



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**KENNEDY CENTER  
and  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
TOURING 2004 JAZZ AMBASSADORS  
CELEBRATE VOCAL JAZZ**

**Cynthia Scott and the JAS Trio  
The Jay Klum/Bill Heid Quartet  
The Neighborliness Jazz Quartet  
The Lynk/Anderson Quartet  
Roseanna Vitro and Her Trio  
Kelley Johnson Quartet  
Deborah Davis and a Few Good Men  
The Chicago Jazz Quartet**

**Department of State Sponsored Tours include Europe, Asia, Africa, Latin America**

**Ensembles to Perform Free Kennedy Center Millennium Stage Concerts**

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and the United States Department of State, now engaged in the seventh year of their cooperative "Jazz Ambassadors" project, announce the 2004 Millennium Stage concerts and tours of eight exemplary jazz ensembles. These 2004 Jazz Ambassadors, all selected through highly competitive auditions, will tour in countries across Asia, Africa, Near East, Central Europe, and Latin America with programs celebrating vocal jazz and its importance to the music. Seven of the groups — Cynthia Scott and the JAS Trio, the Jay Klum/Bill Heid Quartet, the Neighborliness Jazz Quartet, the Lynk/Anderson Quartet, Roseanna Vitro and her Trio, Kelley Johnson Quartet, and the Chicago Jazz Quartet — open their tours with a performance on the Kennedy Center Millennium Stage. Upon its return to the United States, the quartet Deborah Davis and a Few Good Men will conclude its tour abroad with a Millennium Stage performance.

<b>Millennium Stage Event</b>	<b>Jazz Ambassador Group</b>	<b>Foreign Tour</b>
Weds., Feb. 18, 6 p.m.	Cynthia Scott and the JAS Trio	Cameroon, Gabon, Benin, Togo, Lagos Guinea
Tues., Feb. 24, 6 p.m.	The Jay Klum/Bill Heid Quartet	South Africa, Mozambique, Malawi, Mauritius, Comoros
Tues., Mar. 9, 6 p.m.	Lynk Anderson Quartet	Cote d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Morocco, Mauritania, Niger, Tunisia
Thurs., May 20, 6 p.m.	The Neighborliness Jazz Quartet	South Korea, Russia, Cambodia, Mexico
Tues., June 8, 6 p.m.	The Kelley Johnson Quartet	Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Slovenia, Croatia
Tues., Aug. 10, 6 p.m.	The Chicago Jazz Quartet	Vietnam, Thailand, Indonesia, Philippines, Pakistan, Bangladesh
Tues., Aug. 17, 6 p.m.	Roseanna Vitro and Her Trio	Serbia and Montenegro, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Turkey, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Albania
Fri., Sep. 17, 6 p.m.	Deborah Davis and A Few Good Men	Suriname, Guyana, Venezuela, Paraguay, Argentina, Brazil, Mexico

### **Jazz Ambassadors Background**

The Kennedy Center plans and supervises the Jazz Ambassador audition process, funded by a grant from the Department of State. Each selected group is brought to the Center at the beginning of its tour to give a free performance on the Millennium Stage. These performances, which become part of the daily 6 p.m. Millennium Stage schedule, are also broadcast worldwide on the Internet. The Department of State provides the quartets with overseas traveling expenses and a modest honorarium for each Jazz Ambassador. The tours, which usually last four to six weeks, are usually designated for countries that are not frequently visited by American musicians. In addition to public concerts, the visiting Jazz Ambassadors will conduct master classes and lecture-recitals for local musicians.

### **The Kennedy Center**

The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, under the leadership of Kenneth M. Duberstein and Alma Johnson Powell, interim co-chairpersons, and Michael M. Kaiser, president, is the nation's performing arts center and a Presidential Memorial. The Center's programs reflect the institution's commitment to the recognition and celebration of the rich heritage of the American people through the presentation of the finest and most diverse performing arts offerings from the United States and throughout the world. To nurture the continued vitality of the arts in America, the Center's Education Department, under the direction of Derek E. Gordon, senior vice president, holds as its mission the provision of opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds to learn about and to experience the performing arts. For more information about the Kennedy Center and its programs, please visit its web site: <http://kennedy-center.org>. Jazz Ambassador applications and information may be obtained from: <http://kennedy-center.org/ambassadors>.

### **U.S. Department of State**

The U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), under the leadership of Assistant Secretary of State Patricia S. Harrison, fosters mutual understanding between the United States and other countries through international educational and training programs. The bureau presents the diversity of United States history, society, art and culture to overseas audiences, and promotes personal and professional collaborations between private citizens and organizations in the United States and abroad. The Jazz Ambassadors tours are among more than 30,000 annual exchanges managed by the bureau. Other ECA exchange programs include the Fulbright Program, the International Visitor Program, Cultural Programs, and CultureConnect. For further information, visit the Bureau's web site: <http://exchanges.state.gov/education>.

