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Lineup Announced for 45th Annual Tri-C JazzFest

A diverse artist roster brings exciting music to Cleveland June 20 – 22

CLEVELAND — Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C®) announced the lineup for the 45th annual Tri-C JazzFest Cleveland, presented by KeyBank, from June 20 – 22 at Playhouse Square.

This year's festival features 12 acts performing nine concerts inside Playhouse Square's historic venues and highlights an eclectic series, from Charles Lloyd to Cuban pianist Harold López-Nussa to vocal queens Cécile McLorin Salvant and Ledisi.

“The artists in the lineup are prize-winning creatives pushing boundaries, advocating for social change and exploring the worlds of Broadway and Hollywood,” said festival director Terri Pontremoli. “But when they hit the stage and play live, the magic begins.”

Below is the indoor concert schedule with showtimes, locations and artist bios:

Thursday, June 20 | 8 p.m.

Take 6 — Mimi Ohio Theatre

Take 6 (Claude McKnight, Mark Kibble, Joel Kibble, Dave Thomas, Alvin Chea and Khristian Dentley) has been heralded by Quincy Jones as the “baddest vocal cats on the planet.”

Winner of 10 Grammy Awards, 10 Dove Awards, a Soul Train Award and a member of the Gospel Music Hall of Fame, the group is made up of six virtuosic voices united in crystal clear harmony against a backdrop of syncopated rhythms, innovative arrangements and funky grooves that bubble into an intoxicating brew of gospel, jazz, R&B and pop.

Take 6 has come a long way from its days at Oakwood College in Huntsville, Alabama, where McKnight first formed the group as the Gentleman's Estate Quartet in 1980. What has made the music and the group last this long? The answers are direct and simple: faith, friendship, respect and a love of music.

Friday, June 21 | 5 p.m.

Jason Moran and The Bandwagon — Allen Theatre

Jason Moran is a pianist, composer and artist from Houston. His groundbreaking trio, the Bandwagon (with bassist Tarus Mateen and drummer Nasheet Waits), is celebrating more than 20 years of success. Moran's recent awards and fellowships include the MacArthur Foundation, United States Artists, the Doris Duke Foundation and the Ford Foundation. He has composed scores for Ava DuVernay's films *Selma* and *13th* and author Ta-Nehisi Coates's staged version of *Between the World and Me*. Moran is currently the artistic director for Jazz at the Kennedy Center and teaches at the New England Conservatory.

Friday, June 21 | 6:30 p.m.

Cécile McLorin Salvant — Mimi Ohio Theatre

Cécile McLorin Salvant is a composer, singer and visual artist. Jessye Norman described Salvant as “a unique voice supported by an intelligence and full-fledged musicality, which light up every note she sings.” Salvant has developed a passion for storytelling and finding connections between vaudeville, blues and folk traditions from around the world. She is an eclectic curator, unearthing rarely recorded, forgotten songs with strong narratives, interesting power dynamics, unexpected twists and humor.

Salvant won the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz International Vocals Competition in 2010 and has received Grammys for Best Jazz Vocal Album for three consecutive albums. She was also nominated in 2014 for her album *WomanChild*. In 2020, Salvant received the MacArthur Fellowship and the Doris Duke Artist Award. *Ghost Song*, Salvant’s debut album for Nonesuch Records, was released March 2022 to critical acclaim and received two Grammy nominations.

Friday, June 21 | 7:45 p.m.

Marcus Miller/Bob James Quartet – Connor Palace

Grammy-nominated artist Marcus Miller has dozens of movie scores and more than 500 recording credits to his name across jazz, R&B and opera. He has worked with Miles Davis, Herbie Hancock, Luther Vandross, Wayne Shorter and David Sanborn, among others. His instruments include bass, guitar, vocals, saxophone, clarinet, keyboards and recorder. In 2012, Miller was appointed a UNESCO Artist for Peace, supporting and promoting the UNESCO Slave Route Project. In 2021, *Bass Player* magazine awarded Miller a Lifetime Achievement Award.

