

The National Jazz Museum in Harlem  
104 East 126th Street  
New York, NY 10035  
212 348-8300  
<http://www.jazzmuseuminharlem.org/>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 1/4/08

### *National Jazz Museum in Harlem's January Schedule*

- *Jazz for Curious Listeners features Kenny Washington and film show!*
- *Jazz for Curious Readers with scholar Farah Griffin*
- *Harlem Speaks with Gary Walker and Ademola Olugebefola*
- *Performances by pianists Jonathan Batiste, Matthew Shipp and Ben Wolfe*

The National Jazz Museum in Harlem syncopates into the New Year with a month packed with free public programs of priceless value: our newest series, **Jazz for Curious Readers**, features Columbia University author and scholar Farah Griffin, author of a book on Billie Holiday, and faculty member of the Center for Jazz Studies; Jacquie "Tajah" Murdock, who danced professionally at the Apollo Theater in the 1940s, lights up our **Jazz in the Parks** series; **Jazz for Curious Listeners** begins the new year with one of our most popular guest instructors, Kenny Washington, and closes the month with jazz on film; and our flagship series, **Harlem Speaks**, brings in veteran WBGO radio announcer Gary Walker and the acclaimed artist, Ademola Olugebefola, to engage in spirited discussion at the Harlem School of the Arts.

Live performances at **Harlem in the Himalayas** round out our January events at the Rubin Museum of Art. First there's a solo piano date by the eclectically talented Matthew Shipp, followed by a show headlined by the superlatively gifted pianist Jonathan Batiste, and concluding with bassist Ben Wolfe's Double Quartet, featuring a string quartet and jazz quartet (with saxophonist Marcus Strickland) premiering a new composition reflecting on the Himalayas.

Now don't you agree that this is the way to get the New Year going right?!

**Friday, January 4, 2008**

**HARLEM IN THE HIMALAYAS**

**Pianist Matthew Shipp (solo)**

7:00 pm

Rubin Museum of Art  
150 West 17th Street  
New York, NY 10011

Box Office: 212.620.5000 ext. 344  
\$20

With his unique and recognizable style, pianist Matthew Shipp worked and recorded vigorously during the 1990s, creating music in which free jazz and modern classical intertwine. He first became known in the early '90s as the pianist in the David S. Ware Quartet, and soon began leading his own dates -- most often including Ware bandmate and leading bassist William Parker -- and recording a number of duets with a variety of musicians, from the legendary Roscoe Mitchell to violinist Mat Maneri, who began appearing on recordings in the 1990s. Through his range of live and recorded performances and unswerving individual development, Shipp came to be regarded as a prolific and respected voice in creative music by the decade's close.

Born in the 1960s and raised in Wilmington, DE, Matthew Shipp grew up around '50s jazz recordings. He began playing piano at the young age of five, and decided to focus on jazz by the time he was 12. Shipp played on a Fender Rhodes in rock bands while privately devouring recordings by a variety of jazz players. His first mentor was a man in his hometown named Sunyata, who had an enthusiasm for a variety of studies in addition to music. Shipp later studied music theory and improvisation under Clifford Brown's teacher Robert "Boisey" Lawrey, as well as classical piano and bass clarinet for the school band. After one year at the University of Delaware, Shipp left and took lessons with Dennis Sandole for a short time, after which he attended the New England Conservatory of Music for two years.

Shipp moved to NYC in 1984 and soon met bassist William Parker, among others. Both were playing with tenor saxophonist Ware by 1989. Meanwhile, Shipp had debuted as a recording artist in a duo with alto player Rob Brown on *Sonic Explorations*, recorded in November 1987 and February 1988. Shipp married singer Delia Scaife around 1990. He then went on to lead his own trio with Parker and drummers Whit Dickey and Susie Ibarra. Shipp has led dates for a number of labels, including FMP, No More, Eremite, Thirsty Ear, Silkheart, and more.

In 2000, Shipp began acting as curator for Thirsty Ear's Blue Series. This excellent series hosted a number of Shipp's own recordings, as well as the recordings of William Parker, Tim Berne, Roy Campbell, Craig Taborn, Spring Heel Jack, and Mat Maneri. The following year saw the release of *Nu Bop*, an exploration into traditional jazz, followed closely by its 2003 counterpart, *Equilibrium*. In 2004 Shipp released *Harmony and Abyss*, a meditation on repetitive melodic and harmonic structures. One arrived in January of 2006.

And you'll arrive at a deeper appreciation of Shipp's artistry during this solo performance at the Rubin Museum.

**Monday, January 7, 2008**

**JAZZ for CURIOUS READERS**

6:00 pm | At the NY Public Library

203 West 115<sup>th</sup> Street

For reservations: 212-348-8300

FREE!

