

Jam

Jazz Ambassador Magazine

OCTOBER + NOVEMBER 2024

\$8.99

Kansas City Jazz Ambassadors 2024
JAM Awards Voting Has Begun!

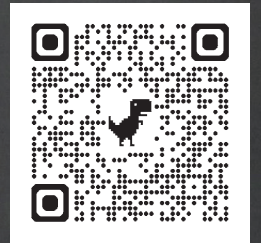
Charlie Parker with
Woody Herman

UNESCO in KC

Cynthia VanRoden

Jazz Heroes

AND MORE!



Karvin

WORLD CITIZEN



FOLLY

Jazz

2024-2025



Karrin Allyson

September 21, 2024 at 7:30 p.m.



Some Enchanted Evening
featuring Benny Benack III and Stella Cole

October 26, 2024, 7:30 p.m.



Yellowjackets

January 18, 2025, 7:30 p.m.

säje

February 28, 2025, 7:30 p.m.



An Evening with Branford Marsalis

March 15, 2025, 7:30 p.m.



Helen Sung Meets Bach Aria Soloists

April 5, 2025, 7:30 p.m.



Tickets on sale July 1
FollyTheater.org/Jazz

Jam

Jazz Ambassador Magazine

OCTOBER + NOVEMBER 2024
VOLUME 35, NO. 6

Contents

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Jam is published by the Kansas City Jazz Ambassadors, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to the development and promotion of Kansas City jazz.

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"Jam" is a Registered Trademark of
The Kansas City Jazz Ambassadors, Inc.
Jam/Jazz Ambassadors Magazine (Online)
ISSN: 1533-0745

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Service Printing and Graphics, Inc.

Please join us for our annual event at Voo on December 12th. Consider becoming a premium member of KCJA and support KC Jazz.

Our board members include Lynn Abrams, Joe Dimino, Jason Goudeau, Mikole Kaar, Linda McShann, Dan Sturdevant, Jessica Poell, and Amber Underwood.

Stay hip,
David Basse, President and Editor

Karrin, World Citizen 2

Frank Smith Jazz Recitals. 4

Veteran Singer
Cynthia VanRoden 6

For the Record: New Music
from Back Alley Brass Band
and EE Pointer 9

Remembering Sharon
Valleau and Marc Caplan 11

Club Scene 12

VOO to Host Jazz Futures 14

Zildjian Cymbals 16

Woody Herman 18

UNESCO Kansas City 20

Kansas City Boasts at Least
Two Jazz Heroes. 22

How I Came to Love Jazz 24

Kar



Karrin

WORLD CITIZEN

Vocalist Karrin Allyson arrived in Kansas City in the very early 1990s. The 5 time Grammy nominee openly credits the company she kept in Kansas City for her impromptu jazz education. That crowd includes long-time bandmembers pianist Paul Smith, guitarists Danny Embrey and Rod Fleeman, drummers Todd Strait and Doug Auwarter, and bassists Bob Bowman and Gerald Spaits. She has recorded several blazing improvisations with saxophonist Kim Park and trumpeters Stanton Kessler and Mike Metheny, who were a significant part of her KC supporting cast.

Graduating from The University of Nebraska, Omaha before her arrival in Kansas City, Karrin was featured at the college on April 4th, 2022 with a big band performance of her original compositions entitled “Some of That Sunshine,” and was handed an Honorary Doctorate by the school on December 16th of that same year.

At the Folly Theater on September 21st, 2024, Karrin was featured with renowned Brazilian musicians Vitor Goncalves and Rafael Barata, New York based bassist, Harvey S and guitarist, Rod Fleeman. This was the opening performance of the

2024-25 Folly Jazz Series, find details & tickets at www.follytheater.org

Like Kansas Citians before her, Charlie Parker and Pat Metheny, Karrin is a ‘World Citizen’ known widely as a master of her craft, which includes 3 recordings of Brazilian jazz, several recordings of jazz standards, Broadway and classical music, and a cross section of her favorite popular songs and the blues.

In her college days, Karrin was leading the original female rock band, “Tomboy.” Some 3 decades later, the vocalist gathered together 6 of jazz’s most prominent female performers for the groundbreaking project, “Shoulder to Shoulder.” Working closely with celebrated record producer, author, and conceptualist Kabir Sehgal, Karrin “went deep in a vivid color pallet of ongoing social justice concerns” – women’ suffrage, a platform originally based on the right of women to vote in elections.

With well over a dozen highly acclaimed recordings to her credit, Karrin is once again considered for a Grammy in 2025. Listen to current interviews with Karrin Allyson and Steve Kraske at KCUR Interview and with David Basse, at www.davidbasse.com





MIDWEST TRUST CENTER SERIES

JOHNSON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

New Names, Same Great Series!

Presenter, Doreen Maronde's Recital Series at Johnson County Community College has just gotten a long overdue name change.

