

2011 UNIVERSAL TEMPLE OF THE ARTS

Staten Island JAZZ Festival 24 ARTISTS

BLUIETT



Illinois native Hamiet Bluiett is a jazz saxophonist, clarinetist, and composer. His primary instrument is the baritone saxophone and he is considered one of the finest living players of this instrument. Bluiett moved to New York City in 1969, where he joined the Charles Mingus Quintet and the Sam Rivers large ensemble. In 1976 he co-founded the World Saxophone Quartet (along with two other Black Artists' Group members, Julius Hemphill and Oliver Lake), which soon became jazz music's most renowned saxophone quartet. In the 1980s, he also founded The Clarinet Family, a group of eight clarinetists playing clarinets of various sizes ranging from E-flat soprano to contrabass.

He has remained a champion of the somewhat unwieldy baritone saxophone, organizing large groups of baritone saxophones. Since the 1990s he has led a virtuosic quartet, the Bluiett Baritone Nation, made up entirely of baritone saxophones, with drum set accompaniment. Bluiett has over a dozen recordings to his credit and has also worked with Sam Rivers, Babatunde Olatunji, Abdullah Ibrahim, Stevie Wonder, and Marvin Gaye.

LEOPOLDO FLEMING



As a musician, composer, and arranger Leopoldo is a great personality with a rich and multicolored palette of inspiration from his Latin-Afro-Indian roots, his childhood in Puerto Rico and St. Thomas, his many years as highly active on the jazz and beyond music scene of New York, and his international experience from since his youth collaborating and touring with US, Caribbean, and African stars all over Europe, the African continent, South America, the Caribbean, the Orient, and Australia. He goes about well versed and talented in several musical genres - jazz, funk, R&B, Caribbean, Cuban, Brazilian, African, gospel, spirituals. He is a brilliant accompanist, and a fascinating soloist, has a special melodic gift in his playing, and his performances sparkle with surprises, sophistication, grace, and exquisite timing.

He has toured worldwide with Nina Simone, played, recorded, toured with Miriam Makeba, The Symphony of the New World, Harry Belafonte, Monica Zetterlund, The String Reunion, Eartha Kitt, The World Bass Violin Ensemble, Beaver Harris, Novella Nelson, Lonnie Liston Smith, Dr. Lonnie Smith, Sonny Stitt, Richard Grove Holmes, *Queen* Esther Marrow, Leon Thomas, Randy Weston (in big band format and in a trio including bassist Ron Carter), Archie Shepp, Bob Cunningham, Kenny Barron, Horace Parlan (now living in Denmark), David Murray, The Boys' Choir of Harlem, The Spiritual Singers of Harlem - now the New York Harlem Singers, and so many other wonderful artists.

WINARD HARPER



Inspired by the musicianship of greats such as Clifford Brown, Max Roach, Cannonball Adderley, and Billy Higgins, Winard Harper has been a bandleader for over twenty years. His considerable talent and musicality landed him gigs with leaders Betty Carter, Johnnie Griffin and Dexter Gordon. Those pivotal early years on the road made a lasting impression on his decision to lead and develop bands. Harper muses, "You can hear it and feel it when musicians have shared the vision and experiences that distinguish a band from a gig. The relationships, the cohesion, the sacrifices and growth. It all comes through."

The Baltimore native, born in 1962, displayed an early affinity for rhythm. His father observed him beating on cans when he was three years old and encouraged him to take up drumming. His mother quipped, "I have no idea what we would have done with all that energy had it not been for that outlet." By five years old, he was making guest appearances with older brother Danny's rock band. He made a lasting decision when he heard a Clifford Brown and Max Roach recording. "I was fascinated hearing Max do the things he did with percussion of all types," he recalls. "I knew I had to play jazz."

Harper has played and recorded internationally with some of the most renowned jazz figures of his lifetime. His musical companions have included Dr. Billy Taylor, Nancy Wilson, Carmen McRae, Pharoah Sanders and numerous others. Beginning in the late 80's, he co-led the widely acclaimed Harper Brothers band with brother, Phillip. In the 90's, Harper branched out on his own with a dynamic sextet configuration that has produced seven recordings. In the essential tradition that nurtured him, and countless other stand-outs, Harper keeps "jazz academy" in session by spotlighting exceptional young talent.