### **Kennedy Center Millennium Stage Concerts Live Internet Broadcasts**

The Kennedy Center/Department of State Jazz Ambassadors' concerts will be broadcast live on the Internet, as are all concerts on the Kennedy Center Millennium Stage. These daily 6 p.m. broadcasts are available for viewing by anyone with Internet access. In addition, past Millennium Stage performances are stored in the archives of the Website. Both live and archived performances are available at <http://www.kennedy-center.org>.

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[www.kennedy-center.org](http://www.kennedy-center.org)

**Cynthia Scott and the JAS Trio, Wednesday, February 18, 6 p.m., Millennium Stage**

**Cynthia Scott**, vocalist, began singing in her father's church in El Dorado, Arkansas. She received both her B.A. and M.A. in music from the Manhattan School of Music. Her professional career began as one of the Ray Charles Raelettes, and she has also performed with Lionel Hampton, Cab Calloway, Joe Williams, Oscar Peterson, the Count Basie Orchestra, Lou Donaldson, Wynton Marsalis, and Harry Connick, Jr. Her latest CD, entitled *Boom Boom*, was recorded live in Japan with the Norman Simmons Trio with the Norman Simmons Trio. For ten years, Scott sang with a big band at New York's prestigious Supper Club, and she has performed throughout Europe, Asia, South America, and Canada. She received a 2002 Grammy Award nomination for her release *A La Carte*, and was a finalist in the 1998 International Thelonius Monk Jazz Vocal Competition. <http://www.cynthiascott.com>

**Steve Ash**, pianist, a native of Pittsburgh, received his B.A. in jazz piano from the Indiana University School of Music. For over twenty years, he has lived and performed in New York City, including steady engagements at the Rainbow Room and Windows on the World. He has played with many established jazz musicians, such as Frank Wess, Dave Liebman, Rufus Reid, Eddie Harris, Chris Connor, Annie Ross, Mel Lewis, Doc Cheatham, Ruby Braff, Vernell Fournier, Lewis Nash, and Peter Washington. He has toured and recorded with Warren Vache's All Stars. Recordings include Warren Vache's *Swingtime, Still Comin' On Up* (Metropolitan BoperaHouse), and *The Evening Sound* with the Neal Miner Sextet.

**Alvin R. Atkinson, Jr.**, drummer, became a student of the drum at age eight and has been playing ever since. Highlights include: a performance at the White House for President George W. Bush in 2002, house drummer for the 2002-2003 season of the *Emeril Live* television show on the Food Network, the Kennedy Center's 2002-2003 *Harlem* national tour, performances with the Wycliffe Gordon Quartet at Lincoln Center, and a film score entitled *A Tale of Two Pizzas* with Freddie Cole. In addition to touring and performing with his own group, he appeared with Tom Browne on the *Mo' Jamaica Funk* tour, 1996-2001, and with Grammy-nominated Nnenna Freelon on her 2001 *Soul Call* tour. He created sound effects for the 2002 Kennedy Center production *The Red Badge of Courage*. Atkinson has been featured in concert with Freddy redd, Benny Green, Ellis Marsalis, Jimmy Heath, Barry Harris, Roy Hargrove, Donald Brown, Steve Wilson, Fred Wesley, Mark Elf, Houston Person, Curtis Fuller, Branford Marsalis, Ray Codrington, Harold Ousley, Charlie Byrd, Oscar Brown, Jr., Ernie Andrews, and Vanessa Rubin.

**Joseph Lepore**, bassist, was born in New York in 1967 and, after moving to Europe with his family, began his formal music training at age twelve in Italy. At fifteen he started playing the double bass and in 1992 graduated with high honors from the Conservatory of Salerno. Though he attended a workshop with Italian bass player Furio Di Castri in 1996, he is mostly self-taught. In 1997, the jazz quartet in which he played won first prize for best musical group in the Europ' Jazz Contest in Brussels. He has played in numerous jazz festivals, including the Gexto Jazz Festival in Spain, the Liegi festival in Belgium, and the Umbria Jazz Festival in Italy. In 1999, Lepore returned to New York and since then has been a member of Trio 65, the house band at the Rainbow Room. He has performed with David Liebman, Steve Grossman, Tony Scott, Elliot Zigmund, Peter Bernstein, Sam Yahel, Jimmy Lovelace, Harry Whitaker, Ronnie Matthews, Eric Lewis, Frank Hewitt, and many others. He has also appeared on recordings with Rosario Giuliani, Claudio Colasazza, Sergio Esposito, Nicola Mingo, and Claire Gobin. Lepore played the jazz bassist in the film *The Talented Mr. Ripley*.

## **The Jay Klum/Bill Heid Quartet, Tuesday, February 24, 6 p.m., Millennium Stage**

**Jay Klum**, vocalist and pianist, performed from a young age in church and later with local jazz and Latin bands while studying music at Eastern Michigan University in Ypsilanti, Michigan. After completing her studies, she moved to L.A. where she began making a name for herself at jazz venues that included Concerts By the Sea, The Blue Room, and the Candy Store. Klum toured Nigeria, Haiti, and Japan before performing full time in top jazz clubs in Japan for eight years. In 1991, Klum moved to New York City and her career continued to excel with engagements at Fat Tuesdays, the Village Gate, Sugar Hill, Green Avenue Grill, Tatou, Sweetwaters, and others. She was a finalist in the 1992 John Coltrane Competition and a featured vocalist on saxophonist Benny Russell's European tour. Recordings include the soundtrack for the film *In the Soup* and drummer Leon Parker's *Above and Below*. With husband and saxophonist Ted Klum, she formed Alltribe Music and Alltribe Records LLC under which her 2002 release *Home Cookin'* appears.

