, Carter's "Tight".

— **Russ Musto**



Marc Cary @ Tribeca Performing Arts Center

In 1960, a young man named Herbert Jeffrey Hancock moved from his native Chicago to New York and, within a couple of years, had established himself as both a pianist of choice for a wide array of musicians and as a leader and composer. Though it is far too soon to see if the story will have the same legendary ending, New York has had another recent Chicagoan transplant of about the same age make his own deep ripples in the city's jazz ocean: vibraphonist **Joel Ross**. His name seems to be everywhere these days, in as disparate band settings as that of Peter Evans and Aaron Parks, Herlin Riley and María Grand. And while he hasn't waxed his leader debut yet, he is increasingly gigging around under his own name and in varied projects. One such group appeared at Mezzrow (May 8th), a quartet with the fascinating frontline of Ross' vibraphone paired with Kalia Vandever's trombone, ably supported by bassist Harish Raghavan and drummer Craig Weinrib. The band's first set was four pieces, all hovering around the 15-minute mark, three of which were originals paired with the standard "Alone Together". Though hype is the modern jazz currency, Ross is well deserving of his rarified air. His composing is unique and soloing pianistic, the latter somehow bridging the virtuosic gap between Oscar Peterson and Cecil Taylor. While Vandever and Weinrib were solid, it was the match-up with monster Raghavan that was most fruitful. The pair should work as a duo, à la Walt Dickerson and Richard Davis. (AH)

**The Jazz Gallery Honors Gala** at The Players Club (May 7th) recognized the contributions to the music by NEA Jazz Master pianists Randy Weston and Eddie Palmieri, drummer/activist Terri Lyne Carrington and impresario Bruce Gordon with inspired music, moving testimonials and much deserved awards. From the opening procession of the Roman Diaz Agolona Afro Cuban Ensemble, a festive spirit filled the room that would continue through the night. Gallery cofounder/trumpeter Roy Hargrove led an imposing ensemble of vibraphonist Joel Ross, alto saxophonist Immanuel Wilkins, pianist David Virelles, bassist Luques Curtis and drummer Kendrick Scott through a rousing arrangement of Carrington's "Fire", after which vocalist Dianne Reeves introduced the composer with a touching remembrance of their enduring friendship. Claudia Acuña joined Hargrove's band to sing Victor Jara's "El Derecho de Vivir en Paz" as a prelude to George Wein's presentation of the Contributor To The Arts Award to Gordon. The Agolona Ensemble and Gnawan percussionist Maalim Hassan Ben Jaafar teamed up with Hargrove's sextet for an incredible extended outing on Randy Weston's "Cookbook" prior to Weston's acceptance of his award, presented by author Yaa-Lengi Ngemi. Following musicologist Renee Lopez' presentation to Palmieri of his award, all of the night's players plus tenor saxophonist Melissa Aldana threw down on "Vamonos Pa'l Monte", with even Palmieri taking a turn on his song. (RM)

## WHAT'S NEWS

The latest inductees into Jazz at Lincoln Center's **Ertegun Jazz Hall Of Fame** have been announced: Jimmie Blanton, Nat "King" Cole and Nina Simone. The newest members will be celebrated in curated sets at Dizzy's Club Jul. 17th-19th. For more information, visit [academy.jazz.org/hall-of-fame](http://academy.jazz.org/hall-of-fame).

As part of the annual **Alternative Guitar Summit** taking place this month, there will be a workshop with Bill Frisell at The Jazz Gallery Jun. 23rd at 1:30 pm. And the Alternative Guitar Summit Camp will take place Jun. 11th-15th at Full Moon Resort in Big Indian, NY. For more information, visit [alternativeguitarsummit.com](http://alternativeguitarsummit.com).

Sony Corporation is Official Title Sponsor and INGLOT Cosmetics of Poland is Presenting Sponsor of the **Annual Blue Note Jazz Festival**. As part of the festival, a new venue, Sony Hall, will be inaugurated with concerts by Gregory Porter, Eddie Palmieri, The Manhattan Transfer and Chris Botti. For more information, visit [bluenotejazzfestival.com](http://bluenotejazzfestival.com).

