

Festival of New York 2026
SEPT 14-20
TRUMPET music

Sept 14 – Brooklyn Conservatory of Music

Pablo Masis' Sparks
Jim Seeley Quintet
58 7th Ave, Brooklyn, NY

Sept 15 – The New School (2pm)

Ahmed Abdullah
FONT Award of Recognition 2026
55 W 13th St, New York, NY

Sept 15 – Close Up

Bell Thompson
Robert Vega / Jonathan Finlayson
Joey Curreri
Altus
154 Orchard St, New York, NY

Sept 16 – The Sultan Room

Beyondo Band
Peaceful Faces
Milena Casado
234 Starr St, Brooklyn, NY

Sept 16 – The Jazz Gallery

Skylar Tang Quartet
Miranda Agnew
1158 Broadway 5th floor, New York, NY

Sept 17 – The Jazz Gallery

Kal Ferretti Big Band feat. Ingrid Jensen
Akili Bradley
1158 Broadway 5th floor, New York, NY

Sept 18 – The Statuary

Diego HedeZ Quintet
Pete Rodriguez Quintet
Adam O'Farrill's ELEPHANT
53 Congress St, Jersey City, NJ

Sept 19 – Nublu

Cole-Kamen Green
AANI
151 Avenue C, New York, NY

Sept 20 – The Cutting Room

Volker Goetze Quartet
44 East 32nd Street, New York, NY

Exclusive virtual performances by

Cubana Bra'ss feat. Rachel Therrien
(Cuba), **Alistair Payne** (Netherlands),
Robin Fassie (South Africa), and **Judah**
Onesimus (Kenya) — fontmusic.org/bwb

Complete program and artist lineup
FONTMUSIC.ORG

In less than six months, Jazzcultural, the third Manhattan jazz venue in proprietor Spike Wilner's fleet, has become a thriving scene. On a Tuesday (Aug. 11), the music room, a separate café behind, even the sidewalk outside, were all packed with fans come for pianist **Brad Mehldau's** quartet, an all-star outfit with Peter Bernstein (guitar), John Webber (bass) and Gregory Hutchinson (drums). The first set began with a bluesy take on "Old Devil Moon", then "Bésame Mucho" played as a jazz waltz. Mehldau developed his solo out of short motifs, ending with a complex figure, employing a similar strategy on the second number, which was delivered with even more swing and drive. Bernstein, whose guitar tone is just about the prettiest in the city, led his composition "Just a Thought", supported by Webber's sustained, booming bass and Hutchinson's provocative but always on-point accompaniment. It was a heady environment that encouraged the performers to bring their A-game. The ante was upped when surprise guest Joshua Redman sat in for two songs. As Redman assembled his tenor saxophone, Mehldau launched into Clifford Brown's "Brownie Speaks", the band responding with increased enthusiasm before the saxophonist got a strong kick from Hutchinson, and plenty of house, for a spirited solo. Last was Charlie Parker's bop blues "Cheryl", with excellent improvising all around. By the end of the set, it seemed as if everyone in the venue, even those back in the café who couldn't see the stage, were paying undivided attention to the music: mouths closed, ears open. — **Tom Greenland**



Brad Mehldau @Jazzcultural

Next summer, trumpeter **Jon-Erik Kellso's** regular Sunday night gig at The Ear Inn turns twenty. His band, the EarRegulars, features a rotating cast of musicians, so besides Kellso himself and Matt Munisteri (guitar), the only thing "regular" about it is its artistic excellence. A recent gig (Aug. 8) included Kellso, Evan Arntzen (clarinet, tenor), Josh Dunn (guitar) and Tal Ronen (bass). The repertoire, drawn from traditional New Orleans jazz and the Great American Songbook, comprised well-roasted chestnuts from the 1910s ("Milenberg Joys", "Shim-me-sha-wabble", "Someday, Sweetheart", "Smiles"), 1920s ("I'm Coming Virginia"), 1930s ("I'm Gonna Sit Right Down and Write Myself a Letter", "In a Shanty in Old Shantytown", "Louisiana Fairytale") and one from 1950: "The Best Thing for You (Would Be Me)"—all of which could easily sound stuffy or dated in less inspired hands. What makes the EarRegulars so attractive is how they bring fresh expression to elderly repertoire. Each musician is a sterling soloist, taking extended turns that often begin with a short motif, perhaps derived from the song's melody, then developed into long lyrical sequences infused with ebullient syncopations. It gets even more exciting when they "talk" to each other in real time: Kellso embellishing the main theme, Arntzen coloring in the spaces around the leader's gestures with artful filigree, Dunn tying both parts together with smooth inner harmonies and chunky, sometimes surprising rhythms, Ronen anchoring the boat—everyone improvising at once without getting in each other's way. (TG)