**Bill Heid**, vocalist and keyboardist, has performed throughout the U.S., Canada, and Europe with stays in Japan and Singapore. From 1965 to the mid-70s he played the Hammond B-3 organ in clubs with his own groups and artists such as Jimmy Ponder, Bruce Foreman, Grant Green, Sonny Stitt, David "Fathead" Newman, Grachan Monchur III, Eddie Gladden, and Mickey Roker. While based in Chicago from 1975 to 1984, he fronted his own groups and toured with blues artists Son Seals, Jimmy Witherspoon, John Lee Hooker, and Fenton Robinson, and played on several Alligator Records with Robinson, Ko Ko Taylor, and Roy Buchanan. Working and living in Detroit from 1984 until 1999, Heid appeared on numerous records with Detroit blues legends Johnnie Bassett, Joe Weaver, and Alberta Adams. A 2002 Jazz Ambassador, his group toured Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Sri Lanka. Recordings as a leader include *This is My Rifle* (Muse/Westside), *Bop Rascal* (Savant), *Wet Streets* (Savant), *Dark Secrets* (Savant) and many others.

**Patrick O'Leary**, bassist, studied piano and bass at Potsdam State University's Crane School of Music where he received his B.A. in music. Originally from Buffalo and now living in New York City, he has toured the U.S., Canada, Europe, South America, Australia, and Japan with the Lionel Hampton Orchestra, the Illinois Jacquet Orchestra, the Hal Garper Trio, and Teri Thornton. Also with Hampton, he recorded the Grammy-nominated *Sentimental Journey* (Atlantic). O'Leary has recorded with J.R. Monterose, Mundell Lowe, Mel Lewis, Bucky Pizzarelli, Jerry Bergozi, and Scott Robinson. Other artists with whom O'Leary has played include Diana Krall, James Moody, Junior Cook, Lee Konitz, Joe Lovano, Barry Harris, Junior Mance, Joe Williams, and Marlena Shaw. He regularly appears at The Blue Note, The Village Vanguard, Bradley's, Fat Tuesdays, The Iridium, and has recently performed at the Kennedy Center, Lincoln Center, and Carnegie Hall. As a 2001 Jazz Ambassador, he toured West Africa, and in 2002 toured Southeast Asia and South America.

**Michael D. Petrosino**, drummer, received the Ralph Faulk Music Scholarship from Bowling Green State University in Ohio. He is also a recipient of the Outstanding Performance Award at the Elmhurst Jazz Festival and the Tri C Jazz Festival. Petrosino has performed with Slide Hampton, Gladys Knight, Ron Afif, Bruce Barth, Ralph Lallama, Steve Allen, Gerri Allen, Ben Vereen, Lou Rawls, Jeannie Bryson, Laverne Butler, Chris Potter, Rick Margitza, Dena Derose, The Fifth Dimension, The Temptations, the Toledo Jazz Orchestra, the Bill Mobley Big Band, and the George Andre Brazilian Big Band. Petrosino toured Vietnam, Malaysia, and Indonesia with the Bill Heid Trio as a 2002 Jazz Ambassador.

### **The Lynk/Anderson Quartet, Tuesday, March 9, 6 p.m., Millennium Stage**

**Monica Lynk**, jazz vocalist, was awarded a full scholarship to the Berklee College of Music (1993-1997). She has appeared at the Newport Jazz Festival, the Blue Note in Japan and New York, Sculler's Jazz Club and Regatta Bar in Boston, a Tribute to Bille Holiday and Nancy Wilson, and *Basic Black: a Tribute to Duke Ellington* on PBS. In 1999 she was nominated Best Jazz Vocalist at the Boston Music Awards and dubbed "Star in the Making" by the *Boston Herald*. Featured vocalist in Kendrick Oliver's New Life Jazz Orchestra, Lynk recently recorded their debut album with famed bassist Christian McBride. She can also be heard on Walter Beasley's *Private Time* (Mercury) and *Summa Cum Jazz, Best of Berklee* (1997). Lynk has performed with Roy Hargrove, Nicholas Payton, Kevin Mahogany, Oleta Adams, André Crouch, Teodross Avery, CeCe Winans, and Will Downing.

**Jason Anderson**, saxophonist, received a full scholarship the Berklee College of Music (1993-1997). He has studied and performed with Illinois Jacquet, Buddy Morrow, Bill Pierce, Andy McGhee, LeRoy Vinegar, and Thara Memory. Musicians with whom Anderson has also performed include Roy Hargrove, Nicholas Payton, Christian McBride, and Jonathan Butler. He has toured, playing tenor and soprano saxophone, clarinet, and flute, with the Illinois Jacquet Orchestra, the Tommy Dorsey Orchestra, and the New Life Jazz Orchestra. Anderson can be heard on *Welcome to New Life* (2002).

