



THE INSTITUTE'S 30TH ANNIVERSARY JAZZ FESTIVAL 2021

Featured Artists



Benny Benack III (trumpet, vocals) has proven to be a rare talent: not only a fiery trumpet player with a stirring command of the postbop trumpet vernacular, but also a singer with a sly, mature, naturally expressive delivery in the post-Sinatra mold, performing standards and his own astute songs with a thrilling sense of showmanship. His superb intonation and bracing virtuosity enable him to handle astounding feats of vocalese (complex solos with written lyrics). And he's a highly capable pianist as well. Benack has performed widely as a front man for Postmodern Jukebox and played and recorded with Christian McBride, Josh Groban, Diplo/Major Lazer, Emmet Cohen, Ben Folds, Ann Hampton Callaway, Melissa Errico, and many more. He's been featured at jazz festivals and clubs around the world, won or was a finalist in several prestigious competitions (including the Thelonious Monk and Carmine Caruso Trumpet Competitions) and is highly sought after as a clinician and educator, leading workshops and panels for jazz at Lincoln Center's Jazz for Young People program and the New York Youth Symphony's Education department. Third in a generational line of Pittsburgh jazz notables, Benack follows in the footsteps of his trumpeter/bandleader grandfather, Benny Benack, Sr., and his father Benny Benack, Jr., a saxophonist/clarinetist who gave the young Benny his first professional experience. (Benny, Sr. recorded the Pittsburgh Pirates' 1960 theme song, "Beat 'Em Bucs" and toured with Tommy Dorsey and Raymond Scott, among others.) Benack's latest album, "A Lot of Livin' to Do," was released in 2020 and features bassist extraordinaire Christian McBride, drummer/producer Ulysses Owens, Jr., and Takeshi Ohbayashi on piano and Rhodes.



Paul Bollenback (guitar) started his music career in 1981, and has performed as a sideman with a wide range of jazz luminaries, including artists as diverse as Stanley Turrentine, Jeff "Tain" Watts, Steve Gadd, Gary Bartz, David "Fathead" Newman, Terri-Lyne Carrington, Joe Locke, Jack McDuff, James Moody, Jim Snidero, Charlie Byrd, Herb Ellis, Paul Bley, Geoffrey Keezer, Mike LeDonne, Carol Sloane, Gary Thomas, Grady Tate, and in the group East Meets Jazz with the renowned tabla virtuoso Sandip Burman, to name a few. He is known for his versatility, and also for an influential 20-year stint with jazz organist Joey DeFrancesco. Bollenback performs on over 80 recordings as a sideman, and has released 8 CDs as a leader. A busy performance schedule has been augmented since the late '90s by steady jazz education duties at Columbia University, Queens College, and The New School. Bollenback is also a composer, whose pieces have appeared on Joey DeFrancesco's "Reboppin'" and on the "Jazz Times Superband" CD. His most recent recording, "Portraits in Space and Time" (Mayimba Music), with his trio, was released in 2014.

Alexander Claffy (bass) is currently one of the most in-demand bass players in New York. Since moving there from Philadelphia in 2011, he has worked with a long list of musicians including Wallace Roney, Christian Scott, Louis Hayes, Harold Mabern, Russell Malone, Jimmy Cobb, Louis Hayes, Joey Alexander, and Johnny O'Neal. He's recorded three albums as a leader including his most recent, "Claffy II." His father, Joseph Claffy is a notable society band-leader in the Philadelphia area. Claffy also appeared on the first three seasons of the Nickelodeon show, "Blue's Clues."



Byron Landham (drums) is best known for his 18-year association with organist Joey DeFrancesco, with whom he recorded 16 albums and toured the world. In addition, he leads his own highly regarded band, The Landham Brothers, and has performed with a wide range of jazz greats including David Sanborn, Betty Carter, Benny Golson, James Moody, Grover Washington, Jr., David "Fathead" Newman, Branford Marsalis, Chick Corea, Bobby Watson, Jimmy Smith, Etta James, Stanley Turrentine, Illinois Jacquet, George Benson, Gary Bartz, Pat Martino, and Tom Harrell.

Thank you for joining us
for our 30th Anniversary
Jazz Festival!

An Evening of
JAZZ
at The Wharf