The popular free series began when 12345 College Boulevard was located in the midst of rolling corn fields. To put that in perspective, more than 4,000 musicians have performed for a respectable 50 minutes at the lunchtime series that is held in the spring and in the fall months.

The College honored Doreen's loyal service of many decades, at the first concert of the 2024 fall season, by naming the recitals as the Maronde Professional Recital Series! The classical series will remain the Ruel Joyce Series, and the jazz series will now be known as the Frank Smith Jazz Series, after Doreen's deceased husband and long-time member of Kansas City's esteemed jazz community, pianist Frank Smith.

This is intended to cement Doreen's legacy and to assure that these music series continue well into the future. Performances are Mondays and Tuesdays at noon in the Midwest Trust Center and feature some of Kansas City's most respected professional classical and jazz musicians. They are free and open to the public. Visit www.jccc.edu/recitalseries for full details.

Ruel Joyce Recitals

Sept. 30: Destiny Ann Mermagin, violin Michael Mermagin, cello Lolita Lisovskaya-Sayevich, piano

Oct. 7: Soojin Jin, piano, Ed Laut, cello

Oct. 14: St. Petersburg Quartet
Oct. 21: Jayne Siemens, soprano, John Livingston, piano
Oct. 28: Tom Aber and the Brookside String Quartet
Nov. 4: Sean Chen
Nov. 11: Tomoko Iguchi, violin and viola, Karen Savage, piano

Frank Smith Jazz Recitals

Oct. 1: Rod Fleeman Trio
Oct. 8: Eclipse – Everett Freeman, piano, DeAndre Manning, bass, Michael Warren, drums
Oct. 15: Paganova Quintet
Oct. 22: Chris Hazelton Trio
Oct. 29: Roger Wilder Quintet
Nov. 5: Lisa Hittle and the Wichita Connections
Nov. 8: JCCC Faculty Jazz Quintet
Nov. 12: Charlie Parker Celebration! Gerald Spaits/Charles Perkins Quartet

The recitals are sponsored by the JCCC Music, Theatre and Recording Arts department.

Jazz Winterlude continues in the 2024-2025 season with "Chicago Blues Supersession" on October 19th, "Paragon Ragtime Orchestra" on November 17th, New Orleans Songbook, a Jazz at Lincoln Center Production, on February 16th.

Tickets for Midwest Trust Center at <https://tickets-center.com/>

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Veteran Singer

CYNTHIA VANRODEN

**Finds Home in KC by
Way of Philly & NYC**

Joe Dimino

On a lark in the hottest part of July, Veteran Singer Cynthia van Roden crooned in her playful & sophisticated way over the bustling crowd in The Savoy deep in the historic heart of downtown Kansas City in the art haven of Hotel 21c with her trusty band following her lead. Her aura was stopping all in their paths to catch this modern act in a vein of true revelry.

“I love all music. I think the part of jazz that resonated with me in the beginning is the Great American Songbook. The stories that were told,” Cynthia explained. How it all falls together with the music. I just love where the notes go unexpectedly and sharing it. I want to transport people because there is a lot to be said in those songs.”

Her personal timeline of transport started just outside of Philadelphia. Her grandmother was taught stride and grand piano by the nuns and it ran in the family lineage. She was told that she could sing before she could even talk. In fact, there is a level of royalty in her bloodline. Deep in great grandparent relations she is loosely related to Taylor Swift.

“My father sang in a barber shop quartet. He had such a beautiful voice. I remember singing Christmas carols with him one year at these beautiful gardens outside of Philadelphia and it brought tears to my eyes,” Cynthia said. “I really didn’t have any classical training. Music was always my entertainment and balm. It was so important to me growing up.”

It wasn’t until later in life that jazz captivated her music senses. Early on, it was rock and roll and she even had a Fender Telecaster. It was when she went to college in New York after leaving Philly that a group of friends were jazz aficionados and led her to the true gates of jazz.

“We would just listen to album after album. When people came to town that we could see, we would be there. My first person I really listened to was Duke Ellington, Ella Fitzgerald. I love listening to Ben Webster,” Cynthia said. “They had the most amazing record collection and I would listen to re-

ally rare singers like Claire Austin, Felicia Sanders, Judy Holliday and Marilyn Monroe.

As a starving artist, she scraped together the funds to see some seminal performances in her earlier days with legends like Anita O’Day and Peggy Lee. She studied how they orchestrated their shows and delighted the crowds. The seeds were planted early on.

“I was in New York for about 20 years and I just kept getting downsized. Honestly, I was recruited by Hallmark in KC to start one of their photo departments,” Cynthia said. “I thought I would try it for a year. I have worked with every photographer I wanted to in New York. I’ll be back. And I’m still here in KC.”

Along with the jazz chops, her creative life includes photography, voice overs and ukulele performed for Hallmark products and commercials. She arrived in Kansas City in June of 1997 with every intent of it being temporary, yet the charms pulled her in and she never left.

