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MONTEREY JAZZ FESTIVAL ON TOUR
featuring **DEE DEE BRIDGEWATER, KURT ELLING,**
LAKECIA BENJAMIN, CHRISTIAN SANDS,
YASUSHI NAKAMURA, and CLARENCE PENN

THURSDAY, APRIL 20, 8:00 p.m.
THE MUSIC CENTER AT STRATHMORE



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THURSDAY, APRIL 20, 8:00 p.m.
THE MUSIC CENTER AT STRATHMORE

Tonight's program will be announced from the stage.

The performance is approximately 90 minutes.

There is no intermission.

This is one of twenty 2022/23 season performances included in Washington Performing Arts's The World in Our City initiative, which promotes cross-cultural understanding and cultural diplomacy via the presentation of international visiting artists, globally inspired local programming, and the award-winning Embassy Adoption Program, a partnership with D.C. Public Schools.

Special thanks to the following lead supporters of Washington Performing Arts's mission-driven work: Jacqueline Badger Mars and Mars, Incorporated; D.C. Commission on the Arts and Humanities; the National Capital Arts and Cultural Affairs Program and the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts; The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation; and the Dallas Morse Coors Foundation for the Performing Arts.

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ABOUT MONTEREY JAZZ FESTIVAL

Monterey Jazz Festival's (MJF) mission is to inspire the discovery and celebration of jazz, anchored by an iconic festival. As the longest continuously-running jazz festival in the world, MJF on Tour groups have brought the Festival's reach to over 150,000 jazz fans across the country and Canada since 2008, featuring some of the genre's greatest practitioners, including James Moody, Christian McBride, Cécile McLorin Salvant, Gerald Clayton, Christian McBride, Benny Green, Bria Skonberg, Kenny Barron, Regina Carter, Nicholas Payton, Ravi Coltrane, Russell Malone, Chris Potter, Melissa Aldana, and Ambrose Akinmusire, to name a few.

Monterey Jazz Festival on Tour is produced by Danny Melnick for Absolutely Live Entertainment (ALE) and booked by The Kurland Agency, which also produced and booked three previous MJF tours in 2013, 2016 and 2019.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS



Dee Dee Bridgewater, vocals

Over the course of a multi-faceted career spanning four decades, Grammy and Tony

Award-winning jazz giant Dee Dee Bridgewater has ascended to the upper echelon of vocalists, putting her unique spin on standards, as well as taking intrepid leaps of faith in re-envisioning jazz classics. The two-time Grammy-winner most recently won the Grammy for Best Jazz Vocal Album for *Eleanora Fagan* (1915-1959): *To Billie With Love From Dee Dee*. She earned her first

professional experience as a member of the legendary Thad Jones/Mel Louis Big Band, and throughout the 1970s she performed with jazz legends Max Roach, Sonny Rollins, Dexter Gordon, Dizzy Gillespie, and others. Awarded a National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Jazz Master Fellowship in 2017, Bridgewater's voice combines the voluptuousness of Sarah Vaughan with the sweet, girlish clarity of Ella Fitzgerald. Bridgewater has performed at MJF six times since 1973.



Kurt Elling, vocals

Renowned for his singular combination of robust swing and poetic insight, two-time Grammy winner Kurt Elling

has secured his place among the world's foremost jazz vocalists. *The New York Times* proclaimed Elling "the standout male vocalist of our time." Over a 25-year career of touring and recording, Elling has won three French Prix du Jazz Vocal awards, two German Echo Awards, two Dutch Edison Awards, and has been nominated for 15 Grammys. Elling had a 14-year run topping the DownBeat Critics and Readers polls and has won 12 Jazz Journalists Awards for "Male Vocalist of the Year." Elling's voice is instantly recognizable, and he is a virtuoso improviser and a compelling storyteller. *The Guardian* (UK) named Elling "one of jazz's all-time great vocalists." Elling has performed at MJF six times, including acting as Artist-in-Residence in 2006 and was the vocalist in the MJF on Tour All-Stars in 2009-2010.



Lakecia Benjamin, saxophone

Voted as the winner of the 2020 *DownBeat* Critics Poll Rising Star Alto Saxophonist and

Up and Coming Artist of the Year by the Jazz Journalists Association, charismatic and dynamic saxophonist Lakecia Benjamin fuses traditional conceptions of jazz, hip-hop, and soul. Benjamin's electric presence and fiery sax work has shared stages with

legendary artists, including Stevie Wonder, Alicia Keys, The Roots, and Macy Gray. Benjamin's album *Pursuance* is an intergenerational masterpiece that takes one on a journey through the lineage of the music with the works of John and Alice Coltrane. Her new album, *Phoenix*, out in late January 2023 features Patrice Rushen, Dianne Reeves, Angela Davis and Wayne Shorter and was produced by Terri Lyne Carrington. Benjamin has performed at MJF twice since 2016. .