Grammy-winning jazz keyboardist Bob James is renowned for exploring different musical landscapes and breaking boundaries. In 1962, while still in college, his band entered the Notre Dame Collegiate Jazz Festival – with Henry Mancini and Quincy Jones among the judges. The trio entered the competition playing avant-garde music in a contest promoting straight-ahead jazz. To their surprise, they won. Not long after, Jones signed James to an album deal with Mercury Records. In 1963, Mercury released James’s first album, *Bold Conceptions*, a free jazz exploration produced by Jones that differed from the smooth jazz he would later become known for.

Friday, June 21 | 10 p.m.

Scary Goldings – Mimi Ohio Theatre

Scary Goldings combines hard-hitting grooves and well-crafted parts to make for a truly fun and unique time. The group consists of the funk ensemble Scary Pockets (anchored by guitarist Ryan Lerman and keyboardist Jack Conte) and Larry Goldings. With his signature Hammond organ style and versatility on many keyboards, Boston native Goldings has traversed not only the wide spectrum of jazz – where he is perhaps best known – but also the worlds of funk, pop and electronic music.

Saturday, June 22 | 2:30 p.m.

ARTEMIS/Flying Home: A Trumpet Summit – Mimi Ohio Theatre

The brainchild of pianist and composer Renee Rosnes, ARTEMIS is a powerful ensemble of modern jazz masters. Named for the Greek goddess of the hunt, this multinational, multigenerational group of women was founded in 2017 under the banner of International Women’s Day. The band’s performance at the 2018 Newport Jazz Festival was so compelling that Blue Note Records President Don Was signed them to the label. Tour dates followed across Europe and the U.S., including performances at festivals in Saratoga, Monterey and Detroit and premier venues such as Carnegie Hall, SFJAZZ, Chicago’s Orchestra Hall and the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. The band released its debut recording in 2020 and its second album in 2023. Each member of ARTEMIS is a bandleader and composer, and the repertoire draws on their distinctive personalities, from original music to imaginative arrangements of eclectic material. ARTEMIS performs with joy, power, passion and high-wire intensity. Rosnes will be joined by Ingrid Jensen (trumpet), Nicole Glover (saxophone), Noriko Ueda (bass) and Allison Miller (drums).

Flying Home: A Tri-C Trumpet Summit celebrates three decades of Tri-C JazzFest Academy alumni, featuring Sean Jones, Dominick Farinacci, Curtis Taylor and Tom Lehman. This is a special tribute to the outstanding educational program at Tri-C JazzFest Cleveland, now in its 45th season. The rhythm section also features distinguished alumni of the program: Jonathan Thomas (piano), Graeham Guerin (bass), Gabe Jones (drums) and Patrick Graney (percussion).

Saturday, June 22 | 5:15 p.m.

Diego Figueiredo/Harold López-Nussa – Allen Theatre

Praise flows for Brazilian guitarist Diego Figueiredo. Jazz critic Scott Yanow says, “Diego has the rare ability of making everything sound beautiful.” George Benson hails Figueiredo as one of the greatest guitarists he’s ever seen. *Guitar World Magazine* raves about his live performances, describing them as effortlessly sublime and utterly fabulous.

Figueiredo lives in, with and for music. Born in 1980 in Franca in São Paulo, Brazil, he began playing music at 4 years old. By 12, he had already attracted a local following, and at 15, he was drawing huge crowds around Brazil. Figueiredo has recorded over two dozen albums and is the winner of several competitions, including the Montreux Jazz Guitar Competition and Brazil’s Visa Prize.

Cuban-born pianist and composer Harold López-Nussa’s Blue Note Records debut of *Timba a la Americana*, an album released in August 2023, teems with joy and pathos that was inspired by the pianist’s recent decision to leave his Cuban homeland. Produced by Snarky Puppy bandleader Michael League, *Timba a la Americana* unveils a new sound performed by a tight-knit band featuring harmonica virtuoso Grégoire Maret, Luques Curtis on bass, Bárbaro “Machito” Crespo on congas and López-Nussa’s brother, Ruy Adrián López-Nussa, on drums.