**Guest:** Author and Scholar Farah Griffin

Farah Jasmine Griffin is considered one of the top African-Americanists in the country. She received her B.A. from Harvard (1985) and her Ph.D. from Yale (1992). Professor Griffin's major fields of interest are African American literature, music, history and politics. The recipient of numerous honors and awards for her teaching and scholarship, in 1996-97 Professor Griffin was a fellow at the Bunting Institute of Radcliffe College. She is the author of *Who Set You Flowin'?: The African American Migration Narrative* (Oxford University Press, 1995), the co-editor (with Cheryl Fish) of *Stranger in the Village: Two Centuries of African American Travel Writing* (Beacon, 1998), and the editor of *Beloved Sisters and Loving Friends: Letters from Addie Brown and Rebecca Primus* (Knopf, 1999). Her most recent book, *If You Can't Be Free Be A Mystery: In Search of Billie Holiday*, was published in 2001 by the Free Press.

**Tuesday, January 8, 2008**

**JAZZ for CURIOUS LISTENERS**

7:00 pm | At the Harlem School of the Arts

645 St. Nicholas Ave. (off 141<sup>st</sup> Street)

Call for reservations: 212 348-8300

FREE

**Guest Instructor: Kenny Washington**

**Subject: Great jazz drum moments**

Washington is one of the most learned and accomplished drummers of his generation. He arrived on the scene in the late '70s and early '80s, and has been in demand by much older musicians ever since, playing with such legendary veterans as Lee Konitz, Betty Carter, Johnny Griffin, Dizzy Gillespie, Clark Terry, and Tommy Flanagan. Born in Brooklyn, New York, Washington studied with former Dizzy Gillespie drummer Rudy Collins and attended New York's LaGuardia High School for Music & Art.

Washington worked with Konitz while still in his teens, recording with the saxophonist's nonet in 1977. He worked with Carter from 1978-9 and Griffin from 1980. A prolific freelancer, Washington has compiled an enormous discography, performing on dozens of sessions by many of jazz's most prominent figures. Washington has a strong interest in jazz history; he's written liner notes for and/or helped prepare classic jazz re-releases by Art Blakey and Count Basie, among others.

He's also taught jazz drumming at the New School in New York City, and worked as

an announcer at the New Jersey jazz radio station WBGO. He currently holds down the drum chair in the Bill Charlap trio.

Washington will take you deep inside the jazz idiom tonight, highlighting bright moments in the history of jazz drumming.

**Friday, January 11, 2008**

### **JAZZ IN THE PARKS**

**Memories of the Apollo Theater and Savoy Ballroom Lecture,  
Live Music with dancer Jacquie "Tajah" Murdock**

7:00 pm

**Location:** Hansborough Recreation Center

(35 W. 134th Street)

FREE | Reservations: 212-348-8300

Jacquie "Tajah" Murdock has been a member of the National Jazz Museum in Harlem family ever since her appearance for the *Harlem Speaks* series in 2004. Since then, the elegant elder dancer, educator and dance historian has participated in several of the museum's other programs, including the Harlem Speaks Education Initiative. So it's only appropriate that we bring her to center stage yet again, this time for a discussion of the Apollo Theater and the Savoy Ballroom, and a live dance demonstration by Loretta Abbott as well!

**Tuesday, January 15, 2008**

### **JAZZ for CURIOUS LISTENERS**

7:00 pm | At the Harlem School of the Arts

645 St. Nicholas Ave. (off 141<sup>st</sup> Street)

Call for reservations: 212 348-8300

FREE

**Guest Instructor: Kenny Washington**

**Subject: Laughing in Rhythm - Jazz Humor**

The writer Ralph Ellison described the blues as a combination of the tragic and the comic. In his second consecutive week as guest instructor, drummer, record collector and artist-historian Kenny Washington takes hold of our Jazz for Curious Listeners class for adults with a focus on humor in jazz. He won't let go until you're in stitches!

**Thursday, January 17, 2008**

## **HARLEM SPEAKS**

**Gary Walker, WBGO host**

6:30 pm | at the Harlem School of the Arts

645 St. Nicholas Ave. (off 141<sup>st</sup> Street)

call 212-348-8300 to RSVP

FREE

In jazz radio, great announcers are distinguished by their ability to convey the spontaneity and passion of the music. Gary Walker is such an announcer, and his enthusiasm for this music greets WBGO listeners every morning. His love of jazz is apparent, and he says it's a feeling that began during adolescence growing up outside of Detroit in the mid 1960's. He remembers his dad bringing home a new radio with an FM band.