**Geoffrey Clapp**, drummer, has performed with many renowned musicians, including Ellis Marsalis, Terence Blanchard, Frank Morgan, Wynton Marsalis, Delfeayo Marsalis, Eric Reed, Charlie Hunter, Wycliff Gordon, Theresa Anderson, Dina DeroseJeanie Bryson, the Dirty Dozen Brass Band, Charles Owens, E.J. Strickland, as well as others. Clapp can be heard on the recordings: *Skwerm's Groove* with David Ellis (2002); *Newlafaya* with Louque (2001); *Kevin Blanq Trio* (2000); *Friendship Pagoda*, featuring Nicholas Payton, with Martin Krusche (1999); *Cobalt Blue* with Glenn Patscha (1998); *Look at Me Now* with Kay Dorian (1998); *The Color of Courage* with Terence Blanchard (1998); *David Ellington Trio* (1997); *Sessions from the Hood* with Miles Ozaka (1994); *Ellis Marsalis Trio with the Chicago Symphony* (1994); *Vibes!* with Theresa Anderson (1993), *Comment* with David Morgan (1992); and many more.

**Jared Gold**, organist and pianist, earned his B.A. in jazz performance from William Paterson University in Wayne, New Jersey. He received the 1998 Governor's Award for Jazz Performance in New Jersey. In addition to his own trio, Gold has performed with Bill Goodwin, Ralph Bowen, Benny Golson, Benny Powell, John Swana, Ralph Peterson, the Kendrick Oliver Big Band, Bob Mintzer, John Snyder, Mike Karn, Joe Strasser, and John Webber. Venues at which he has appeared include Steinway Hall, Detour, Symphony Space, Cleopatra's Needle, and Kavehaz in New York; Regatta Bar in Boston; Ortlieb's Jazz House and Chris's in Pennsylvania; NJPAC and Trumpets in New Jersey; and The Bird Paradise in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Gold can be heard on *Enjoy the Moment* (PKO Records) and *Going Somewhere* (Midlantic Records).

### **The Neighborliness Jazz Quartet, Thurs., May 20, 6 p.m., Millennium Stage**

**Curtis Blaine Fye**, bassist, earned his Bachelor of Music in jazz studies from Virginia Commonwealth University. He was a 2002 Outstanding Soloist at the Notre Dame Jazz Festival. Fye has performed with the Devil's Workshop Band and Boots of Leather; performed, toured, and recorded with the quartet Regan led by guitarist Regan Nunnaly; and performed and recorded with the group Tanakh. Since 2001, he has been a member of Neighborliness. Fye can be heard on *It Could Happen to You* (2002), the *Richmond Memories* soundtrack (2001), and *All's Well That Swings Well* (Groove Sophisticate, 1999).

**Daniel Clarke**, pianist and vocalist, received a Merit Scholarship to attend the Berklee College of Music summer program before earning his B.A. in jazz studies from Virginia Commonwealth University, where he also received a Merit Scholarship. He has performed and recorded with the Modern Groove Syndicate and the Devil's Workshop Big Band, as well as Kris Calloway, George Turman, John D'earth, Among Friends, and Neighborliness. Clarke can also be heard on *Danny C's Musical Review* (Courthouse Records, 2000), recorded live at the Glen Allen Cultural Arts Center.

**Robby Sinclair**, drummer and arranger, earned his B.A. in music from Virginia Commonwealth University where he received the 2002 VCU Outstanding Instrumentalist Award. He also received three Outstanding Performer Awards at the 2002 Notre Dame Jazz Festival. Sinclair appeared at the Bakersfield Jazz festival, the Roanoke Jazz and Blues Festival, Jazz in the Park (Staunton, Virginia), and Blues Alley in Washington, D.C. He can be heard on the recordings *Idle Hands* (Grantham Dispatch Records, 2002), *It Could Happen to You* (2002) on which his original composition "Splat 9" appears, *Among Friends* 2001 and 2002 (Fieldcrest Music), and *Danny C's Musical Review*. Upcoming releases include *Smoke and Mirrors* (Cosmology Productions) and a CD with Regan Nunnaly on Olive records.

**John Winn**, jazz vocalist, saxophonist, and clarinetist, received his B.A. and M.A. in music from Virginia Commonwealth University. He has performed with the Great American Music Ensemble, the Colorado Symphony Orchestra Pops, and the Richmond Symphony Orchestra, in addition to his own group, the John Winntet. Festival performances include the Sacramento Jazz Festival, Mammoth Lakes Jazz Festival, Wyoming Jazz Festival, and Live at Loon Lake. Winn can be heard on the recordings *Hello Cleveland* and *Flood Zone* (Bob Records, 2000); *Beyond Expectations* film soundtrack (1997); *The Write Time* (Sherlock Music, 1996); *Forever Equals One Day* (Bob Records, 1995).