Among the many Tony Bennett centenary shows of late, Hot Sardines founder, vocalist **Elizabeth Bougerol**, presented hers, *Are You Having Any Fun*, a narrative-heavy tribute to the icon, at Joe's Pub on Bennett's actual birthday (Aug. 3). Possessed of the ghost of Art Tatum, pianist Matt Ray opened with "I Left My Heart in San Francisco", followed by a rollout of tunes from the mighty Bennett catalog. A wonder of the evening was the number of personnel that were successfully crammed onto a postage stamp of a stage, with John Manzari still able to tap in spectacular style. There were expected tunes, such as "It Had to Be You", but also lesser-known fare, such as Freddie Green's "Corner Pocket", transformed into the standard, "Until I Met You". A highlight was the harmonized vocal duet of trombonists J. Walter Hawkes and Todd Londagin with "I Can't Believe That You're in Love with Me". Guest vocalist Kat Edmonson sang two duets with Bougerol: "I've Grown Accustomed to (His) Face" and "Firefly"; but a misstep was the lack of a solo for Edmonson, although Ray offered one with "The Best Is Yet to Come". Guitarist Emeline O'Rourke accompanied Bougerol on "Close Your Eyes" and ukulele-bearing Hawkes dueted with the singer on "The Very Thought of You". After an evening of mostly midtempo jazz, the ensemble finally broke out with hot closers, "It's All Right with Me" and the title song. Throughout, bassist Jen Hodge and drummer David Berger were stalwarts. — **Marilyn Lester**



Elizabeth Bougerol @Joe's Pub

The Big Easy might boast the Preservation Hall Jazz Band, but for that enduring Nola sound, NYC has the **High Society New Orleans Jazz Band** (HSNOJB) born at the Café Carlyle in 1997, though it grew out of Woody Allen's weekly residencies that began at Michael's Pub in 1971. Co-leaders and founders, trumpeter Simon Wettenhall and GRAMMY-winning pianist Conal Fowkes, were at the helm in Birdland Theater (Aug. 6), fronting a septet that has the genre down to a "T." Aside from a sub for clarinetist Tom Abbott, the band is Harvey Tibbs (trombone), Josh Dunn (banjo, guitar), Brian Nalepka (bass, vocals) and Kevin Dorn (drums). Most of the repertoire is performed jauntily midtempo, with the first vocal, "Should I?" (Nacio Herb Brown, Arthur Freed), revealing Fowkes to have the sound of a period vocalist. "Bouncing Around" was a bouncy treat, with a bright tempo and onomatopoeia of sound. In a change of mood, the 1858 hymn "Sweet By and By" (Joseph P. Webster, Sanford Fillmore Bennett) found itself living next to the lively 1898 Italian waltz, "Ciribiribin" (Alberto Pestalozza, Carlo Tiochet). Moving up in history, finally getting her due, Lil Hardin's "Just for a Thrill" was voiced by Fowkes, with proper introductory deference by Wettenhall. Closer was the sprightly Jelly Roll Morton classic, "Black Bottom Stomp"—not exactly a burner, but lively enough. Similarly addressed earlier in the program was "Mr. Jelly Lord". HSNOJB, as a longtime unit, has settled into a comfortable groove: sweetly appealing without being groundbreaking. (ML)