BOB CUNNINGHAM



A native of Cleveland, Ohio Bob Cunningham has tasted the fruit from many different trees of the music world from classical to contemporary. He studied the Bass privately with such accomplished master instructors as Jacques Possell and June Cobb of Ohio, as well as the illustrious Art Davis and Homer Mench of New York. The Cleveland Music Institute and the prestigious Julliard School of Music further contributed to the rounding out of his musical growth.

The contemporary greats with whom Cunningham has performed read like a brilliant "Who's Who" of the music world. Having moved to New York in 1960, he has jammed and gigged with such notables as Dizzy Gillespie, Max Roach, Betty Carter, Aminata Moseka "Abbey Lincoln", Sun Ra, Art Blakely, Freddie Hubbard, Pharoah Saunders, and Yusef Lateef, for whom he composed and arranged a number of pieces. Cunningham has gone to work with not only accomplished musicians, but also noted choreographers such as Eleo Pomare, Rod Rodgers, Raymond Sawyer and luminous poets like Sonia Sanchez, Sandra Sharp, Camille Yarbrough, and Gylan Kain.

BETTY SHIRLEY



Jazz Vocalist extraordinaire, artist and teacher Betty Shirley is blessed with all the range and tonal control one might expect from a first-class Jazz singer. Ms. Shirley can scat, propel, coax and hang on to a note. She improvises with unerring instincts and delivers exactly what a song needs, spinning notes like silk.

Her extensive repertoire ranges from original compositions, Jazz (modern and traditional) and Blues to R&B, and Bossa Nova. She has sung with some of the best Jazz musicians in the world: Ellis Marsalis, Art Blakey Jr., Benny Green and Bross Townsend, to name a few and her tours have included Europe and Brazil. Her credits include the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival, the Pensacola Jazz Festival, Essence Fest and the Women in Jazz Series.

As a recording artist, Shirley has 3 critically acclaimed CDs to her credit as a leader. *Unveiled* (1995), *Betty Shirley Sings* (with the Chuck Chaplin Trio, 2002), and *Close Your Eyes* (released March 2007). Her latest work "Close Your Eyes," was completed just at the time Hurricane Katrina was rolling in.

KIANE ZAWADI



Kiane Zawadi is a New Yorker originally from Detroit and comes from a family whose tradition is rooted in music. Mr. Zawadi has performed and recorded with many legendary musicians, including his mentor, Barry Harris, Dizzy Gillespie, Joe Henderson, Roland Alexander, Freddie Hubbard, Art Farmer/Benny Golson Jazztet, James Moody, Lionel Hampton, Frank Foster, Aretha Franklin, Clifford Jordan, Wynton Marsalis *Live at Lincoln Center*, Rodney Kendrick, Archie Shepp, Randy Weston, McCoy Tyner, Larry Ridley, Yusuf Lateef, Sun Ra and Dexter Gordon.

Kiane was voted *Downbeat Magazine's* "Artist deserving Wider Recognition" and received a National Endowment for the Arts Performance grant. His teaching experience includes Jazzmobile, NYC Housing Authority After-School program; Washington Irving HS Music in the Schools program, The New School Jazz Studies program, The Crown Heights Youth Collective, and Duke University's Master Music Performance Program.

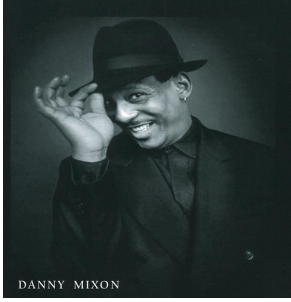
VISHNU WOOD



Vishnu Wood combines his work as a performing musician with multicultural education programs in an effort to help adults and children understand the roots of America's classical music JAZZ. His [career](#) includes national and international concerts and performances as a jazz bassist and national and international educational programs through [Safari East Cultural Programs](#), the organization he founded in 1973.

Mr. Wood is a native of Detroit who came up in the bebop era at the feet of jazz greats such as Barry Harris, Elvin Jones, Clifford Jordan, Randy Weston, Yusef Lateef. After a long New York – based career, Mr. Wood has added a second residence in Amherst, Massachusetts where he combines country life with an active musical career.