López-Nussa traces the origins of *Timba a la Americana* to a day during his family’s first winter after leaving Cuba to live in Toulouse, France. He found himself flipping through voice memos on his phone, listening to jams and fragments of song ideas he’d documented years before. These seedlings of songs transported him back to the rhythmic communication that was part of his everyday life in Cuba.

Saturday, June 22 | 7:30 p.m.

Charles Lloyd Ocean Trio II, featuring Gerald Clayton and Marvin Sewell — Mimi Ohio Theatre

The critical consensus is that Charles Lloyd has never sounded better. The depth of his expression reflects a lifetime of experience. Credited by many musicians with anticipating the world music movement as early as the late 1950s, Lloyd describes his music as having always “danced on many shores.”

Over the past six decades, his compositions have punctuated the post-bop period, embraced the traditional music of a host of world cultures and enlivened the psychedelic 1960s with avant-garde improvisation. Lloyd was invited to guest on recordings with the Doors, the Birds, the Grateful Dead and the Beach Boys. He made his first album for ECM Records, *Fish Out of Water*, in 1989. He has long been a free spirit, master musician and visionary. He has loomed large over the music world, and at 84 years old, he remains at the height of his powers and is as prolific as ever. Early on, Lloyd saw how placing the improvised solo in interesting and original contexts could provoke greater freedom of expression and inspire creativity. Throughout his remarkable career, he has searched for alternative ways to frame his improvisational skills.

Saturday, June 22 | 9 p.m.

Ledisi — Connor Palace

A 2021 Grammy winner, Ledisi’s career has spanned almost two decades. Since arriving on the scene in the late 1990s, this vocalist has won three Soul Train Music Awards, an NAACP Theater Award and been nominated for six NAACP Image Awards and 12 Grammys.

Born in New Orleans and raised in Oakland, California, Ledisi has truly earned a place in the pantheon of the greatest singers of her generation. Ledisi has performed alongside Dave Matthews, Kelly Clarkson, Vince Gill and Maxwell and jazz greats Herbie Hancock and Patti Austin.

No stranger to the film and television world, Ledisi landed her first feature, singing in *Leatherheads*, directed by George Clooney, in 2008. In 2015, she portrayed Mahalia Jackson in the Oscar-nominated movie *Selma*. Ledisi secured her first major television role, playing Patti LaBelle on the hit BET series *American Soul*. Ledisi helped workshop the Tony Award-winning musical *The Color Purple* and then began her recording career, signing a deal with Verve, a division of the Universal Music Group. She returned to the theater in 2019 as The Ancestor in the critically acclaimed off-Broadway musical *Witness Uganda* by Griffith Matthews and Matt Gould, receiving the LA Alliance Ovation Award nomination.

Festival passes — which offer VIP seating to all nine ticketed concerts, plus other benefits — are on sale through April 1 for \$300. Visit tri-cjazzfest.com to purchase a pass.

Individual tickets go on sale on April 12 through the Playhouse Square box office.

The 2024 JazzFest also includes free outdoor concerts on the plaza at Playhouse Square Friday and Saturday of the festival weekend. The performances will feature local and regional talent selected by a panel of music industry experts.

The festival regularly draws tens of thousands of people downtown for the three-day experience. For a full roster of Tri-C JazzFest events — including free community concerts in the months leading up to the festival — visit the [Tri-C JazzFest website](#).

Tri-C JazzFest Cleveland is made possible by KeyBank, Fran and Jules Belkin, The George Gund Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Ohio Arts Council, SeibertKeck Insurance Partners, Debbie and Jim Strassman, Margaret W. Wong & Associates LLC and a growing list of donors and vendors.

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NOTE: Photos of performers are available [via Dropbox](#) for media use.