

GREG BANDY (Mar. 18, 1951 – May 23, 2025) The drummer, whose first professional gig was at age 11, died in his native Cleveland at age 74. He performed with Lee Morgan, Joe Henderson, Betty Carter, Richard “Groove” Holmes, Freddie Hubbard, Stanley Turrentine, Pharoah Sanders and Gary Bartz (the latter two with whom he extensively worked and recorded). His sole leader date was *Lightning in a Bottle* (Bix Ox, 1997) with Bartz, Olu Dara, Donald Smith and Alex Blake. His credits also included Art Davis, Malachi Thompson, Giacomo Gates, Bill Easley and others.

RAPHAEL “RAY” BLUE (Aug. 17, 1950 – May 22, 2025) The Peekskill, NY-raised tenor saxophonist died after a short illness, at age 74. A licensed clinical social worker, Blue had a parallel career in music. He founded Cross-Cultural Connection, a non-profit focusing on teaching and presenting live jazz to students, which also produced Peekskill’s annual Jazz in the Park Festival. In 2001, he recorded his self-released leader debut, *Always with a Purpose*. His final album *#People* came out two years ago. His collaborations included Kirk Lightsey, Kenny Barron, Harold Mabern, Benny Powell, Eddie Henderson, Charli Persip, Wycliffe Gordon, Bernard Purdie, Steve Turre, Sun Ra Arkestra, Daoud-David Williams and others.

LILLIAN BOUTTÉ (Aug. 6, 1949 – May 23, 2025) The New Orleans-based singer died at age 75 from Alzheimer’s disease. Boutté received a bachelor’s degree in music therapy from Xavier University of Louisiana and later worked as a NOLA session musician and backup singer for the likes of Patti LaBelle, the Neville Brothers and others. She sang in the Golden Voices Gospel Choir and collaborated with the Olympia Brass Band and Pee Wee Ellis, and recorded for Timeless, Storyville, Music Mecca and other labels.

JOE FORD (May 7, 1947 – May 25, 2025) The alto-soprano saxophonist and flute player, who earned his bachelor’s degree in music education in 1968 and worked as a teacher before turning to music full time, died at age 78. In the late ’90s, he led two ensembles, the Black Art Sax Quartet and the big band The Thing. He released one album as leader, *Today’s Nights* (Blue Moon, 1993), featuring Kenny Kirkland, Charles Fambrough and Jeff “Tain” Watts. Ford’s 1974 recording debut was with the band Birthright on the group’s *Free Spirits* (Freelance) with Onaje Allen Gumbs. He worked extensively with McCoy Tyner and also played and recorded with Idris Muhammad, Malachi Thompson, John Blake, Avery Sharpe, Freddy Cole, Bill O’Connell, Frank Foster, Daoud-David Williams, Larry Willis and Steve Berrios (the latter two were colleagues with Ford in Jerry Gonzalez’ Fort Apache Band).

ALOYSIUS TYRONE “AL” FOSTER (Jan. 18, 1943 – May 28, 2025) The drummer, who made his recording debut in 1964 on trumpeter Blue Mitchell’s *Things to Do* (Blue Note), died at age 82. He worked with Miles Davis off and on from 1972-85, longer than any other musician. Foster also led his own bands since the late ’70s, which featured saxophonists Michael Brecker, Bob Mintzer, Bob Berg, Chris Potter and Dayna Stephens and pianists Dave Kikoski and Adam Birnbaum. Foster was a member of The Great Jazz Trio, ScoLoHoFo, Quest, Super Trio and Heads of State and had credits with Monty Alexander, Illinois Jacquet, Hugh Masekela, David Liebman, Dexter Gordon, Cedar Walton, Sonny Rollins, Freddie Hubbard, Jimmy Heath, Bill Evans, Branford Marsalis, Michel Petrucciani, Roy Hargrove, Paquito D’Rivera and Herbie Hancock, among many others. His own albums appeared on such labels as CBS/Sony, Better Days, Laika, Jazz Eyes and Smoke Sessions.