**Issue Project Room** has announced "Jon Hassell: Riffs on Hyperopia and Music", a discussion with the famed trumpeter to take place at the venue Jun. 2nd at 8 pm. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit [issueprojectroom.org](http://issueprojectroom.org).

It has been announced that Chicago's **Delmark Records**, established in 1953, is under new ownership. Chicago musicians/composers/educators Julia A. Miller and Elbio Barilari have acquired the label and all of its subsidiaries, catalogue of masters, inventory of CDs and LPs and Riverside Studio. For more information, visit [delmark.com](http://delmark.com).

Saxophonist/clarinetist **Paquito D'Rivera** received an Honorary Doctorate from the Manhattan School of Music as part of the institution's commencement ceremonies last month.

Winners of Jazz at Lincoln Center's **23rd Annual Essentially Ellington High School Jazz Band Competition** have been named: first-place winner is Dillard Center for the Arts from Ft. Lauderdale, FL; second-place winner is Newark Academy from Livingston, NJ; and third-place winner is Tucson Jazz Institute from Tucson, AZ. Honorable Mention is Beloit Memorial High School from Beloit, WI and Roosevelt High School from Seattle, WA. For more information and the complete list of awards, visit [academy.jazz.org/ee](http://academy.jazz.org/ee).

Entries are now being accepted for the **Seventh Annual Sarah Vaughan International Jazz Vocal Competition** from vocalists over 16 not currently signed to a major label. The contest will take place as part of the TD James Moody Jazz Festival in November 2018. For more information and to submit entries, visit [sarahvaughancompetition.com](http://sarahvaughancompetition.com).

The **21st Century Band Jazz Institute** at Snow Pond Center for the Arts in Sidney, ME will take place Jun. 19th-26th and provide college, graduate-level, and beyond jazz instrumentalists an intensive program of study led by Ron Blake and members of Dion Parson's 21st Century Band. For more information, visit [snowpondmusicfestival.com/programs/21st-century-band-jazz-institute-snow-pond](http://snowpondmusicfestival.com/programs/21st-century-band-jazz-institute-snow-pond).

The **Summer Jazz Arts Institute** in cooperation with the Lehman College Department of Music, Multimedia, Theatre and Dance will take place Jul. 11th-13th. For more information, visit [jazzpower.org](http://jazzpower.org).

The winners of the **2018 Jazz Journalists Association Jazz Awards** have been announced and will be presented Jun. 12th at The New School's Arnhold Hall. For the complete list and to purchase tickets for the event, visit [jjazzawards.org/p/2018.html](http://jjazzawards.org/p/2018.html).

The **SFJAZZ Collective** has announced changes in membership. Etienne Charles will replace Sean Jones on trumpet and Matt Brewer takes over for Matt Penman on bass. For more information, visit [sfjazz.org](http://sfjazz.org).

Registration is now open for the Tenth Annual **Jazz Education Network Conference**, taking place in Reno, NV Jan. 9th-12th, 2019. For more information, visit [jazzednet.org/conference/conference-registration](http://jazzednet.org/conference/conference-registration).

With a performance last month by Gene Bertoncini, Brooklyn venue **The Drawing Room** ceased operations after five years.

**The Manhattan Transfer** has been named an Honorary Lifetime Member of the Barbershop Harmony Society.

As part of the **Louis Armstrong's "What A Wonderful World" 50th Anniversary Celebration**, an initiative of Queens Library, Louis Armstrong House Museum and Kupperberg Center for the Arts, there will be a lecture, "The Life & Times of Louis Armstrong" taking place at Forest Hills Library June 25th, Jackson Heights Library Jun. 2nd and Astoria Library Jun. 4th, the latter two events presented in Spanish. For more information, visit [queenslibrary.org](http://queenslibrary.org).

The Mayor's Office of New York City has announced the return of **New York Music Month** for June. As part of the initiative, there will be free rehearsal space offered to musicians, a Music and Nightlife Conference, free concerts and free walking tours of iconic music sites. For more information, visit [NYMusicMonth.nyc](http://NYMusicMonth.nyc).

Submit news to [info@nycjazzrecord.com](mailto:info@nycjazzrecord.com)