“I love the lifestyle here after living in New York for that long. It wasn’t the people in New York, it was the noise that got to me. It was non-stop,” Cynthia said. “I grew up in the suburbs, so it wasn’t like moving to Kansas City was this big change. I kind of breathed a sigh of relief. I could smell fresh cut grass again.”

It was the generosity and spirit of Kansas City musicians that hooked her. After she got here, it took her about a year to get the gumption to start singing again. It was as though she was in a state of shock that had to wear off from her NYC life to KC.

“I just didn’t know how to get started. I bought a mic. Rod Fleeman told me I needed charts. I asked him what the charts were. I know it sounds so simple, but I just didn’t know where to start,” Cynthia noted. “A lot of my charts are done by hand by Danny Embrey. I started building a repertoire. I had a difficult year in 2004. I almost left this earth. I had two different kinds of cancer.”

It was shortly thereafter that she entered a competition called Bar Natasha Idol. She was in the

CYNTHIA VANRODEN CONTINUED

midst of something called post-traumatic growth syndrome and winning this competition gave her the courage and motivation to move on into a new chapter of her performing career.

“That’s where I learned to read energy in a room. During the competition, it was packed,” Cynthia noted. “You could feel the energy. It was palpable.”

After all of these years, Kansas City is home and the community is key to her happiness.

“I don’t know if every block is like this, but the sense of community in mine is wonderful. For instance, the block that I live on, they had a book club for a while and we are all friends,” Cynthia said. “That is so unusual. When I was at Hallmark, there was a community. In New York you worked with people and you were friends, but it was so big and people lived in so many different places. Yet here, you can touch or be part of it.”

Her love of music after all these years is harmony. She has been with the same group of musicians for the last 12 years and that has been a delight she never knew was possible.

“I love my band members. They have been incredibly supportive and helpful,” Cynthia said. “I make my own arrangements, but they have to write it out for me.”

Her band works hard to transport you to a time where jazz was king and the nostalgia of the era is thick with cool. You can catch her with the band live at The Savoy every second Saturday of the month, along with the last Saturday of the month at The Market at Meadowbrook.

When asked who she really is after all these travels, adventures, survival and evolution, her answer was quite simple for the complexity of her existence.

“I’m positive for the most part. Generous to a fault. Hopefully kind,” Cynthia concluded. “I’m always curious and love learning.”

Everything Cynthia:

<https://www.cynthiavanroden.com/>

Full Cynthia Neon Jazz Interview Links:

<https://youtu.be/EgfzzmEeEdA>

<https://podcasters.spotify.com/pod/show/joe-dimino/episodes/Kansas-City-based-Veteran-Jazz-Singer--Creative-Cynthia-Van-Roden-e2nkb67> ||



Back Alley Brass Band Last Chance to Dance

KC's Back Alley Brass Band has a new EP album. It is heavily rooted in the New Orleans Brass Band sound, but is also a mix of modern and traditional flavor in the idiom, and includes the KC sound as well as hints of funk, rock, and popular music. But, in essence, the album has that "second line" groove. It's brassy. It's bold. It marches. It rushes forward on a stream of golden horns, New Orleans-style.



Bandleader Matt Fillingham said, "All of us in the band grew up in the jazz tradition, but we absolutely love the New Orleans Brass Band sound. Brass Bands have started to become more and more popular around the country. There were a couple fantastic bands in town that have elements of New Orleans style like Relativity Brass and Grand Marquis, but there was a hole in the scene for the more modern funky brass bands like Rebirth Brass Band, The Soul Rebels, Youngblood Brass Band, The Hot 8, The Stooges...We wanted to bring that more funk/hip-hop/party street style that more modern brass bands are doing."

Although the album is composed mainly of originals and traditional tunes, it has surprises, including a cover of Miley Cyrus's "Flowers." A nod to healthy (instead of toxic) masculinity. Whereas the Cyrus tune includes iconic lines like "Paint my nails / cherry red / match the roses that you

left" and "I can take myself dancing" and "I can buy myself flowers," the KC brass band leans into the feel of the tune in a more muscular, charcoal, burnt-end, bold way—and is wordless, lyric-less, strictly instrumental. It surprises.

One endearing facet of the album is that the album includes all-men choruses at key points. The men sing, for instance, "You gonna make me want somebody else, / if you keep on treatin' me the way you do. / I wanna love somebody." They're not expert singers, but that's part of the charm. They lift their imperfect voices with spirit, and it has that heart-string-pull effect as when someone drops to a knee and proposes amidst a crowd. The heart and chest are laid bare.

"We have the most fun when we get to explore all the types of music that a Brass Band can play," said Fillingham. "I think our audiences do too. Most people who come out to see us immediately recognize some of the traditional tunes we play like 'Second Line,' 'I'll Fly Away,' and 'Saints' and will spontaneously start dancing and singing along. When we cover a pop tune like 'Flowers,' everyone gets excited about hearing a song they already know, but done with a groove, instrumentation, and setting that they didn't expect. Our completely original songs, like 'Samba de Rick,' 'Bringing The Heat,' and 'Comin' For Ya' are our attempts to not only add to the brass band literature, but to put that Kansas City spin on our sound." The album is catchy—and fun—for the reasons Fillingham notes. It gets you moving.