JACK KLEINSINGER (Aug. 1, 1936 – Jun. 11, 2025) The producer of Highlights in Jazz died at home in NYC from complications after a fall, at age 88. Kleinsinger graduated from law school in 1959 and was a NY State assistant

attorney general, retiring in 1991. The first Highlights in Jazz concert, at Theatre de Lys in Greenwich Village, was in 1973. He subsequently produced more than 300 Highlights concerts spanning five decades, presenting a veritable who’s who of jazz greats, many at Tribeca Performing Arts Center, the series’ home from 2003-23. He was awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of North Florida, which houses his archives in the UNF Digital Commons Jack Kleinsinger Library.

GUY KLUCEVSEK (Feb. 26, 1947 – May 22, 2025) The accordionist and composer, known for his fusion of polka, minimalism and experimental music, died at age 78. He began playing accordion at age five and later emerged as a figure in the Downtown NYC experimental scene. Klucsevsek released more than 20 albums and had his own or collaborative albums on zOaR, Experimental Intermedia, RecRec Music, Tzadik, Winter & Winter, Starkland and Motéma Music, among others. He was a member of Accordion Tribe and worked extensively with John Zorn, as well as Bobby Previte, Anthony Coleman, Bill Frisell, Anthony Braxton, Laurie Anderson, Dave Douglas, Phillip Johnston, Fred Frith, Michael Moore and others.

JOHN MARSHALL (May 22, 1952 - May 21, 2025) The trumpeter, long based in Europe, died at age 72. He was a first-call musician in NYC from 1971-91 and also led the Bopera House quintet from 1987-91. In 1992 Marshall relocated to Cologne, Germany, becoming a principal soloist of the WDR radio-television big band. He had his own or collaborative albums on Blue Jack Jazz, V.S.O.P., Mons and Organic Music, and had credits with Buddy Rich, Mel Lewis, Lionel Hampton, Dizzy Gillespie, Eddie Harris, Lalo Schiffrin, Maceo Parker, Luciana Souza, Erik Ineke and Rein De Graaff among others.

TEBOGO LOUIS MOHOLO-MOHOLO (Mar. 10, 1940 – Jun. 13, 2025) Born during apartheid in Capetown, South Africa, the drummer died after a long illness at age 85. He was co-founder and the last surviving member of the (dangerously) integrated The Blue Notes, which fled into exile to London in 1964. There Moholo-Moholo became part of the British free jazz scene, and considered his art as a political act, refusing to provide “entertainment.” In 2004, he received the Order of Ikhamanga in Silver, one of South Africa’s highest cultural honors and in 2005 returned to Cape Town on a permanent basis where he taught, played and continued to fight for cultural and social justice. He had his own or collaborative albums on FMP, Intakt, Om, Impetus, Emanem, Ogun, Incus and Loose Torque, alongside credits with fellow Blue Notes Chris McGregor and Dudu Pukwana, as well as Steve Lacy, Roswell Rudd, Keith Tippett, Peter Brötzmann, Curtis Clark, Dennis González, Cecil Taylor, Frode Gjerstad, Kali Fasteau, Jon Corbett and others.

DON MOORE (Aug. 14, 1938 – Jun. 10, 2025). The Philadelphia, PA-born double bassist died at age 86. He became interested in the bass around age 18 and went on to play and record on significant albums by Elvin Jones, Jackie McLean, Roland Kirk, Clifford Thornton, as well as Archie Shepp, John Tchicai and Don Cherry, most prominently in The New York Contemporary Five.

RIGMOR NEWMAN (May 9, 1938 – Apr. 26, 2025) The singer, concert producer and manager died at age 86 in The Bronx from complications of Parkinson’s disease. Born in Udevalla, Sweden, she married trumpeter Joe Newman in 1961, relocating to NYC, where she became co-founder and executive director of Jazz Interactions, a nonprofit organization promoting jazz. After their divorce in the mid ’70s, she would then marry Harold Nicholas and started managing him and his brother, Fayard, producing the 1992 award-winning documentary, *Nicholas Brothers: We Sing and We Dance*. With George Wein, Newman produced and opened Manhattan’s Storyville club (on E. 58th St.). As

an independent producer, she mounted jazz, classical and dance performances at The Town Hall, Symphony Space, Lincoln Center and Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall.