The Jazz Foundation of America's Thursday afternoon concert series at the National Jazz Museum in Harlem included a unique duo set (Aug. 6) featuring **Darius Jones** (alto) and **Ra Kalam Bob Moses** (drums). Both are extremely eclectic musicians who defy easy categorization; between them, they have occupied countless positions on the jazz-to-avantgarde spectrum as players and composers. This performance showed their compatibility as heartfelt instrumentalists with instantly recognizable styles. Moses, still youthful in his late-70s, conjured a rainbow-hued palette of sounds from his custom kit, using varied implements on the drums, ranging from his bare hands to rubber-ball-tipped mallets. The drummer often kept up a steady stream of activity, but he still left plenty of room for Jones to showcase his deep, iridescent timbre. Apart from a bit of Albert Ayler's "Ghosts", the set was entirely improvised, broken up into relatively short sections. These took the form of little scenes in which each player focused on a few specific techniques; Moses introduced some with on-the-spot titles, such as "Bluesy Dirty Nasty March" and "Noise 'R' Us". Though Jones might explore percussive attacks or multiphonics, he often concentrated on simple melodies with a folk-song quality, illustrating how free improvisation doesn't need to be abstract to be effective. In these moments, Moses often seemed to take a melodic approach as well; the two players continually filled in each other's sonic space without ever directly copying or repeating ideas. — **Elijah Shiffer**



Ra Kalam Bob Moses @National Jazz Museum in Harlem

Tenor saxophonist **Ricky Ford** brought an all-star quartet to Smalls (Aug. 7) featuring Mark Soskin (piano), Jerome Harris (acoustic bass guitar) and Barry Altschul (drums). These four veterans of the scene, each with illustrious careers going back at least five decades, cut loose on a straight-ahead set of standards and originals by the leader. At first a little rough around the edges, this band soon found its level at a high collective energy on Ford's "A Maiden's Voyage", spearheaded by the saxophonist's robust timbre and dramatic lines. On this and elsewhere in the set, the quartet was joined by rising star marimba player Andrés Coll, visiting from Spain. Coll's fiery solos, full of rolls and tremolos, highlighted the lack of sustain that differentiates his instrument from the vibraphone. Altschul, best known as a member of New York's '60s-70s free jazz underground, was equally at home in this more conventional setting; however, there were a few opportunities for the drummer's avant garde roots to peek through. One of these was a freely-interpreted version of Billy Strayhorn's "Passion Flower", in a far more intense mood than a typical ballad. Ford stated the melody, originally written as an alto feature for Johnny Hodges, in the same octave on tenor—bringing the bridge far into his instrument's altissimo register for a particularly impassioned climax. Another moment of noisy abandon came at the set's end, with a blast of group free improv before the closing theme of Milt Jackson's "Bags' Groove". (ES)

Marta Sánchez Trio at the Lower East Side's Close Up (Aug. 7) was a jazz hang of the highest order: warm, alert and so enveloping that the club's jewel-box room seemed briefly womb-like. The all-originals set list skipped her recent solo prepared-piano record, *For the Space You Left* (Out Of Your Head), drawing instead from 2024's *Perpetual Void* (Intakt) and newer material. It was a first-time lineup: Dan Weiss subbed ably for drummer Mark Whitfield Jr. (who got called away to another gig) and bassist Kanoa Mendenhall was a find, her lines expressive and unusually alive to the shape of a phrase. Though Sánchez has been a standout member of David Murray's Quartet for years, it was clear here how much authority she carries as a leader, her compositions dense with tradition even as they push past it. On "3:30 AM", introduced as a piece about insomnia and anxiety, her playing stayed cool and assured, though an undertow of vulnerability came through in her touch and in the trio's interplay. "The Absence of the People You Long For", a slower, angular piece, still frothed with a restless energy, as if in possession of an unruly momentum that it couldn't slough. Newer tunes, including "Ancient", and the older "This Is the Last One About You", darted with a traffic-jam energy, laced with Bach-like counterpoint moves. The second set turned inward, opening with a solo that seemed to stretch time, capturing listeners in its spell; all we could do was allow ourselves to get swept away in it. — **Ariella Stok**



Marta Sánchez @Close Up

WHAT'S NEWS

NYCJR is thrilled to celebrate this month's John Coltrane centennial (Sep. 23) by putting the spotlight on longtime Coltrane Quartet bassist Jimmy Garrison. We are doubly thrilled to have two historic photos gracing our cover and inside feature, each by legendary photographers with current photo exhibitions. Celebrated UK photographer **Val Wilmer's** wonderful photo of Garrison and his son Matthew Garrison (see cover image) is one of her many classic images on exhibit (through Oct. 4) as part of *Val Wilmer: Blue Moments - Black Sounds*—along with photos of Rashied Ali, Albert Ayler, Archie Shepp, et al.—at Lucy Bell Gallery in Southeast England's East Sussex. For more info visit lucy-bell.com. The inside cover feature photo (p. 8), capturing Garrison with Coltrane at Rudy Van Gelder's recording studio in December 1964, is by none other than the late **Chuck Stewart** (1927-2017), widely considered the most prolific, consequential music photographer of the 20th century. *Chuck Stewart: Framing the Sound* is an exhibition of his iconic photographs at The Sun ATL (in Atlanta, GA) through Sep. 26. For more info visit vinsonart.com/exhibitions.