The group is not new. As Fillingham said, "The group formed about five years ago. Three members of the band (Tom Lawlor, Justin Cross-

man, and Daniel McDill) met and played together at Pittsburg State University in Pittsburg, KS. The rest of us met playing in various bands around KC. We sort of recruited each other after finding out about our shared love of brass bands and started rehearsing regularly. Eventually we popped up on the streets of The Crossroads during First Fridays and have been asked to play in all sorts of clubs, festivals, weddings, parties, and events in Kansas City and the Midwest.”

The band can be found playing live regularly at First Fridays in The Crossroads, Nighthawk, The Ship, Boulevardia, Prairie Village Jazz Fest, Lee’s Summit Jazz Fest, and at events where “second lines” are in demand, such as weddings, birthdays, funerals, and block parties.

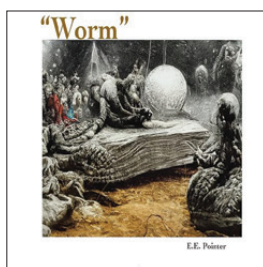
The sectionals on each tune are always engaging, and the short solos are full of fire. The album gives a heavy nod to its New Orleans roots. This is an album to really enjoy. Turn it up. Way up. For brassy gold.

—Kevin Rabas

EE Pointer

Worm (1 July 2024)

Always eclectic and compelling, and often experimental, EE Pointer is one of a kind, as a composer, musicians (trumpet, keys), and bandleader. Pointer has a new album, WORM, that dropped as a CD and is streaming July 1.



The album traces (through music) “some touchstone over the past two years. Some heavy times,” Pointer writes in the album liner notes. The album opens with Pointer’s iconic go-to style, late-Miles Davis trumpet over two-and-four, an electric brassy fusion style Pointer has perfected

and for which he is known, such as with KC’s own River Cow Orchestra. But this is not an album of only that. It shifts drastically (but gradually) from this modern sound across soundscapes to music “in the tradition,” such as “Uprights,” which sounds like a ragtime stride tune. It’s piano-only, nothing electronic or electric, and the tune has a kind of levity our era lacks. In some ways, the album sounds diary-like. One day, rain. Another, clouds. Another, sun. But, despite its variety, the album is unified and seems carefully plotted and planned. The tunes lead one into the other, of a piece, invisibly stitched.

About the album, Pointer writes, “I don’t want to spoon feed anybody any ideas of what the music means, sounds like, or how it was created. It is still pretty much impressionistic, so the ball is in the listener’s court (to mix my metaphors). The Neo Impressionistic slant of the compositions on ‘Worm’ should supply all who want to share in the fun with plenty of their own impressions of the music,” and, for this listener, they do. It is Pointer at top form, who meditates on one day or one month, then watches the clouds and birds, like the ancient Greeks, finding prophetic lessons in them. Afterwards, we learn the news from them, these tunes.

There’s funk. There’s electric jazz. There’s traditional work. There’s double time. There are ballads. And, although Pointer appears to work alone here, he seems multiple: keys and trumpet and drums. (And more.) And it doesn’t sound homemade. It sounds modernly made, as if the whole trio (or more) is Pointer’s home orchestra held at his fingertips and also behind a blue screen.

Highlights include the quiet, pensive, music-box-like “Reflection,” played on electric keys. But softly, like a lullaby. Pointer’s light touch mirrors that of Bill Evans.

Give WORM a listen. It’s unlike anything else. Propulsive, yet meditative, Pointer serves up another thoughtful, contemporary hit.

—Kevin Rabas

Gone And Not Forgotten

Sharon Valleau

Jazz Advocate

From an early age it was obvious Sharon was talented. She was not shy in expressing herself and became active in theater during high school. Through that, Sharon discovered she had an impressive vocal range and she sang throughout her life.



She landed a position as a senior writer with Hallmark Cards - one of their first African American writers - and during her years at Hallmark, she was instrumental in creating new products and programs for heightened marketability. Her involvement with Hallmark led to a liaison with Maya Angelou. Sharon served as the team lead in developing retail offerings of writings and inspirational gifts featuring the voice of Dr. Angelou.

As a volunteer, Sharon was very active on the board Kansas City Jazz Ambassadors. Music remained a passion, and she would occasionally take the mic at local clubs. Once retired, Sharon continued to write grants, business proposals, for print and broadcast, and as a speech writer.

She wrote and co-produced a documentary film short: "Where Do We Live" A History and Analysis of Housing Patterns in Kansas City. Sharon was a contributing journalist for the Jazz Ambassador Magazine and The Kansas City Call. She also wrote script adaptations, turning children's novels into full length plays for the Rainbow's End Theatre. Sharon is missed by the jazz community and especially those involved with the Jazz Ambassadors.