DANNY MIXON



Daniel Asbury Mixon was born in Harlem, New York. Danny began his artistic expression as a tap dancer. He was a student of the Ruth Williams Dance Studio and even at the tender age of ten was known as "the show stopper." Danny attended the High School of Performing Arts with Dance as his major.

During an afternoon outing at the Apollo Theatre with his grandfather, Danny was inspired by the jazz musicians he heard. It was then that he decided he wanted to play the piano. At the age of fifteen Danny began piano lessons with Mr. Cecil. However, his most memorable teacher was Roland Hanna.

At 17 years of age, while employed at a fabric company, Danny was invited to play with Sam Brown's band backing Patti Labelle & the Blue Bells in Atlantic City at Reggie's Cocktail Lounge. He never went back to the fabric business and Danny has never looked back.

By age 19 Danny found himself in Europe with the Muse Quartet under the auspice of Chris White. Then Danny worked with Art Blakely, next Kenny Durham, then Cecil Payne. His first professional organ gig was with Carlos Garnet at the Baby Grand in Brooklyn. Danny accompanied Big Maybelle at the Blue Coronet. The singer, Danny is most known for accompanying, is Betty Carter. After which Danny worked extensively with Charles Mingus. He ran the U.S. circuit with Yusef Lateef. Danny enjoyed a few years with the Lionel Hampton Big Band. Since Danny was in his 20's he has worked continuously with Frank Foster as a pianist for the Big Band; Frank Foster's Loud Minority, and his quartet - the Non-Electric Company.

Danny appears on many recordings, his most recent being with Hank Crawford on the CD's "Tight" and "After Dark." Danny's most recent CD is "On My Way". He is currently in the studio working on a few projects; his next CD, as well as producing others.

Danny Mixon is an accomplished Pianist and Organist who performs all over the world. Danny has also worked with Joe Williams, Mariena Shaw, Oscar Brown, Jr., Dakota Staton, Leon Thomas, Chaka Kahn, Lou Rawls, Gloria Lynn, Lysle Atkinson, Earl May and many others. The Danny Mixon Trio performs annually at the Jazz Mobile. He appears regularly at Showman's as an Organist.

LEE PEARSON



Lee Pearson is known to say To God be the Glory. He started developing his gift for the drums at the age of two in Baltimore City. His parents Lee Sr. and Judith Pearson bought him his first drum set at the age of three and the rest is history. From Broadway, to Jazz, to R&B, to Hip Hop, and even to the organ on Sunday mornings when he's in town, Lee Pearson's work is versatile.

Lee grooves and moves with some of the finest names of this world's movement called music. He has recorded on six notable Jazz recordings, including Hank Jones' The Great Jazz Trio, David Murray and the World Saxophone Quartet, Roy Ayers Live at Arturo's, and Hamiett Bluiett & Baritone Nation. Lee Pearson is currently working on his first CD which will prove his statement, newness and unique sound as he stretches for greater rhythmic heights and deeper musical depths.

In addition to touring and performing with his own band Beava's Atmosphere, Lee Pearson has toured with some of the world's great pacesetters in Jazz and Hip hop including, Hank Jones, John Hicks, Bobby Watson's, Kenny Garrett, Little Jimmy Scott, Tim Warfield, Javon Jackson, Roy Hargrove, Casey Benjamin, Antonio Hart, The Duke Ellington Orchestra, The Cab Calloway Orchestra, Donald Harrison, Curtis Lundy, Mike Stern, Lauryn Hill, Erykah Badu, Roy Ayers, Chaka Khan, Lonnie Listen Smith, Gene Con, Bobbi Humphreys, Ronnie Laws, Jon Lucien, Wayne Henderson (from the Jazz Crusaders), David Murray, and The Tonight Show with Jay leno band, just to name a few. Between 2002 and 2003, Lee Pearson did a world tour with Savion Glover's four time Tony Award-winning Broadway show, "Bring in 'Da Noise, Bring in 'Da Funk."

