

JOYCE BREACH (Feb. 27, 1944 – Sep. 5, 2025) Born in Alameda, CA, and raised in Kansas City, MO, the vocalist, whose tone has been described as akin to “warm honey,” died at age 81. Breach attended West Virginia University and settled in Pittsburgh before moving to NYC in the ’80s. She solely recorded for Audiophile (13 albums), including her debut, *Confessions* (1990), with artists ranging from pianist Keith Ingham, bassists Bob Haggart, Murray Wall and Greg Cohen and drummer Steve Little, to guitarist James Chirillo and saxophonist Scott Robinson, among others. Pianist Mike Renzi often accompanied her live appearances in the New York area.

PAT COLEMAN (Jun. 2, 1949 – Sep. 1, 2025) The England-born, Canada-based guitarist died at age 76. In the ’60s, he went on the road with rock band Stoney Plain (which played opening act for The Who, The Doors and Cream). Later known primarily as an educator, he taught guitar ensemble and combos, as well as private instruction. Coleman was also a partner in and produced albums for the Roadhouse and Root Cellar record labels. His credits include Neil Swainson, Brent Jarvis, Don Thompson, Woody Shaw and Joe Henderson.

JOE DEJARNETTE, JR. (Nov. 10, 1937 – Aug. 18, 2025) The Cleveland trumpeter and educator passed away at age 87. In the ’60s, he joined the city’s rising jazz scene, becoming known as “The Pied Piper of the Gold Coast.” DeJarnette studied at Cleveland’s Modern School of Music under Phil Rizzo, then at the Cleveland Institute of Music, learning theory and Dalcroze Eurhythmics with Harry Herfort. He spent years with the Cleveland Board of Education, the Cleveland Area Arts Council and the Department of Recreation, teaching and mentoring young players.

WALFREDO DE LOS REYES, SR. (Jun. 16, 1933 – Aug. 28, 2025) Son of trumpeter Walfredo De Los Reyes II and father to percussionists Walfredo De Los Reyes, Jr. and Daniel De Los Reyes, the Havana, Cuba-born drummer, timbalero, percussionist and educator died in Concord, CA, at age 92. Inspired by Candido Camero, he was instrumental in advancing the use of multiple percussion (congas, timbales, bongos) played simultaneously by one player. The long list of those he performed or recorded with include his father, Josephine Baker, La Lupe, Dionne Warwick and Paquito Hechavarria. He had albums on Pablo, Tania and Calle Mayor alongside credits with Chico O’Farrill, Luis Conte, Larry Elgart, Cachao, Carlos “Patato” Valdes, Clare Fischer and others.

MARY ANNE DRISCOLL (Nov. 3, 1950 – Jul. 10, 2025) The improvisational pianist-vocalist passed away at age 74. Driscoll learned to play by ear, and early on conducted choirs before formal music study at the College of San Mateo and San Francisco State. She also explored electronic music. By 1975 she was recording her own work, writing and arranging for ensembles. In 1977, she moved to NYC to study with Cecil Taylor and produced projects at CBS. Driscoll composed, arranged, recorded and produced work with Jimmy Lyons, Dewey Johnson, Karen Borca and Paul Murphy. Their quintet later recorded for RCA. She relocated to Maine in 1990, and in 1992 led a trio session dedicated to Lyons with William Parker and Murphy at Mapleshade Studios. Other credits include Jay Oliver, Eddie Gale and Ted Daniel.

PETER GRITZ (Aug. 18, 1958 – Aug. 20, 2025) Born in Salgótarján, Hungary, the drummer, long based in France, died at age 67. After graduating from high school, Gritz studied at the Budapest Jazz Conservatory and soon began working as a jazz musician with pianist Béla Szakcsi Lakatos and guitarist Gyula Babos in Saturnas. He emigrated to France in 1980, where he joined Antoine Hervé’s trio after a stint with Iván Lantos and harpist Kristen Noguès. Gritz also joined the bands

of Barney Wilen and Éric Barret, and in the late ’80s worked with Yochk’o Seffer’s Chromophonie. Among his credits are Francis Lockwood’s trio Jimi’s Colors, Lee Konitz, Marc Ducret, Michel Edelin and others. He had his own or collaborative albums on Emen, Nocturne Productions, Charlotte, Deux-Z and L’Oz Productions.

