



Attucks Jazz Club returns for 2019-2020 season!

Presented by Virginia Arts Festival and SevenVenues

Featuring Top Jazz Artists in an Intimate Club Setting at Norfolk's Historic Attucks Theatre

Tickets just \$20

Presented by the Virginia Arts Festival and SevenVenues, the Attucks Jazz Club transforms an intimate, upstairs space at the historic Attucks Theatre and brings some of the genre's most talented players to seven Saturday nights from September 2019 through April 2020. With comfortable open table seating, and the Club bar, the Attucks Jazz Club is the perfect way to enjoy a Saturday night – it's the way jazz was meant to be heard!

The series is curated by pianist and educator John Toomey, a legend among local jazz fans, whose namesake trio performs with the featured artist in each Attucks Jazz Club show. When he's not making history himself, Toomey teaches Jazz History and Jazz Improvisation at Old Dominion University, where he also directs the Jazz Combo and Jazz Choir. Before settling down at ODU, Toomey toured with jazz trumpet legend Maynard Ferguson as well as vocalists Mark Murphy and Rene Marie. Regular players in the trio include drummer Jae Sinnett, known to area jazz fans as both a player and the host of WHRV's *Sinnett in Session*, and bassist Jimmy Masters, who has enlivened the region's jazz scene for more than three decades.

All performances begin at 8pm. The Attucks Theatre is located at 1010 Church St., Norfolk; lot parking is available behind the venue (\$5). For more information, performance times, and tickets, visit www.vafest.org.

Tickets for Attucks Jazz Club are just \$20 and may be purchased online at www.vafest.org, by phone at 757-282-2822 or by visiting the Virginia Arts Festival box office located at 440 Bank Street in Norfolk between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday-Friday; also available at Ticketmaster.com.

The 2019-2020 Attucks Jazz Club line-up includes:

KEN PEPOWSKI, CLARINET

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2019

"Arguably the greatest living clarinetist" (BBC2), Ken Peplowski is a "brilliantly entertaining" (*Downbeat*) musician. He cut his teeth playing in the family polka band while still in elementary school in Cleveland; by high school he had caught the jazz bug, and was soon jamming with local musicians and gigging nights and weekends. After a year of college, Peplowski was invited to join the legendary Tommy Dorsey Orchestra under the direction of Buddy Morrow. Just a few years later in 1984, Benny Goodman came

out of retirement and put together a new band, hiring Peplowski on tenor saxophone. In his star-studded career, he has collaborated with the greats, from Mel Torme and Peggy Lee to Charlie Byrd and George Shearing, along with fascinating forays into music of all kinds, playing alongside Madonna, Leon Redbone, and Erich Kunzel.

MARK SHIM, TENOR SAXOPHONE

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2019

Born in Jamaica, this inventive saxophonist moved to Richmond, Virginia as a child, and began studying saxophone in 7th grade. His restless, searching artistic spirit carried him to New York City, where he went on to play with Mose Allison, Betty Carter, and the Mingus Big Band, among others. Shim counts among his influences Sonny Rollins, Joe Henderson and Gene Ammons, but credits Betty Carter with the “best teaching” that formed his style. He has been hailed by critics for his virtuosity, and a style that swings from mellow to fierce: “He burst through the tunes, gathering speed and weight like a snowball rolling down a hill in a cartoon... “ (*The New York Times*). You can find this sought-after sideman playing with Vijay Iyer and other innovators on the forefront of jazz.

BOBBY WATSON, SAXOPHONE

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2019

Saxophonist, composer, arranger and educator Bobby Watson, raised in jazz-rich Kansas City, made a name for himself as the musical director of Art Blakey’s Jazz Messengers, launching a career that kept his phone ringing for decades and his bags packed for gigs across the map. He has played with the legends, including Max Roach, Louis Hayes, Wynton Marsalis, Joe Williams, Dianne Reeves, Lou Rawls, Betty Carter and many more. Watson’s classic 1986 release “Love Remains (Red)” has long been recognized by the Penguin Guide to Jazz as part of the “core collection” any jazz aficionado should own. His original compositions include music for the soundtrack of Robert DeNiro’s film *A Bronx Tale*, and a number of classics that have been interpreted by many of his fellow musicians, including “Time Will Tell,” “In Case You Missed It,” and “Wheel Within a Wheel.”

