

ANITA BROWN JAZZ ORCHESTRA

**April 25, 2021: HELP CELEBRATE JAZZ APPRECIATION MONTH ~
SAVE THE DATE!**

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New York Composer to Premiere *Hart Island Suite* Embracing our collective grief from COVID-19

NEW YORK, NY - New York jazz composer, Anita Brown has composed *Hart Island Suite* to tell a poignant family story honoring a family member who rests on Hart Island, NYC's public cemetery. She offers its newly-scheduled premiere to simultaneously honor all souls who rest on Hart Island and all who perished as a result of COVID-19, *all of whom were denied the opportunity for funeral rituals.*

Anita Brown Jazz Orchestra will be presented by Jazz Forum Arts to premiere *Hart Island Suite* as part of its **2021 Sunset Jazz at Lyndhurst Concert Series:**

WHEN: Thursday, August 26, 2021; 6:30-8:00pm (no rain contingency) SAVE THE DATE!

WHERE: The west lawn of the Lyndhurst Mansion, 635 South Broadway, Tarrytown, NY 10591

ADMISSION: FREE

PARKING: Per car fee on premises

This performance is made possible by Jazz Forum Arts, Project Grants from NYFA and NewMusicUSA and donations through Fractured Atlas: Liberate the Artist.

The composition of *Hart Island Suite* was made possible with support from The Hart Island Project and a **2019 NYSCA Individual Artist Composer Commission.**



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Composer's Notes:

"This suite was composed to tell a poignant family story, honoring a family member who rests on Hart Island, NYC's public cemetery. At the same time, it seemed to lend itself to honoring all one million souls who rest with her, as these souls were likely never afforded a funeral ritual.

As the Covid19-related death rates soared in our nation, local media illustrated the role of NYC Hart Island during this heartbreaking tragic period. This made me realize that Hart Island Suite has the potential to broadly embrace not only my parents' grief, but New York's and our nation's collective grief.

In three movements, *Hart Island Suite* tells the story of my parents' grief as per their stillborn daughter, one year my senior (I. Mother's Story). The second movement (II. Terra Incognita) addresses the poor perception of Hart Island itself, seeking to change its public image to one of beauty and serenity. The final movement (III. Julie's Second Line) offers my NYC jazz musician parents and their first-born child a New Orleans style "second line" jazz funeral, to lift the life-long painful burden of grief.

It was rather stunning for me to realize that the unfortunate delay of this work's planned 2020 premiere may now offer a very broad embrace to include the families of all 500,000+ Americans who succumbed to this wrenching scourge and were denied customary funeral rituals.

Perhaps this delay in scheduling its premiere has presented me the opportunity to offer our nation a definitively American celebration of all souls lost through this unique funeral ritual in America's own jazz idiom." ~Anita Brown

Anita Brown is an award-winning composer who founded *Anita Brown Jazz Orchestra* in 2000. She has been commissioned by The Count Basie, Jon Faddis and Westchester Jazz Orchestras. Her formidable credits in production of live performances and recordings include work with Maria Schneider Orchestra, The Vanguard Jazz Orchestra, Dave Pietro, and her own ensemble. An experienced music educator, Brown is a Teaching Artist with ArtsWestchester and teaches in the Clarkstown Central School District.