Marc Caplan

Drummer

Marc had a passion for music, particularly the drums. For over half a century, he was a celebrated drummer around KC, sustaining his enthusiasm and talent for playing music until just recently. He had friends, too many to count, a scathing wit, critical thinking, a love of Kansas City music history.



On April 24th, 2024, the Mo City Jumpers had a reunion. Bassist Mark Montgomery, pianist Jim Beisman and saxophonist Dana Smith were joined by Marc Caplan. They hadn't had a chance to play together for quite some time and Marc had been in declining health, but the ole friends had so much fun, they got together a few more times and played music at BB's Lawnside BBQ.

"We feel we have more fun than most," said Mark Montgomery, "and lucky we had some great gigs with Marc in 2024." Dana Smith confided that he was intimidated by Marc at the start, because Marc was not only a blues musician, he was a respected jazzer, too. "Marc had played with legendary B3 organist Greg Meise, and guitarist Danny Embrey. When Marc hooked up with us, we were scared. Marc simply explained, 'look you hillbillies, here's what you got to do.'"

Marc Caplan is remembered and respected by all that had the chance to share the stage with him. As a drummer he had impeccable time and as

continued on page 19

Club Scene

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Voo to Host Jazz Futures Popular KC Nightclub

On October 17th, 2024 Voo, in the Muehlebach Hotel, hosted the season's first installment of the Kansas City Jazz Ambassadors, "Jazz Futures."

In its 4th year, Jazz Futures features top-notch jazz ensembles from area colleges and universities, giving students a chance to perform professionally, and the school's jazz studies department a generous donation to further their program.

This Thursday evening affair begins at 7pm, and it features curated cocktails, superb small plates, and some of the finest up and coming jazz in the city. In fact, many of the musicians pictured above have been jamming at Voo with master educator and pianist, Mike Pagan in his long-running Wednesday evening Voo jam session.

Now that the school year has begun again, many of the musicians pictured have gone on to prestigious schools, such as the University of Memphis and other schools of the east and west coasts.

On October 17th, we heard a fresh crop of hand-picked musicians, many who were on the professional stage for the very first time. They brought their "A" game to the famed 12th Street hotel that began its jazz policy in 1925.

Jazz Ambassador President, David Basse was the host, and his group of veteran musicians performed immediately following the opening installment of Jazz Futures. The history, the music, the fine food and the party began at Voo. Plan to



utures ub & Jazz

Join us for Jazz Futures, sponsored by Kansas City Jazz Ambassadors.

7pm -11pm Thursday, October 17th, 2024 – free, open to the public - reservations requested

On Thursday, December 12th, Voo Lounge, in the Muehlebach Hotel at 12th and Baltimore, KCMO, will host Jazz Futures. This time featuring the KCKCC Jazz Studies ensemble directed by Brett Jackson. The evening will include the JAM Awards and the KC Jazz Ambassadors Annual Meeting. Appearing on December 12th will be, Joel Martinez, alto and soprano saxophone Noah Randall, alto saxophone James Barton, baritone saxophone Michael Suriano, guitar Caden Bradshaw, piano Solomon Foster, organ Amil McDaniel, bass Nick Gasser, bass and Luke Paulson, drums. The event goes from 7pm - 11pm and also features the David Basse Group and special surprises.



7pm – 11pm Thursday, February 20th, 2025, KU Jazz Studies directed by Matt Otto and Brandon Draper. Voo Lounge – free, open to the public - reservations requested

7pm – 11pm Thursday, April 17th, 2025, KU Jazz Studies directed by Carl Allen. Voo Lounge – free, open to the public - reservations requested

www.vookansascity.com - www.kcjazzambassadors.org - www.davidbasse.com ¶



Zildjian Cymbals

A 400 Year Old Family Owned Company

By Tom Alexios

Zildjian is now at the beginning of their 5th Century. That, to me, is amazing. This story is going to be an honest attempt to pay homage to a family owned company that's over four hundred years old. That's an unbelievable accomplishment of any company. What can possibly be written about Zildjian that has not been written before, over the span of the four centuries, many times over the company's lifetime?


It's time to recognize another new milestone. Each year that goes by makes this an increasingly unique story from a survival standpoint. Considering all of the changes, large and small, politically and culturally, that have happened over four centuries, it's incredible for it to still be the highest quality cymbal company in the industry.

In Constantinople, Turkey in 1623, a man by the name of Avedis was working to figure out a way to mix certain metals together and heat treat them. After a long period of trial and error, Avedis came

up with a stable predictable combination of metals that he was able to extract the maximum amount of quality and sound from, which led to ultimately becoming a leader in industry standards for over four centuries. That is something amazing to write about any company achievement, no matter what industry it might be.

Avedis was so good at what he was able to accomplish. His cymbals were widely proclaimed for their quality. He became known as Zildjian, which means Cymbalsmith in his language. It's not unusual in some countries for your trade to be translated into your last name.