### **The Kelley Johnson Quartet, Tues., June 8, 6 p.m., Millennium Stage**

**Kelley Johnson**, vocalist, won first place in the 2002 International Jazzconnect Vocal Jazz Competition with her version of "Tea for Two," from her recently completed album *Music is the Magic* (2003). *Music is the Magic* features musicians Brian Lynch, John Hansen, Geoffrey Keezer, Essiet Essiet, Jon Wikan and Steve Wilson and arrangements written largely by Kelley. The CD *Make Someone Happy* (Chartmaker Records, 1998) was produced by and features pianist Fred Hersch, among others. Johnson studied jazz music at the Wisconsin Conservatory of Music in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. While in Seattle on vacation in the late 1980s, she was hired to work with Seattle legends Buddy Catlett and Clarence Acox and the Roadside Attraction Big Band, and made the city her home. In 1988, jazz vocal legend Mark Murphy became Johnson's mentor and friend, and later recommended her first album to the jazz world. Johnson has performed at Birdland in New York, Dimitriou's Jazz Alley and New Orleans in Seattle, Pops for Champagne in Chicago, Brasserie in Portland, Jazz Estate in Milwaukee, and the China Hotel in Guangzhou, China. Festival performances include the Seattle Jazz Festival, Jazz Port Townsend Festival, Bellevue Jazz festival, Bumbershoot Festival in Seattle, and the Victoria International Jazz Festival in British Columbia. In 1997, she created an independent record label, Sapphire Records. She has been awarded "Best Northwest Jazz Vocalist" by Earshot Jazz and the Northwest jazz community. She is currently an instructor at both Cornish College of the Arts and Musicworks Northwest.

**Nathan Peck**, bassist, was a mainstay in the Pittsburgh music scene from 1995 to 2002, performing with such musicians as Joe Harris, Roger Humphries, and Jimmy Ponder. In addition to working as a sideman, Peck led his own ensembles, such as Jazz Satellite who released its debut recording *Moon Shine* in 2001. In 2002, Peck moved to New York City where he continues to work as a fulltime musician and leads two groups, the Nathan Peck Trio and Mass Distraction. He has performed with such artists as Maynard Ferguson, Wynton Marsalis, Paquito D'Rivera, David Lahm, Maureen Budway, Liz Berlin, Etta Cox, and others. Since 1992, he has performed and recorded with his family jazz group, the Skip Peck Trio, made up of his father Skip Peck, his mother Donna, and his brother Alex. Peck has appeared on the recordings *Trance Formation* (2004), *A-List* (2003), *New Fire* (2003), *Lost in a Summer Night* (2002), *Life Goes On* (2002), and more.

**John Hansen**, pianist, has performed with the Woody Herman Orchestra, Bud Shank, Bobby Shew, Pete Christlieb, Ernestine Anderson, the Seattle Symphony Orchestra, Bob Moses, Ernie Andrews, Jay Thomas, Rick Margitza, Monica Mancini, Jon Fedchock, and more. Club engagements include Birdland in New York; Pops for Champagne in Chicago; The Cotton Club and The Glass Slipper in Vancouver, British Columbia; Dimitriou's Jazz Alley and Tula's in Seattle; and Jazz de Opus in Portland, Oregon. He has performed at numerous jazz festivals, including Les Rendez-Vous de l'Erdre in Nantes, France; the Victoria International Jazz Festival on Vancouver Island and the DuMaurier International Jazz Festival in Vancouver, British Columbia; the Port Townsend Jazz festival in Washington; and the B.C. Sandpoint Idaho Music Festival. Concerts include a jazz trombone series with Julian Priester in Berkeley, California and the 10+1 Tour with Juhan Lee in Seoul, South Korea. Hansen can be heard on *Live at Tula's, Vol. II* with Jay Thomas (McVouty Records, 2001), *The Forgotten* with Richard Cole (Origin Records, 2001), *Cause and Effect* with Chuck Bergeron (Double Time Records, 2001), and many other recordings.

**Jon Wikan**, drummer currently based in New York, has accompanied a cross-section of leaders, ranging from singers Ernestine Anderson, Mark Murphy and Freddy Cole to horn players such as Bud Shank, Ingrid Jensen, and Pete Cristlieb. Born in Petersburg, Alaska, Wikan was transplanted to Seattle Washington at age 5. He was turned on to the drums in high school where he began playing in the school jazz band. From 1988-95 Wikan attended Central Washington University, taking a year off to tour with the Mills Brothers and Ellington alumni Herb Jefferies. He was soon called to work with vocalist Ernestine Anderson. During his travels he studied with drum masters such as Chico Hamilton, Carl Allen, and Jeff Hamilton. In 1996 Wikan immersed himself in the Seattle jazz scene and was taken under the wings of multi-horn man Jay Thomas, Bill Ramsay, and composer James Knapp. As a sideman in the northwest area, he backed artists including Pat Labarbra, Herb Ellis, John Fedchock, Rick Margitza, Buddy Collette, Roswell Rudd, Mark Murphy, Kurt Elling, Bobby Shew, Brad Turner, Jessica Williams and Dan Faehnle. Wikans' recent move to New York City immediately landed him a record date with pianist Geoff Keezer, a tour of Japan with Mark Murphy and a week at the Blue Note with the New York Voices. He has also appeared at the Detroit Jazz Festival, the Mary Lou Williams Jazz Festival, the Savannah Jazz Festival, and a live CBC radio concert in Montreal. Other artists with whom he has played include Karrin Allyson, Sam Yahel, Ron Affif, Seamus Blake, Marcus Strickland, Jay Collins, David Budway, Mark Elf, David Berkman, Jeffery Smith, Antonia Bennett, and Aaron Parks. Wikan is an active clinician/ teacher, teaching privately at The New School University. In 2001, he participated in the BMI jazz composer's workshop, working with composers Jim McNeely and Mike Abene. His new band, Project O, performed at the 2002 Earshot International Jazz Festival, and recently released their new record, *Now As Then* (Justin-Time, 2003).