Lee Pearson's Group Beava's Atmosphere consists of some of the most amazing musicians. Lead vocals: Micah Smith, Organ and Keys: Josh Thomas, Bass and Synthesizer: Cory Baker, and on Guitar: Mat Chase. This smooth combination of artists makes Beava's Atmosphere the ultimate musical experience.

WAFOO



“WaFoo,” which is made of two Japanese kanji-characters “Wa” and “Foo,” stands for “Winds of Japan” or “Japanese style.” The prototype of this music ensemble was formed in 2001 by four Japanese musicians, under the concept of “Beauty of the music across the East and the West.” After a numbers of performances praised by many audiences in New York area, in 2004, the ensemble added more talents to broaden the scope of artistry and became WaFoo.

WaFoo is not only a performance group but also a group of active award-winning composers with a variety of music careers and backgrounds, which makes this ensemble very unique. All the repertoires of WaFoo are their compositions or new interpretations of Japanese folk music created under the one strong concept, “Blending Japanese philosophy, such as Zen, Shinto and Confucianism, into a variety of music styles to create lyrical, aesthetic and delightful sound for body and soul.”

Major Performances Include: Haruichiban Japanese Music Festival (Drom, Manhattan, Mar. 2008); White Plains Cherry Blossom Festival (White Plains, May 2005 ~ 2008); Nagasaki Hiroshima Reflections by SI OutLoud (Staten Island, Apr. 2005); Greenwich; SeptemberFest (Greenwich, CT, Sep. 2005); NYC Culture Fest 2004 at Battery Park (Manhattan, Oct. 2004); NYPL Concert Series (Staten Island, Queens, (2008 ~ 2009); Talent on the Terrace by Greenbelt Nature Center (Staten Island, 2008 ~ 2009); WaFoo Seasonal Concerts at St. Peter’s Church (Staten Island, 2005 ~ 2009).

JEANNINE OTIS



Jeannine Otis /Jahneen has an eclectic array of experiences as a performer, educator and music director. She has performed all over the world as a vocalist, including the Pori Jazz Festival with Heikki Sarmanto. Her segment at the Pori Jazz Festival was recently included in a film about that festival with Jazz greats such as Miles Davis, the Brecker Brothers and Maynard Ferguson. Her recording with Mr. Sarmanto and the Helsinki Philharmonic entitled Magic Songs, is available on Warner European Records. In addition, Ms. Otis has a long-standing collaboration with jazz great Vishnu Wood, working on music education projects under the auspices of the United Way as part of Safari East Cultural Productions, founded by Vishnu Wood.

She is the Director of Music at the historic Saint Marks Church in-the Bowery, as well as Theaterworks USA’s yearly production of Freedom Train, a piece about the young Harriet Tubman that travels all over the country including TownHall, the FoxTheater in Atlanta, and The Grand Ole Opry. Ms. Otis is the only black recipient of the Presser Music Foundation Award from Wellesley College as well as a Teaching Fellow award from Emerson College, Boston. She continues to collaborate internationally, nationally, and locally as a consultant with arts programming while performing and teaching.

DAVID JONES



David Jones has been playing piano almost every day for the last 30 years in his home in St. George, that overlooks Curtis High School and, beyond that, New York Harbor and the Statue of Liberty. He comes from the avant garde wing of the great experiment, known as American Jazz. David played on the West Coast with bass clarinetist Patrick Wallace and the late drummer Joe Kelly in the group New Bay Ensemble, and on the east coast with Philadelphia-based group, Image. In his travels, from east coast to west and back again, David has enjoyed playing all kinds of music in every setting.

JOY RYDER



Joy Ryder

Brooklyn-born Ryder (nee Denise Whelan) is the daughter of jazz singer and bassist Phil Whelan, who had a hit with the song "One Bourbon, One Scotch, One Beer" with his band The Five Encores. Her childhood was filled with her father's rehearsals and her own piano lessons from the age of four.

Joy Ryder embodies the best of all possible styles as she delivers a melange of classic rock, r&b and neosoul. Though Ryder has been called a blues singer, she is a jack of all trades: jazz stylist, punk diva, and rock 'n' roll rabble rouser. She has performed with with Jackson Browne, Bonnie Raitt, Crosby, Stills and Nash, and others. They also toured the USA for Rock Against Racism, from NY to Texas.