Avedis III moved to the United States in 1900 and settled down in the Boston, Massachusetts area. He married and started to build a life for himself and his wife. In the 1920s, Avedis III received a letter from his uncle that it was time for him to go overseas and take over the business. Avedis III



Avedis
Zildjian

then returned to the United States, and brought with him and established the Zildjian Company.

When Avedis III died, he left Zildjian to his two sons, Armand, the eldest, and his younger brother, Robert. Their attempts to work together became difficult, to say the least. Robert left Zildjian with a copy of the original formula and started his own company called Sabian Cymbal Company. Zildjian and Sabian are the only two companies to share the original formula that has been passed down for centuries from Avedis, the visionary of the company.

In talking with members of the Zildjian Company over the years, the culture of the company is constantly working on the grooming of the next generation of leadership to steer the company into a long healthy future.

Zildjian is up against some very aggressive unconventional techniques by other companies to wrestle market share from them. A company like

Zildjian has, for over multiple centuries, had numerous attempts from rivals attacking the company. The Zildjian Company can never be complacent of its history, and must always be ready to fend off any threats from any competition.

Derek Sharpe, owner of Super Sonic Music store in Topeka and Lawrence, recognizes that not everyone can afford the Zildjian, so he carries an extensive line of companies from the high-end price and quality of Zildjian to the lesser expensive brands.

Drummer Brandon Draper, a Music Instructor at Kansas University is also an Artist Representative for the Zildjian Company. He has been playing Zildjian Cymbals since he was a kid, and he swears by quality.

In closing, Zildjian is very confident about what it needs to do in order to stay an industry leader for centuries to come. ¶

WOODY HERMAN IN KANSAS CITY CHARLIE PARKER PERFORMS

The following Story is about a unique jazz performance at Memorial Hall in Kansas City on July 22nd, 1951 that became a major part of music history. It was the performance of the Woody Herman Orchestra with special guest Charlie Parker.

The following are excerpts from the letter I received on August 17th, 2013 from my longtime friend Al Julian. Al was an executive at Capitol Records. He handled the artist Woody Herman's relationship with the label. Woody and Al built a long-term friendship that lasted till Woody's passing on October 29th, 1987. It was through my friendship with Al that I got to meet Woody on numerous occasions.

Al asked Woody for a detailed breakdown on how the July 22nd Event came about, what happened then and what happened after. The following letter is verbatim of what Woody told Al. Al put all this information into a letter to me that I requested so that I could document this important part of jazz music history.

There is one of the few original copies of the tape of the performance in the Smithsonian National Museum of American History in Washington DC. It was donated by Jack Siefert, Woody's longtime best friend and attorney. Jack was a great guy and very loyal to Woody and to the preservation of Woody's legacy. Jack donated numerous other pieces of important memorabilia from Woody's career.

I have in my personal collection a CD copy of the original performance that I received from Al.

An interesting fact about this special July event from Chuck Haddix was that Charlie Parker went to the performance with his good friend and barber, Baxter. It was a historic moment in time – a once in a life time public collaboration performance of Woody and Charlie.

The following are excerpts from the letter from Al Julian;

“Tom, this is the recording of Bird with Woody and the band. The note booklet is very poor and there is very little information about the concert and the recording. There is also a misprint in the band members. The trombones are Urbie Green, Fred Woods and the late Jerry Dorn; saxophones are Bill Perkins, Kenny Pinson, the late Dick Hafer and Sam Staff. This was a historic concert and recording. It's the only recording that has been released of Bird Woody and the band playing together. Woody once told me how it came about.

As you know, Woody and Bird were great friends. The band and Woody had worked a tour of California and the west coast, and were on the way back to New York. Bird had recently gotten out of drug rehab and was spending time at home with his Mother. Woody knew he was there, so he called Bird and told him the band would be playing a concert at the Kansas City Arena on July 22nd, 1951. Woody invited him to sit in with the band. From the band's book, Woody let Bird call the tunes.

What also was interesting was it was the very first gig for our late friend saxophonist Dick Hafer