LENA SEIKALY, VOCALIST

SATURDAY, JANUARY 18, 2020

It’s easy to fall in love with this DC-based singer, as she weaves beautifully crafted vocal riffs along classic melodies, refreshing the standards with new nuance and meaning. Named “one of Washington’s preeminent jazz singers” and “brightest voices in jazz” (*The Washington Post*), Seikaly is making her mark in national and international jazz circles as a revivalist of traditional jazz vocals, as well as an innovator in contemporary vocal jazz styles. She was one of eleven semi-finalists for the prestigious 2015 Thelonious Monk Institute International Jazz Vocals Competition in L.A., and is an alum of the Betty Carter Jazz Ahead program in DC, and the Jazz Aspen Snowmass program directed by Christian McBride. She has performed at the Kennedy Center, Blues Alley, the Hamilton, and Strathmore Music Center, and has headlined at jazz festivals throughout the U.S.

ROBIN EUBANKS, TROMBONE

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2020

This Grammy-winning music master was born to a uniquely musical family: his brother, Kevin Eubanks, was the musical director for *The Tonight Show*; their mother is a music educator; another brother,

Duane, is a renowned trumpet player; and their Uncle Ray Bryant was a prominent jazz pianist. His own career has included collaborations with Art Blakey, Elvin Jones, Eddie Palmieri, Sun Ra, Barbara Streisand, The Rolling Stones and Talking Heads, to name a few. Winner of the 2014 Jazz Times Critics Poll for Best Trombonist, along with multiple Downbeat Readers and Critics Polls for Trombonist of the Year, he is in demand as a sideman, leader and composer—and when he's not performing, he serves as a leading educator, having taught at Oberlin College, the Berklee College of Music and the New England Conservatory.

MARQUIS HILL, TRUMPET

SATURDAY, MARCH 7, 2020

This groundbreaking musician, composer and bandleader has worked tirelessly to break down the barriers that divide musical genres. Contemporary and classic jazz, hip-hop, R&B, Chicago house, neo-soul—to Marquis Hill, they're all essential elements of the profound African-American creative heritage he's a part of. Born in Chicago in 1987 and raised on the city's culturally rich South Side, Hill began playing drums at age 4, before switching to trumpet in the 6th grade. In November 2014, he won the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz competition and became a presence on the global scene virtually overnight; since then he has played with a who's who of jazz that includes Dee Dee Bridgewater, Boney James, Kurt Elling, and Joe Lovano.

STEPHANIE NAKASIAN, VOCALIST

SATURDAY, APRIL 4, 2020

Stephanie Nakasian is a well-seasoned vocalist and master of innovative jazz improvisation, with a fresh and vibrant sound all her own. Bringing high energy to every performance, Stephanie enthalls listeners with her pure tones and a flawless delivery, engaging them on a personal level with a love for the music that is playful, electric and spontaneous in story and song. Stephanie came to international attention in the mid-80s when she sang and toured with the vocal jazz master Jon Hendricks and Company – what she considers her “vocal jazz apprenticeship.” She continues to tour and record as a vocal leader.

About the Presenters

Since 1997, the **Virginia Arts Festival** has transformed the cultural scene in southeastern Virginia, presenting great performers from around the world to local audiences and making this historic, recreation-rich region a cultural destination for visitors from across the United States and around the world. The Festival has presented numerous U.S. and regional premieres, and regularly commissions new works of music, dance, and theater from some of today's most influential composers, choreographers and playwrights. The Festival's arts education programs reach tens of thousands of area schoolchildren each year through student matinees, in-school performances, artists' residencies, master classes and demonstrations.

The City of Norfolk's **SevenVenues** serves to link Norfolk's residents, visitors and tourists to Norfolk's rich cultural arts and entertainment community. Besides providing entertainment services, the City of Norfolk's Department of Cultural Facilities, Arts and Entertainment is also responsible for the maintenance, repair, management and operation of the City's seven public assembly facilities which include: Scope Arena, Chrysler Hall, the Attucks Theatre, the Wells Theatre, Harrison Opera House, Harbor Park, and Open Air Events.

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