JOHN RUOCCO (Sep. 18, 1952 – May 21, 2025) Originally from New Haven, CT, the tenor saxophone and clarinet virtuoso died in Europe at age 72. From 1981-85 he taught at the Royal Conservatoire in Liège (Belgium) and gave various clinics and workshops in America and Europe. At the Royal Conservatoire in the Hague, he both taught and became leader-conductor of its big band. Ruocco had his own or collaborative albums on Jazz Cats, Challenge, Pirouet and Doublemoon, alongside credits with Toots Thielemans, Dutch Jazz Orchestra, Fay Claassen, Myriam Alter and Dave Liebman among others.

ELLEN SEELING (Jul. 1950 - May 26, 2025) The trumpet player, bandleader and educator, with over 35 albums to her credit, died at age 74. She was the first woman to earn a degree in Jazz Studies from Indiana University, moving to NY in 1975. In 1980, she co-founded the jazz fusion band DEUCE. Relocating to San Francisco in 1989, Seeling continued to perform with DEUCE, and in 1998 founded the Montclair Women’s Big Band, which provided greater visibility to women jazz artists. Seeling taught at UC-Berkeley, among other institutions, and in 2009 founded the country’s first girls only summer jazz camp. Among her many collaborations was work with Mario Bauzá, Machito and Ray Barretto.

MITCHELL SEIDEL (Mar. 12, 1957 - Jun. 2, 2025) The journalist, editor and photographer died at age 68 from congestive heart failure. With a master’s degree in journalism, he worked for several newspapers, notably the *Star Ledger* until his retirement. A jazz enthusiast, he was active with the NJ Jazz Society, was an early, former contributor to *The New York City Jazz Record* and since the early ’80s has had his images in albums released by Sea Breeze Jazz, Flying Dutchman, Palo Alto, Black Saint, Muse, Blackhawk, Soul Note, Reservoir, Uptown, Criss Cross, Landmark, Candid, Red Baron, Contemporary, RCA Novus, Concord, Warner Brothers, Dreyfus, Sackville, 32 Jazz, HighNote, Progressive and Arbors.

DR. ELLIOTT WARREN SIMON (Jan. 12, 1953 – Jun. 8, 2025). The Mt. Vernon, NY-born psychologist, jazz writer and avid New York Yankees fan, died peacefully at home at age 72. After receiving his Ph.D. and completing a postdoctoral program he began a lifelong career working with individuals with intellectual and physical disabilities, serving for many years as an executive at the human services non-profit, Elwyn, Inc. A parallel passion was music. He was a regular contributor of articles and reviews to *The New York City Jazz Record* from the publication’s first year (2002) – including cover stories on John Zorn, Eddie Palmieri and Bucky Pizzarelli – to his final published review (Apr. 2025 issue). He was a dedicated writer, listener and supporter of klezmer and women musicians, from David Krakauer to Meg Okura, Sheryl Bailey, Susie Ibarra and Ayelet Rose Gottlieb.

FODAY MUSA SUSO (Feb. 18, 1950 – May 25, 2025) The Gambian kora player and composer died at age 75 in his homeland. He had been in ill health in recent years after suffering a stroke. Suso began learning the kora at age 6; both parents came from griot families, the caste of musician-storytellers responsible for retaining oral histories. Suso was confirmed a griot at age 18. He taught kora at the University of Ghana, Legon. Seeking to expand his knowledge, he added three bass strings to his kora’s traditional 21, allowing him to hold a steady beat and make its sound more danceable. Suso moved to Chicago in 1977 and formed the fusion band, Mandingo Griot Society. After his stroke, he moved back to Gambia in 2021. Suso collaborated with, among many others, Herbie Hancock, Ginger Baker, Bill Laswell, Pharoah Sanders, Jack DeJohnette and Michael Wimberly.