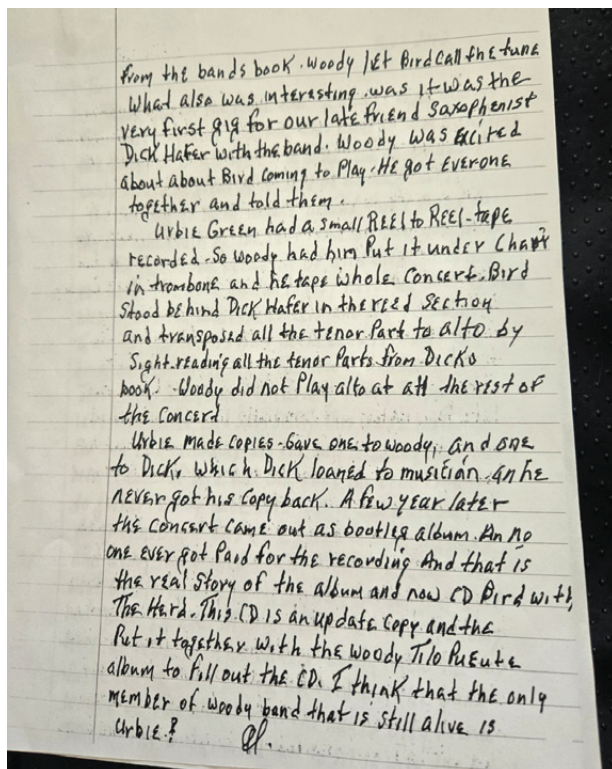
KANSAS CITY PERFORMANCE

By Tom Alexios

with the band. Woody was excited about Bird coming to play. He got everyone together and told them.”

Urbie Green had a small reel to reel tape recorder, so Woody had him put it under his chair and that's how he taped whole concert. Bird stood behind Dick Hafer in the reed section and transposed all the tenor parts to alto by sight, reading all the tenor parts from Dick's book. Woody did not play alto at all the rest of the concert.

Urbie made copies, gave one to Woody, and one to Dick, which Dick loaned to a musician. He never got his copy back. A few years later this concert came out on a bootleg album, and no one ever got paid for the recording. And that is the real story of the album and the CD Bird with the Herd. This CD is an updated copy, and I put together the Bird recording with a Tito Puente to fill out the CD. I think the only member of the Woody band who is still alive is Urbie. ||



GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN CONTINUED FROM 11

a person he was always easy to be with and highly respecter for his integrity.

Consider a remembrance in honor of your favorite Kansas City Musician. The John Booth Legacy Fund offers end-of-life care for local musicians, fine more at www.kcjazzambassadors.org

dors.org or check out this link, and thanks! (<https://kc-jazz-ambassadors.square.site/product/john-booth-legacy-fund/38?cs=true&cst=custom>) (<https://kc-jazz-ambassadors.square.site/product/john-booth-legacy-fund/38?cs=true&cst=custom>) ||



UNESCO Creative Cities Network Kansas City

Beginning in 2017, in an effort to connect preservation efforts at 18th and Vine with the University of Missouri, Kansas City's department of Urban Planning + Design, Kansas City was welcomed into the UNESCO Creative Cities Network. This made our city one of 295 member cities within 90 countries that form UCCN.

This very worthwhile effort, begun by Executive Director Anita Dixon-Brown, is a nonprofit organization with a team that includes Dr. Jacob Wagner, Kathryn Persley, Anna Marie Tutera, and Bukeka Blakemore. Formed in 2004, the UCCN promotes cooperation among cities worldwide that believe creativity is a sustainable driver of urban development. There are 7 distinct fields: crafts and folk art, design, film, gastronomy, literature, media arts, and, of course, music.

Kansas City's music has long been recognized as an international treasure. In 2022, the Kansas City UCCN was invited to present "The Voyage of the Drum" at the annual UCCN meeting in Santos, Brazil, and the program has since been presented many times and celebrated worldwide at many UCCN events.

The organization's efforts have brought "Make Music Day" to Kansas City, in conjunction with Heart of the City Neighborhood Association and KC Parks and Recreation. They facilitated efforts to bring "Not Long Ago, Not Far Away" to Union Station in conjunction with the Jewish Community Fund.

In 2023 4 stellar Kansas City musicians, Aryana Nemati, Paula Saunders-Lewis, Amber Underwood, and Angela Ward represented Kansas City and the United States in Frutillar, Chile for the annual Semanas Musicales Festival. They not only performed at the festival, they shared their stories and jammed with other wonderful musicians. This important trip highlighted gender equality and featured a widely distributed video of a song written by Angela's son, Jaylen.

Creative Cities KC is committed to building an economic development plan in the city's urban core. This plan includes a strong global component, and it connects Kansas City and the United States with countries that share similar artistic attributes.

Kansas City is blessed with a great musical heritage, music venues, and festivals. Music is an industry and economic activity lacks a coherent system of support in our city, and UCCN KC feels that the city's musical assets need to be coordinated and engaged in a city-wide economic development strategy. The organization's worldwide efforts have placed them at the forefront of creating this important economic development strategy and they deserve our help.

The KC Jazz Ambassadors invite you to support and to become a partner with UNNC KC by contacting Bukeka Blakemore at bukekablakemore@gmail.com



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JAZZ JOURNALISTS ASSOCIATION

Kansas City Boasts at Least Two Jazz Heroes Gerald Dunn, 2021 & Mark Edelman, 2024

Gerald Dunn

In 2021 all around the world artists and musicians were coming up with creative ways to respond to the unthinkable ramifications of the global pandemic. Someone said jazz musicians are especially suited to a pandemic because they are expected make something out of nothing, and they

often live life keeping a positive attitude in the face of daunting adversity.