"This was pretty new at the time. Almost all of radio was on AM," recalls Walker. "There were only two stations on this new FM band, and one played jazz. They often broadcast live from a club known as the Twenty Grand, and though I can't remember the artists, I will never forget the feeling of that music. It seemed that the musicians and the crowd were having such a great time. I just wanted more of that feeling."

While his peers were listening to rock and roll, Gary aggressively sought jazz. He listened to Miles Davis, Ramsey Lewis and other cutting-edge artists. He was a finance major at the University of Texas at the time. He remembers passing the campus radio station, and noticing that everyone had so much fun. He soon abandoned finance and graduated with a degree in Mass Media. He continued his studies at the University of Akron in Ohio where he was a radio announcer on the school's jazz radio station. He continued to hone his broadcasting skills, and became proficient at the technical aspects of radio production.

Soon he moved to New York City with plans to broaden his career endeavors. Within five weeks he landed an announcer's position on Saturday mornings at WBGO, and began to meet many luminaries in jazz. After 24 years with WBGO, legendary artists continue to visit the studios, many to join Gary during *Morning Jazz*. He believes their visits are part of what set the station apart from other jazz stations. However, he also believes that other jazz 88 announcers, producers and programming staff contribute to the distinction of the station.

"I think we're the best jazz station in the country, perhaps the world," he says plainly. "I think that because of the knowledge we have here, the fun we have here and the music that is created here. No one else does what we do."

**Friday, January 18, 2008**

**HARLEM IN THE HIMALAYAS**

**Jonathan Batiste**

Jonathan Batiste, piano

Phillip Kuehn, bass

Joe Saylor, drums

7:00 pm

Rubin Museum of Art

150 West 17th Street

New York, NY 10011

Box Office: 212.620.5000 ext. 344

**\$20**

Jonathan Batiste is one of the most exciting of the new jazz pianists on the international jazz scene. Still in his early 20's, he has played with Abbey Lincoln, Wynton Marsalis, and is poised to become a major voice on his instrument. With a charismatic presence and eclectic view of music, Batiste sounds like no one else. Be sure not to miss this concert appearance by a true giant in the making.

Batiste replaces Eric Reed, who cancelled.

**Tuesday, January 22, 2008**

**JAZZ for CURIOUS LISTENERS**

7:00 pm | At the Harlem School of the Arts

645 St. Nicholas Ave. (off 141<sup>st</sup> Street)

FREE

Tonight's feature: A Jazz Film Show

Jazz on film is the closest one can get to the full experience of a live jazz show without actually being there. Executive Director Loren Schoenberg has a treasure trove of clips and shows that he's tapping into for your viewing and sonic pleasure tonight. Come experience rare moments of jazz bliss captured via cinematic magic.

**Friday, January 25, 2008**

## **HARLEM IN THE HIMALAYAS**

**Ben Wolfe Double Quartet**

**premiering a new composition relating to the Himalayas**

Ben Wolfe - bass/composer

Marcus Strickland - saxophone

Luis Perdomo - piano

Marion Felder - drums

Jesse Mills - violin

Cyrus Beroukhim - violin

Max Mandel - viola

Wolfram Koessel - cello

7:00 pm

Rubin Museum of Art

150 West 17th Street

New York, NY 10011

Box Office: 212.620.5000 ext. 344

\$20

Bassist-composer-educator Ben Wolfe was born in Baltimore, Maryland, but grew up in Portland, Oregon. By his early twenties, he was freelancing in the Portland area and also backing Woody Shaw and other national acts when they came through town. At age 23, he moved to New York, where he worked with musical luminaries such as Junior Cook, Jimmy Cobb, Dakota Staton, and the Mel Lewis Orchestra.

By 1988, Ben landed a gig with Harry Connick Jr. and went on to record over a dozen albums and soundtracks, to perform on numerous world tours as musical director and a key performing member of the Harry Connick Jr. Orchestra. During his five years with Connick, Ben appeared on many television, radio, and other media performances. Ben then went on to the Wynton Marsalis Septet, where he stayed until the group disbanded.

Through the years he has gained a large following of jazz aficionados through his work with Wynton Marsalis and the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra, which included performances with Joe Henderson, Doc Cheatham, Jon Hendricks, Harry "Sweets" Edison, and Billy Higgins to name a few.

The artists Ben has recorded with include Wynton Marsalis, James Moody, Marcus Roberts, Branford Marsalis, Eric Reed, Benny Green, Carl Allen, and Diana Krall. He has been an integral part of Diana Krall's touring band and has played on many of her recordings, including the Grammy Award winning CD, *When I Look In Your Eyes*.