PETE LAY (Jul. 31, 1929 – Sep. 7, 2025) The British drummer, who was also editor of *Just Jazz Magazine*, died at age 96. An organizer of jazz festivals as well as a player, he fronted the Gambit Jazzmen (formed in 1982), and prominently played with Ken Colyer in the ’70s and ’80s and for many years with Bill Brunskill both abroad and at the Lord Napier in Thornton Heath, England. Lay was also a regular visitor to New Orleans where he played with Chris Tyle’s Silver Leaf Jazz.

ERNEST “STOMPIE” MANANA (Sep. 29, 1935 – Aug. 29, 2025) The South African, Sophiatown native, trumpeter and flugelhorn player, influenced by Hugh Masekela, died at age 89. Among his significance in South African music is his contribution to the revival and preservation of township jazz. In his over 60-year career, Manana recorded and performed internationally in bands such as the Savoy Havanas, The Cliffs, Transvaal Jazz Stars, African Swingsters and African Jazz Pioneers, of which he was a founding member. He had a new millennium album on Melodi Music and credits with Winston Ngozi, Barney Rachabane, Teaspoon Ndelu, Basil Coetzee, Sipho Gumede, Sipho Mabuse and others.

JOHN MILLER (Jul. 31, 1937 – Aug. 29, 2025) The pianist, composer, arranger, vocal coach and piano instructor, died at age 88. Miller attended the City University of New York, then joined tenor saxophonist Stanley Turrentine for 18 years. He went on to earn a Master’s Degree in the Art of Teaching from Lehman College in New York and taught in the Nassau County, Suffolk County, New York City and Arsdale Public School systems. Eventually, Miller relocated to Atlanta, GA, enrolling in the Master of Jazz Program at Georgia State University, where he created a book of jazz etudes. Miller also worked with Teruo Nakamura, Jon Gordon, Big Nick Nicholas, Ron Aprea, Panama Francis, Frank Foster and others.

GABRIJELA “GABI” NOVAK (Jul. 8, 1936 – Aug. 11, 2025) The Berlin, Germany-born, Croatian pop and jazz singer, died at age 89. Beginning her career in 1958, Novak quickly gained recognition across then-Yugoslavia, known for her unique blend of jazz, swing, French chanson and pop music. In that year she performed with Louis Armstrong at the Bled Jazz Festival. Novak received multiple Porin awards, Croatia’s most prestigious music award, including honors for Best Jazz Performance (2002); Album of the Year, Best Female Vocal Performance, Best Pop Album and Best Vocal Collaboration (2003) and the Porin Lifetime Achievement Award (2006).

HERMETO PASCOAL (Jun. 22, 1936 – Sep. 13, 2025) The Brazilian composer and multi-instrumentalist, died from multiple organ failure in Rio de Janeiro at age of 89. His arsenal of instruments included keyboards, melodica, button accordions, saxophones, guitars, flutes, voice, various brass and folkloric instruments, as well as oddball items such as tea pots and children’s toys. As a child in rural Northeast Brazil, he learned the accordion (sanfona) from his father and taught himself flute. By age 11, he was performing in musical groups with his brother and father (Jose Neto and Pascoal José da Costa). Relocating to urban Recife in 1950, Pascoal started playing in various groups and created Som Quatro. In 1966, he played in the Sambrasa Trio and Trio Novo (renamed Quarteto Novo in 1967), which then launched his career. He joined the multi-faceted group Brazilian Octopus and came to international prominence with an appearance on Miles Davis’ 1971 album *Live Evil*. From the late ’70s onward, he mostly led his own groups, and

in 2019, his *Hermeto Pascoal e Sua Visão Original do Forró* won the Latin GRAMMY for Best Portuguese Language Roots Album. Among his many credits are albums on Cobblestone, Warner Bros., Atlantic, Philips, Tom Brasil Produções Musicais and other labels alongside credits with Conjunto Som 4, Walter Santos, Trio Marayá, Donald Byrd, Antônio Carlos Jobim, Airto Moreira, Duke Pearson, Sérgio Mendes, Flora Purim, Cal Tjader, Stone Alliance, Jovino Santos Neto, Deodato and others.