Our friend and colleague, Gerald Dunn, was honored by the Jazz Journalist's Association in the spring of 2021 and nominated as a 2021 Jazz Hero. The Jazz Journalist's Association Jazz He-

roes Awards were especially meaningful that dark spring, and Dunn was said to often bring musicians into his home and cook them a square meal. Perhaps that is why Gerald can now add “restauranteur” to his long list of accomplishments.

Gerald Dunn set aside the spotlight to serve Kansas City’s jazz scene as a steadfast presence at 18th and Vine. He is known for honoring those whose days were coming to an end, and for welcoming the Monday night youngsters, wanting so badly to be accepted by those who came before them. All the while, for over 20 years now, Gerald Dunn hosts the party that never ends, and picks up his horn from time to time to raise the bar a bit.

We all know Gerald Dunn is the real deal. He carries on a proud musical lineage. He made a sensational 2 saxophone recording entitled Soliloquy with Matt Otto. He studied with alto saxophonist Gary Foster while still at UMKC. Foster had attended KU with trumpeter Carmell Jones in the 1950s and became the first call saxophonist in LA for most of his long career.

Gerald Dunn was awarded his 2021 Jazz Journalists Jazz Heroes award behind closed doors in a private ceremony at the American Jazz Museum in 2021.

Mark Edelman

Mark Edelman founded Theater League, a not-for-profit community-based performing arts organization, to present the best of Broadway musicals on tour to Kansas City audiences and beyond. His endeavor became so successful that Edelman, who had recorded some self-described “Jewish themed parody rock songs” for fun, didn’t get to professionally practice his specialties. Rather, he’s used Theater League as a platform from which to affect cultural preservation, as well as to ignite broad changes in Kansas City.

Mark produced and directed “12th Street Jump;” a syndicated public radio “jazz, blues and comedy jam.” Launched by KCUR-FM, KC’s NPR affiliate, the show grew to be heard weekly

on public radio stations nationwide, recorded live with guests such as Joe Sample, Bob James, and Christian McBride for audiences attending for free at the Mutual Musicians Foundation.

And Edelman has served as President of the Kansas City Jazz Ambassadors, for which he established new programs: “Gig Grants,” handed out to hundreds of out-of-work musicians during the pandemic; “Jazz Futures,” monthly showcases for area college jazz studies students; and the “JAM Awards” honoring the city’s favorite local jazz musicians, drawing larger crowds each year. As current KCJA president, I assure you these projects continue, with impact.

Mark Edelman and his family have done so much for entertainment in Kansas City and with Broadway tours across the U.S. and Canada that sometimes he seems intimidating. His mind works fast, and he does not suffer fools. However, once he decides to help someone or create something that will bring the community together, he does it. Once the good deed is done, he very seldom sticks around to be thanked for his benevolence.

Mark Edelman now resides close to his grandson in Arlington, VA. He was awarded his 2024 Jazz Journalists Jazz Heroes award at Upcycle Piano Craft on September 3rd, 2024. The award was received by long-time Theater League board member, Jack Holland.

Read the complete list of the 2021 and 2024 Jazz Journalist’s Association’s Jazz Heroes here:

GERALD DUNN

<https://www.jjazwards.org/2021-jazz-heroes/>

MARK EDELMAN

<https://jjazzwards.org/>



How I Came to Love Jazz

My mom and dad met
when she was 13, he, 16.
They lived in Brooklyn.
She was friends with his sister, Nell
and he became friends with
her brother, Jack.
Dad played the violin,
had to go past Sara Vaughn
and her gang on his way
to lessons, and they chased
him 'cause he played the violin.
So he quit.
Uncle Jack introduced
dad to bebop
It was still new then.
and denounced as devil music:
Coltrane, Bird, Monk.
He couldn't understand it all
but couldn't stop listening.
My mother was fair
with long almost black hair.

Dad and friends used to
call her snowy with blowy.
Back in those days,
my dark brown skinned dad
couldn't pass the brown
paper bag rule.
But mother did care about that,
she took dance lessons from
Lena Horne, just a young girl in
the neighborhood making a living.
Aunt Nell took classes from
Katherine Dunham.
Mom's friend dated Harry Belafonte,
but she married someone else.
Dad took my mother to Coney Island
and jazz clubs where she drank only milk
and he taught her about jazz
and how to smoke cigarettes.

(previously published in "How I Came to Love Jazz", Helicon Nine Editions, 2018)

For Toni and Les

Current Jazz Ambassadors Members

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Kansas City Jazz Ambassadors 2024 JAM Jazz Awards VOTE NOW!

The JAM Awards honors your favorite Kansas City jazz musicians. Jazz lovers are invited to vote for their favorite local jazz musicians in a variety of a categories. This is a people's choice award, so it's a chance to honor your personal favorites! This is something fun to vote for! Vote now! Winners will be announced at the Jazz Ambassadors Annual Meeting/Party on December 12th.

Vote for your favorites today:

www.kcjazzambassadors.org/jamjazzawards