Ben has created five CDs leading his own group. All five are made up of solely of his own compositions and arrangements. The first is entitled "13 Sketches" (1996), the second "Bagdad Theater" (1997); both of these have been released on Mons Records. His third CD, the critically acclaimed "Murray's Cadillac" (2000) has been released on Amosaya Records. Ben's fourth CD, "My Kinda Beautiful" (2004) has been released by Planet Arts Recordings. This CD features writing for a large ensemble including strings.

Ben is currently teaching at Juilliard School of Music: Jazz Division. Watch for Ben's latest CD *No Strangers Here* being released by Maxjazz in the spring of '08.

**Tuesday, January 29, 2008**

**JAZZ for CURIOUS LISTENERS**

7:00 pm | At the Harlem School of the Arts  
645 St. Nicholas Ave. (off 141<sup>st</sup> Street)  
FREE

Tonight's feature: A Jazz Film Show

This week, we continue our exploration of jazz on film, so come on through, close your eyes while the film and music play, and imagine what it was like to be present during the Golden Age of jazz.

**Thursday, January 31, 2008**

**HARLEM SPEAKS**

**Dr. Ademola Olugebefola, artist/educator**

6:30 pm | at the Harlem School of the Arts  
645 St. Nicholas Ave. (off 141<sup>st</sup> Street)  
call 212-348-8300 to RSVP  
FREE

Ademola began his professional career as a bassist, playing with several small ensembles throughout the metropolitan area during the late '50s and early 1960s. He later studied big band bass with Atilla Zollar. "Sometimes while playing certain notes and passages I would see specific colors while grooving with my eyes closed". This experience fascinated him and he would then have the good fortune of meeting trumpeter, composer and bandleader Calvin Strickland, who founded POMUSICART. While serving as art director of POMUSICART (poetry, music, art) in the mid sixties, Ademola experimented with ways to capture the sensory effect of sound in painting which culminated with the "Blues for Nat Turner Jazz Suite". This avant guard production, performed in series of concerts at the Skyline Ballroom at the former Theresa Hotel in Harlem, was reminiscent of traditional African Ceremonial Theatre within the dynamics of a contemporary sensibility. He retired from playing music in the late sixties to devote full time to the visual arts.

However, Ademola has continually incorporated musical ideas and theories in his extensive body of work over the last four decades in hundreds of exhibitions at major American museums, universities and cultural institutions, and has exhibited internationally also. His graphics, marketing, production and stage design experience has served The NY Public Theatre, The New Lafayette Theatre, American Place Theatre, New Heritage Theatre Group, AUDELCO, Frank Silvera Writers Workshop, Community Works and the NY International Fringe Festival among others. He served on the steering committee for National Dance Week/New York 2005- 2006, and was recently appointed NGO representative to the United Nations' "International Artists

for World Harmony" initiative, representing the New York Metro Martin Luther King Center for Non-violence.

As an organizer and educator he represents the artistic community as a member of the Community Advisory Board of Columbia University's Harlem Health Promotion Center, on the Board of Governors of the Robert Blackburn Printmaking Workshop, a member of the Adam Clayton Powell Memorial Committee and serves as Arts Advisor to the Presidents of the Greater Harlem Chamber of Commerce and the New York Chapter of the National Conference of Artists. He is also an associate art director for the 400 plus member Harlem Arts Alliance.

He is a highly respected cultural activist and renowned Harlem artist whose art and career papers are in the permanent collection of the NY Public Library for the Performing Arts, the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Hatch Billops Archives, Howard University and scores of other American institutions. His painting and current projects include working with the Society of Caribbean Artists (SOCA), NY MLK Center's United Nations World Harmony Awards international expansion to Japan. He is Executive Producer of the forthcoming documentary film, "Drama Mamas!: Black Female Theatre Directors in the Spotlight and Remembered." His current residency at the Chashama Harlem Studios, in the artist's words: "Has been a great creative experience, and provides me with critical work space and prolific incentive to expand my longstanding exploration of pure color and form in painting".

*This press release was composed and edited by **Greg Thomas**.*

**The National Jazz Museum in Harlem** has been ensconced in its Harlem offices for over five years now; its public programs now attract several thousand people a year. **Good news: The Victoria Theater on 125<sup>th</sup> Street will be redeveloped and includes space (10,150 sq. feet) for the museum!** If you would like to receive updates on our progress or further information, please contact us online at <http://www.jazzmuseuminharlem.org/contact.html> or by phone at 212-348-8300. To find video clips, event summaries, program updates and photographs galore from our previous programs, venture here:

[www.jazzmuseuminharlem.org](http://www.jazzmuseuminharlem.org)