This fall, the nonprofit **Blank Forms** (BF) will move from its Clinton Hill location to a new home in downtown Manhattan, where its loft space on 151 Lafayette Street will house a performance space, gallery, archives, offices, bookstore and bar. As its online moving campaign states: "We've been thinking a lot about the downtown loft tradition that inspired Blank Forms from the beginning: artist-centered environments where performance, research, conversation and social life could coexist, and which helped make NYC one of the world's most vital cities for music and art. Spaces like these have become increasingly rare, and the opportunity to create a new home for experimental art in this tradition feels both heartening and urgent." Upcoming events include BF's ninth annual benefit gala at Angel Orensanz Foundation, honoring Keiji Haino (Nov. 9). For more info and to donate visit blankforms.org.

The deadline for grant submissions regarding **Chamber Music America's** Presenter Consortium for Jazz (partially funded by the Doris Duke Jazz Ensembles Project) is coming up: Sep. 24. The grant period is Jan. 2027 to Jun. 2028, and grants will fund 100% of eligible expenses up to \$15K for the applicant. The applicant receives all grant funds and is responsible for the distribution to consortium partners as needed for the project. Past recipients include Arts for Art, ArsNova Workshop and Earshot Jazz Society of Seattle. For more info visit... chambermusicamerica.org/grants/presenter-consortium-for-jazz.

This month's 19th Annual **West Orange Jazz Festival** (in West Orange, NJ, about 30 miles outside Manhattan) celebrates the 25th anniversary and grand reopening of the recently-renovated Oskar Schindler Performing Arts Center (OSPAC). Festival Artistic Director Monifa Brown has put together a seven-hour music marathon (Sep. 19) including the Jaleel Shaw Trio, Dion Parson & 21st Century Band, Antoinette Montague, Joe Locke, Mark Gross, Oscar Perez and the Montclair State University Jazz Ensemble. The festival will additionally honor NEA Jazz Master Dorthaan Kirk, a founding member of WBGO FM and widow to Rahsaan Roland Kirk. She will receive the inaugural OSPAC Jazz Fest Spirit Award. For more info visit pleasantvalleyproductions.org.

The tribute concert to the 2026 **NEA Jazz Masters** will take place at LA's Music Center's Walt Disney Concert Hall and will also be streamed online (Sep. 15). Though Jazz Masters Airtio Moreira and Patrice Rushen are unable to attend, Carmen Lundy and Rhonda Hamilton will participate, in addition to performers including Terri Lyne Carrington, Michael Carvin, Dezron Douglas, Diana Purim (daughter of Airtio and Flora Purim), Ben Williams and many others. For more info visit artisarts.gov.

A fond and sad farewell to the prolific, Lisbon, Portugal-based record label **Clean Feed** Records, which celebrated its silver anniversary this year but has announced that the recently-released *VIVA! O Carro de Fogo De Sei Miguel* will be its final album. *VIVA!* also represents the first posthumous album by Sei Miguel, the France-born (Portugal-based since the mid '80s) trumpeter who passed away last November at the age of 64. Label founder Pedro Costa's deep catalog of Clean Feed recordings served as a home for significant Portuguese musicians such as Luis Vicente, Susana Santos Silva, Carlos Bica, João Lencastre and Rodrigo Amado, as well as Americans Mario Pavone, Marty Ehrlich, Eric Revis, Rob Mazurek, Ned Rothenberg, Mark Dresser, Kris Davis, Nate Wooley, Angelica Sanchez, Tony Malaby, plus the UK's Evan Parker and many others. For more info visit cleanfeed-records.com.

To submit news email ldgreene@nycjazzrecord.com