STANISŁAW SOJKA (Apr. 26, 1959 – Aug. 21, 2025) The Polish jazz-pop singer, pianist and composer, died at age 66. Sojka began performing as a boy soprano in Gliwice Cathedral Choir and eventually at university obtained a master’s degree in arrangement and composing. He made his professional debut in 1978 at Warsaw’s National Philharmonic Hall in the “Jazz at the Philharmonic” series. Sojka’s debut album was *Don’t You Cry* (1979). Over the next six years, he released three more jazz albums and was named “Best Polish Jazz Vocalist” by *Jazz Forum* magazine. In 1988, Sojka formed a duet with guitarist Janusz Iwański, performing together until 1994. In 2007 he formed Sojka Sextet Plus. Sojka had albums on PolJazz, Polskie Nagrania Muza, Helicon, RCA, Polskie Radio Katowice, East Side Artists, Universal Music Polska and other labels.

JOE SOLDI (Jul. 31, 1925 – Aug. 15, 2025) The Newark, NJ-born woodwinds player passed away at his home in Encino, CA, shortly after turning 100. He received his first saxophone at age 11 and right out of high school became a traveling band musician before performing in Broadway pit bands. As a player and later a music contractor, he worked in TV and film, relocating to California. He played and/or recorded with the bands of Elliot Lawrence, Ralph Flanagan and Woody Herman, as well as with The New York Philharmonic, The Bell Telephone Hour Orchestra, The CBS Symphony and radio show orchestras such as the Kraft Music Hall and Kate Smith Radio Shows. His many other credits include albums with Wes Montgomery, Nat Adderley, Bill Evans, Gene Bertoncini, Marlene VerPlanck, Tommy Newsom, Clare Fischer, Tom Talbert, George Benson, Mary Stallings and others.

AKIKO TSURUGA (Sep. 1, 1967 – Sep. 13, 2025) The Japanese, Osaka-born Hammond B-3 organist and pianist died at age 58 after a six-month bout of illness. Her parents bought her a small organ when she was three and she started learning to play standards. A graduate of the Osaka College of Music, she moved to NYC in 2001, taking lessons from and collaborating with Dr. Lonnie Smith, as well as working with Lou Donaldson from 2007 until his death (2024). Tsuruga had over half a dozen albums on labels such as M&I Jazz, Mojo, 18th & Vine, American Showplace Music, AT, Capri and SteepleChase alongside work with Grady Tate, Eric Johnson, Jeff Hamilton, Kevin Golden, Lioness, Ralph Lalama, Hendrik Meurkens, Erena Terakubo and trumpeter-husband Joe Magnarelli, among others.

RONNY WHYTE (May 12, 1937 – Aug. 19, 2025) The pianist-singer died at age 88 in hospice in Fredon Township, NJ. A premier interpreter of American popular song and a talented jazz pianist as well as a songwriter, Whyte won an ASCAP Award for his lyric to “Forget the Woman”, recorded by Tony Bennett. He produced and hosted the weekly Midday Jazz Midtown at Saint Peter’s Church in Manhattan, and was featured twice at New York’s JVC Jazz Festival. The Ronny Whyte Trio performed in concert at Carnegie’s Weill Recital Hall, New York’s The Town Hall, Washington’s Corcoran Gallery and the Mellon Jazz Festival in Philadelphia. He frequently made guest appearances with symphony orchestras, performing his arrangement of *Porgy & Bess* for jazz trio and orchestra and other Gershwin works. Whyte recorded for Audiophile (11 albums) as well as Band Box and Monmouth Evergreen.