Christian Sands, piano

Pianist and MJF on Tour Music Director Christian Sands is a two-time Grammy nominee. Growing up in New Haven,

Connecticut, he started playing professionally at the age of 10 and received his Bachelor of Arts and master's degrees from the Manhattan School of Music. A protégé of Dr. Billy Taylor, Sands began a six-year association with bassist Christian McBride in 2009, and has followed in Dr. Taylor's footsteps by encouraging, inspiring, and advocating for the preservation and history of jazz. As Monterey Jazz Festival's Artist-in-Residence from 2020-2022, Christian launched his online video series "Welcome to the Sands Box," interviewing his friends and favorites from the jazz world. Christian Sands' third recording for Mack Avenue Music Group, *Be Water*, captures and establishes him as a forceful leader in composition and conceptual vision. Sands has performed at MJF five times since 2014 and acted as MJF on Tour's musical director in 2018-2019.



Yasushi Nakamura,
bass

Bassist Yasushi Nakamura is one of the most commanding voices on bass today. Born in Tokyo, Nakamura moved to Seattle, Washington and received his bachelor's degree in jazz performance from Berklee College of Music, and an artist diploma from the Juilliard School. He has recorded or performed with Wynton Marsalis, Wycliffe Gordon, Toshiko Akiyoshi, Hank Jones, Dave Douglas, Emmet Cohen, and many others, and is a member of the American Patchwork Quartet. As an educator, Nakamura has led master classes and summer intensive courses at Juilliard, The New School, Koyo Conservatory, Osaka Geidai, and Savannah Swing Central. In 2016, Nakamura released his debut album *A Lifetime Treasure* and in 2017, his second record, *Hometown* received the 2017 Album of the Year award from *JazzLife* magazine. Nakamura has performed at MJF many times since 2004 and was the bassist in MJF on Tour in 2018-2019.

Origin Records. Since 1991, when he arrived in New York City, Penn has placed his unique blend of mega-chops, keen intellect, and heady musicianship at the service of a staggering array of A-list artists—a chronological short-list includes Ellis and Wynton Marsalis, Betty Carter, Stanley Clarke, Steps Ahead, Makoto Ozone, Michael Brecker, Dave Douglas, Maria Schneider, Luciana Souza, Richard Galliano, and Fourplay. Penn's impressive discography includes several hundred studio albums (including the Grammy-winning recordings *34th* and *Lex* by Randy Brecker and *Concert in the Garden* and *Sky Blue* by Maria Schneider.) Penn recently joined the University of Central Florida Department of Music as an assistant professor of jazz percussion, having previously taught with the Banff International Workshop in Jazz and Creative Music, the Stanford Jazz Workshop, the Saint Louis College of Music in Rome, Italy, and Jazz at Lincoln Center's Intensive Jazz Institute. Penn has performed at MJF three times since 2013.



Clarence Penn,
drums

The charismatic and dynamic Clarence Penn is one of the busiest jazz drummers in the world, a leader of multiple bands, a composer, a prolific producer, and an educator. Penn currently leads several ensembles and is a member of the American Patchwork Quartet. His most recent "rhythmically intoxicating" recording is 2014's *Monk: The Lost Files* on

Dee Dee Bridgewater photo by Joe Martinez; Kurt Elling photo courtesy of Kurt Elling; Lakecia Benjamin photo by Elizabeth Leitzell; Christian Sands photo courtesy of Christian Sands; Yasushi Nakamura photo courtesy of Yasushi Nakamura; Clarence Penn photo courtesy of Clarence Penn

ABOUT WASHINGTON PERFORMING ARTS

One of the most established and honored performing arts institutions in America, Washington Performing Arts has engaged for more than half a century with artists, audiences, students, and civic life. The city is truly our stage: for decades, in venues ranging from concert halls and clubs to public parks, we have presented a tremendous range of artists and art forms, from the most distinguished symphony orchestras to both renowned and emerging artists in classical music, gospel music, jazz, international genres, and more. Washington Performing Arts also has an ever-expanding artistic and educational presence on the internet, addressing the programming challenges of this time of pandemic while envisioning ongoing opportunities for online connection and community in a post-COVID world.

Washington Performing Arts deeply values its partnerships with local organizations and other arts

institutions. Through events online and in a myriad of performance venues and neighborhoods, Washington Performing Arts engages international visiting artists in community programs and introduces local artists to wider audiences. We place a premium on establishing artists as a continuing presence in the lives of both young people and adults through residencies and education programs.

For its achievements, Washington Performing Arts has been recognized with a National Medal of Arts and with three Mayor's Arts Awards from the D.C. Government. We have now embarked upon our second half-century, ever inspired by the motto of our founder, Patrick Hayes: "Everybody in, nobody out."

For more information, please visit WashingtonPerformingArts.org

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*List complete as of
March 22, 2023*

THE REGGIE AWARD

“The Reggie” is an annual award established in 2018 to honor former Washington Performing Arts Board Chair Reginald Van Lee, granted to a high school junior or senior member of the Washington Performing Arts Children of the Gospel Choir to pursue additional arts-related education or activities.

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As of October 10, 2022

For more information about Washington Performing Arts’s endowed fund opportunities, contact Meiyu Tsung at MTsung@WashingtonPerformingArts.org.

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Legacy Society members appreciate the vital role that performing arts play in the community, as well as in their own lives. By remembering Washington Performing Arts in their will or estate plans, members enhance our annual fund, endowment, or donor-designated programs and help make it possible for the next generations to enjoy the same quality and diversity of presentations both on stages and in our schools and community.

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[†] deceased
As of March 10, 2023

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