## **The Chicago Jazz Quartet, Tues., Aug. 10, 6 p.m., Millennium Stage**

**Benjamin Lewis**, pianist, has played in clubs and concerts around the U.S., from New York to Los Angeles. A 1999 Jazz Ambassador who toured West Africa with the LBS Trio, Lewis has also performed with the Orchestra of the Americas at the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta and the American Orient Express “Jazz ‘n’ Blues” train tour. Artists and ensembles with whom he has performed include Steve Cole, Aretha Franklin, Vinnie Calieuta, Grazyna Auguscik, the Tito Carillo Quartet, the Bacchus Latin Jazz Trio, Jazzambo, Samba Samba 2000, the Jackie Allen Duo, the Alison Ruble Quartet, and Kimotion Ensemble. Lewis can be heard on the recordings *The Men in My Life* (Jackie Allen, 2002); *Mozaic* (Matt Geraghty, 2002); *Mirage* (Marc O’Conner, 2001); *Here and Now, There and Before* (Neal Alger, 2001); *The Whale and the Elephant* (Kari Nelson, 2000); and many others.

**Matt Lewis**, vocalist and trumpeter, has performed with major artists including Bob Mintzer, Vinnie Calieuta, Byron Stripling, Marlena Shaw, and Nancy Wilson. He has appeared with the Stitely Orchestra, the Vintage Swing Orchestra, the Chuchito Valdez Afro-Cuban Ensemble, Swing Shift, the Georgia Frances Orchestra, and Jazzambo. Lewis toured India, Sri Lanka, and West Africa as a 1998 and 1999 Jazz Ambassador. He performed at the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta, as clubs and concerts throughout the U.S. In addition to performing and recording for Chicago-based theater companies, Lewis has been the resident artists at the Ravinia Festival of Music since 2001. he can be heard on the recordings *Flower Thieves* (Midnight Circus, 2002); *Pictures* with Laura Dougherty (Waterdog Music, 2002); *Kimotion Ensemble Tracking* with Vinnie Calieuta (Omik Music, 2001); *Lewis Brothers Group: Live and in Concert at WPC* (Lewis Bros. Music, 1998); *Laksar Reese Quintet featuring Matt Lewis* (Birdland Productions, 1998).

**Lorin Cohen**, bassist and Chicago native, has played with Monty Alexander, Johnny Griffin, Von Freeman, Danilo Perez, Dave Kikoski, Bob Sheppard, Joe LaBarbara, Chuchito Valdes, and Ed Shaughnessey. In December of 2002, Cohen toured Italy with William Russo’s Chicago Jazz Orchestra and master clarinetist Buddy DeFranco. He continues to tour with Ryan Cohen’s Quintet. As a member of trumpeter Orbert Davis’ group, Cohen performed at the Chicago Jazz Festival and debuted a jazz concerto with Davis and the Chicago Sinfionetta at Chicago’s Symphony Center in the fall of 2003. In April of 2000, Cohen participated in Betty Carter’s *Jazz Ahead* at the Kennedy Center where he worked with Terence Blanchard, John Pattitucci, George Cables, Carmen Lundy, and Nathan Davis. In June of 2000 he attended the Ravinia Festival’s Steans Institute where he studied and performed with David Baker, Rufus Reid, and James Moody. A 1995 graduate of Northwestern University, he has also studied at the Manhattan School of Music. In 1998 he was named a Blue Note Scholar at the Skidmore Jazz Workshop. As a jazz educator, Cohen lectures and performs as a member of Urban Gateways and Musicalive music education programs in Chicago area schools.

**Michael Raynor**, drummer, is based in Chicago and has worked with legendary saxophonist Von Freeman for 14 years, appearing on his latest release *The Improvisor*. He has toured extensively with vocalist Kurt Elling and plays on two of his Grammy nominated recordings for Blue Note Records. Other artists with whom Raynor has performed include Freddie Hubbard, Eric Alexander, Ira Sullivan, Steve Coleman, Sam Rivers, Bob Sheppard, Chico Freeman, and Jon Hendricks. He has also performed at international festivals in Holland, Switzerland, France, Italy, Germany, the Czech republic, Ireland, Denmark, Norway, Austria, Jamaica, Canada, and the U.S. Raynor has served as adjunct faculty at Roosevelt University.

## **Roseanna Vitro and Her Trio, Tues., Aug. 17, 6 p.m., Millennium Stage**

**Roseanna Vitro**, vocalist, is due to release her new recording, *Tropical Postcards*, with pianist Kenny Werner (A-Records/Challenge, January 2004). She performed with Benny Golson and Don Braden at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in May 2003. She appeared at the November 2002 Jazz Yatra Festival in Bombay, India with new and eclectic ensemble, *From Bebop To Bombay*, fusing jazz and classical Indian music. Last Christmas, Vitro taped a television special with the Maribor Philharmonic Orchestra before concert audiences in Maribor and Ljubljana, Slovenia. She performed at the AngraJazz Azores Festival on the Portugese Island of Terceira; with Jon Hendricks at New Jersey City University, where she is the Director of the Vocal Jazz Department; and the Davidoff International Vocal Jazz Festival in Capetown, South Africa. On her eighth recording, *Conviction, Thoughts of Bill Evans*, Vitro worked with Evans' own favorite bass player, Eddie Gomez. Her recording *Passion Dance* (Telarc Jazz) was critically acclaimed by *Jazz Times*. *Catchin' Some Rays*, a tribute to Ray Charles, received attention from *Downbeat*, *Jazziz*, and CNN. In June of 1998, Vitro was inducted into the Arkansas Jazz Hall of Fame. In 1978, after moving to New York, she sat in with vibes giant, Lionel Hampton who immediately took her out on the road. She has appeared at the Village Vanguard, Town Hall, The Blue Note, Fat Tuesday's, Birdland and The Five Spot in New York; the Women in Jazz Festival at The Kennedy Center; The IAJE and Jazz Times Conventions; Frank Foster's 70th Birthday Concert for NPR and the IAJE; The Newark Jazz Festival; the Santa Barbara Jazz Festival, the Telluride Jazz Festival recorded live for NPR; BET on Jazz; NPR's "Piano Jazz" with Marian McPartland; and much more. In addition to her third year as Director of the Jazz Vocal Program at New Jersey City University, she is a resident faculty member at SUNY Purchase and the New Jersey Performing Arts Center.

**Joe Elefante**, pianist, saxophonist, vocalist, and arranger, began playing piano at age six and saxophone at age 9. After studying with Andy Fusco and Walt Weiskopf, he began playing professionally at sixteen. He attended New York University before transferring to New Jersey City University. At 19 he was musical director for the production of *Me and My Girl* at the Williams Center for Arts in Rutherford, New Jersey. He composed and recorded the musical *A Paris Affair* and continued to write and compose his own jazz and pop songs. Vocalist Jon Hendricks performed his big band arrangement of "New Rhumba," and vocalist Rosanna Vitro commissioned two orchestral arrangements for her concert in Slovenia. In 2001, Elefante attended Betty Carter's *Jazz Ahead* at the Kennedy Center and the BMI Jazz Composers Workshop in New York. His latest project, the Joe Elefante Big Band released *Vanity Fair* (2002, JEBB Music), a collection of ten of Elefante's original compositions.

**Tim Horner**, drummer, has toured extensively through Europe, Asia, and North and South America. His father, a drummer and musical director at their church, and mother, organist and pianist, were his biggest influences while growing up in Roanoke, Virginia. Although he studied the violin, viola, and drums throughout his youth, he concentrated on drumming when he entered Berklee College of Music in 1974. Since moving to New York in 1980, he has worked and recorded with many artists, including the Tommy Dorsey Orchestra, the Maria Schneider Jazz Orchestra, the Village Vanguard Orchestra, Mark Murphy, Joe Locke, Tom Lellis, Joe Williams, Wynton Marsalis, Rufus Reid, Bill Mays, Kenny Werner, the John Hart Trio, and others.

**Dean Johnson**, bassist, has worked with a variety of artists since his arrival in New York in 1980, including: Dave Liebman, Lee Konitz, Joe Lovano, Grover Washington, Wynton Marsalis, Steve Kuhn, Bill Mays, Maurizio Giammarco, Ronny Cuber, Albert Dailey, Sheila Jordan, Carol Sloane, Helen Merrill, Bill Charlap, and many others. Johnson spent ten years with Gerry Mulligan, until his passing in 1996, participating in the Quartet, Nonet, Big Band, and Orchestra, and performing in concerts and festivals all over the world. Born in Seattle, Washington in 1956, Johnson studied bass violin with Gary Peacock, as well as piano and composition at the Cornish Institute in Seattle. On the West Coast, he has worked with many artists, including Sonny Stitt, Harry "Sweets" Edison, Clark Terry, Buddy Tate, Arnett Cobb, Herb Ellis, Ernestine Anderson, and Mark Murphy. From 1974 to 1976, he attended the Berklee College of Music, studying with Rich Appleman, John Neves, John LaPorta, and Herb Pomeroy.

## **Deborah Davis and A Few Good Men, Fri., Sept. 17, 6 p.m., Millennium Stage**

**Deborah Davis**, vocalist, is a native of Dallas, Texas. Growing up in a house without a radio, she developed her own singing style, performing in church, local gospel ensembles, school talent shows, beauty contests, at parties, and on commercial jingles. Her school choir director and mentor, Robert Sanders, added her to his weekend jazz gigs. Davis went on to earn her Bachelor of music education in vocal studies from North Texas University and an Associate Arts degree in recording and engineering at Cedar Valley College. By the time she graduated, she was a permanent fixture on the Dallas jazz scene. As well as leading her own jazz bands, she opened for artists such as Bobbi Humphrey, Deborah Laws, and Angela Bofill. In 1986, Davis moved to New York. In addition to theater work, she has performed with Ray Brown, Lionel Hampton, Clark Terry, Freddie Hubbard, Art Blakey, Lou Donaldson, Delfeayo Marsalis, Cyrus Chestnut, Christian McBride, Brian Blade, and many more. She has sung at such venues as The Blue Note, Birdland, Village Vanguard, Sweet Basil, The Five Spot, Tavern on the Green, and The Rainbow Room. In addition to annual tours throughout Europe and Asia, Davis formed her own company, Manhattan Music Design, and her own label, Got My Own Music.

**Alvin R. Atkinson, Jr.**, drummer, became a student of the drum at age eight and has been playing ever since. Highlights include: a performance at the White House for President George W. Bush in 2002, house drummer for the 2002-2003 season of the *Emeril Live* television show on the Food Network, the Kennedy Center's 2002-2003 *Harlem* national tour, performances with the Wycliffe Gordon Quartet at Lincoln Center, and a film score entitled *A Tale of Two Pizzas* with Freddie Cole. In addition to touring and performing with his own group, he appeared with Tom Browne on the *Mo' Jamaica Funk* tour, 1996-2001, and with Grammy-nominated Nnenna Freelon on her 2001 *Soul Call* tour. He created sound effects for the 2002 Kennedy Center production *The Red Badge of Courage*. Atkinson has been featured in concert with Freddy redd, Benny Green, Ellis Marsalis, Jimmy Heath, Barry Harris, Roy Hargrove, Donald Brown, Steve Wilson, Fred Wesley, Mark Elf, Houston Person, Curtis Fuller, Branford Marsalis, Ray Codrington, Harold Ousley, Charlie Byrd, Oscar Brown, Jr., Ernie Andrews, and Vanessa Rubin.

**Ameen Saleem**, bassist and Washington, D.C. native, took up bass at age 12 and participated in the District of Columbia Youth Orchestra program. He later attended the Duke Ellington School of the Arts where first encountered jazz under the direction of saxophonist Dave Yarborough and bassist Steve Novacel. With both the D.C. Youth Orchestra and the Duke Ellington School of the Arts, Saleem honed his classical and jazz musical skills and performed in venues around the world, including the East Coast, Hampton, Montreaux, and North Sea jazz festivals. He received a full scholarship to North Carolina Central University where he performed with the jazz band at the Grady Tate, Montreaux, Carolina, and Vienne jazz festivals, as well as with local musicians. Upon graduating, Saleem returned to D.C. where he played as a sideman and a badnleader. He now resides in Bayside Queens, New York where he is pursuing his M.A. in music performance and arranging. Recordings include *Schuman Nature* with Tom Schuman, *A Time for Soul* with the Winard Harper Sextet, and *Beyond the Horizons* and *Central Standard Time* with the North Carolina University Jazz Emsemble.

**James Weidman**, pianist, has played and recorded with artists as diverse as Max Roach, Woody Herman, Archie Shepp, James Moody, Greg Osby, Slide Hampton, Jay Hoggard, Marvin "Smitty" Smith, Gloria Lynne, and Dakota Staton. For five years he was the featured keyboardist for Steve Coleman and the Five Elements and the M-Base Collective, as well as being a part of the Spirit of Life Ensemble that held the Monday night spot at Sweet Basil in New York. Weidman has accompanied vocalists Abbey Lincoln and Cassandra Wilson, arranging for the latter's *Blue Skies* CD. Since 1992 he has been pianist and musical director for Kevin Mahogany. Recently, he produced singer Ruth Naomi Floyd's *Fan into Flame* (their third collaboration). His first album as a leader is *People Music* (TCB Records), and his upcoming second is titled *It's 'Bout Time*. A native of Youngstown, Ohio, Weidman learned to play jazz at the age of seven from his father. By age 13, he was playing organ in his father's jazz band. After graduating from Youngstown University, he moved to New York and soon found himself playing with Cecil Payne, Harold Ousley, Bobby Watson, and Pepper Adams, before falling in with Steve Coleman. Since 1978, Weidman has collaborated with saxophonist TK Blue. He has performed at the world's major jazz festivals, including Montreaux, Monterey, Newport, North Sea, JVC, and venues such as Carnegie Hall, Birdland, Blue Note, Sweet Basil, Village Vanguard, Iridium, and Jazz Standard.