



CÉCILE MCLORIN SALVANT

VOCALS Cécile McLorin Salvant

PIANO Sullivan Fortner

BASS Yasushi Nakamura

DRUMS Savannah Harris

Zellerbach Theatre

Saturday, February 3 @ 8 PM

There will be no intermission.



This engagement of Cécile McLorin Salvant is made possible in part through the ArtsCONNECT program of Mid Atlantic Arts with support from the National Endowment for the Arts.



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ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Cécile McLorin Salvant (Vocals)

Cécile McLorin Salvant, is a composer, singer and visual artist. The late Jessye Norman described Salvant as “a unique voice supported by an intelligence and full-fledged musicality, which light up every note she sings.” Salvant has developed a passion for storytelling and finding the connections between vaudeville, blues, folk traditions from around the world, theatre, jazz and baroque music. Salvant is an eclectic curator, unearthing rarely recorded, forgotten songs with strong narratives, interesting power dynamics, unexpected twists and humor. Salvant won the Thelonious Monk competition in 2010. She has received Grammy® Awards for Best Jazz Vocal Album for three consecutive albums, *The Window, Dreams and Daggers* and *For One To Love*. In 2020, Salvant received the MacArthur fellowship and the Doris Duke Artist Award. Salvant released her debut Nonesuch records release *Ghost Song* in 2022; the album went on to receive two Grammy® nominations. *Mélusine*, an album mostly sung in French, along with Occitan, English and Haitian Kreyòl, was released in March 2023 and is now nominated for two Grammy® Awards.

Sullivan Fortner (Piano)

For the past decade, Fortner has been stretching deep-rooted talents as a pianist, composer, band leader and uncompromising individualist. The Grammy® Award-winning artist out of New Orleans received international praise as both key player and producer for his collaborative work on *The Window*, alongside Cécile McLorin Salvant. As a solo leader, he has released *Moments Preserved* and *Aria* to critical acclaim.

In addition to associations with such diverse voices as Wynton Marsalis, Paul Simon, Diane Reeves, Etienne Charles and John Scofield, Fortner's frequent and longtime collaborators have included Ambrose Akinmusire, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Stefon Harris, Kassa Overall, Tivon Pennicott, Peter Bernstein, Nicholas Payton, Billy Hart, Gary Bartz, Christian Scott aTunde Adjuah, Fred Hersch and the late Roy Hargrove. Recent collaborations include Grammy®-nominated releases *Dear Love* (Empress Legacy) and *Generations* from leaders Jazzmeia Horn and The Baylor Project, respectively.

A highly-sought improviser, Fortner has performed across the country and throughout the world at such cultural institutions as Snug Harbor, New Orleans Center for the Creative Arts, Sweet Lorraine's and The Jazz Playhouse in New Orleans, and Jazz at Lincoln Center, Jazz Standard and Smalls Jazz Club in New York City. He's appeared at celebrated festivals, including Newport, Monterey, Discover, Tri-C and Gillmore Keyboard, among others. In 2019, Fortner brought his band to the historic Village Vanguard for a week-long engagement he would reprise in 2020 as a virtual performance during lockdown. His notable studio contributions include work on Etienne Charles's *Kaiso* (Culture Shock, 2011), Donald Harrison's *Quantum Leap* (FOMP, 2010) and Theo Croker's *The Fundamentals* (Left Sided Music, 2007).

Playing solo or leading an orchestra, Fortner engages harmony and rhythmic ideas through curiosity and clarity. Within phrases, he finds universes, and listeners often hear how he's moved by each note he explores. Coming up in New Orleans, Fortner began playing piano at age seven, following a storied lineage of improvisers, masters of time and every iteration of the blues. He earned his Bachelor of Music from Oberlin Conservatory and Master of Music in jazz performance from Manhattan School of Music (MSM). A champion of mentorship, Fortner has offered masterclasses at MSM, New Orleans Center for Creative Arts (NOCCA), Purdue University, Lafayette Summer Music Workshop, Belmont University and Oberlin Conservatory where he held a faculty position.

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Pulling distinct elements from different eras, Fortner's artistry preserves the tradition and evolves the sound. He seeks connections among different musical styles that are at once deeply soulful and wildly inventive. Both his works and his insights have been featured in culturally iconic publications, from *The New York Times* to *The Root*. Accolades include the 2015 Cole Porter Fellowship awarded by the American Pianists Association, Leonore Annenberg Arts Fellowship, the 2016 Lincoln Center Award for Emerging Artists and, in 2020, the prestigious Shifting Foundation Grant for artistic career development.

Yasushi Nakamura (Bass)

Yasushi Nakamura is praised for imaginative, quicksilver bass lines that deepen the groove. His blend of guitar-like precision and gut-level blues has sparked collaborations with artists such as Wynton Marsalis, Wycliffe Gordon, Toshiko Akiyoshi, Hank Jones, Dave Douglas, Steve Miller and more. With his charismatic stage presence and artful, hard swinging melodic touch, Nakamura is a first-call performer capturing new audiences and fans around the world.

Born in Tokyo, Nakamura moved to the United States at age nine and considers both places home. He began with clarinet and tenor saxophone, but his older brother's study of guitar and drums drove him to pick up the bass. His love of rock and funk aside, the music of Charlie Parker, Ray Brown and Miles Davis were a potent influence on him. Nakamura received a BA in jazz performance from Berklee School of Music in 2000 and was awarded a full scholarship to The Juilliard School for his Artist Diploma in 2006. He credits Myron Walden as an early champion, and keeps close ties to Juilliard mentors Victor Goines, Wycliffe Gordon, Carl Allen and Ben Wolfe, all of whom maintain him in their bands.

Nakamura's career is flourishing, with consistent engagements at premier jazz festivals including Tokyo, North Sea, Monterey and Ravinia, and venues such as Birdland, Village Vanguard, the Blue Note, the Kennedy Center, Jazz at Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall. In 2014, he was honored to play the NEA Jazz Masters Concert: Celebrating Jamey Abersold, Anthony Braxton, Richard Davis, and Keith Jarrett, sharing the stage with Joe Lovano and Dave Liebman. A wide array of projects permits him to explore musical styles and collaborations. In 2016, he recorded with one of his long-time inspirations, Toshiko Akiyoshi, for her recent release, *Porgy and Bess*. His performance with Akiyoshi's Jazz Orchestra was also broadcast as a documentary film. Recent works include *For the Love of Duke* with New York City Ballet choreographed by Susan Stroman and *Ellington at Christmas: Nutcracker Suite* with Savion Glover, Lizz Wright, the Abyssinian Baptist Choir and David Berger conducting. In 2010, he toured the Middle East with Jazz at Lincoln Center's Kings of the Crescent City project, and he toured Asia in 2008 with the Juilliard All-Stars. As an educator, Nakamura has led master classes and summer intensive courses at The Juilliard School, New School, Koyo Conservatory, Osaka Geidai and Savannah Swing Central.

In 2016, Nakamura release his first album, *A Lifetime Treasure*, and in 2017, he also released his second album, *Hometown*, from Atelier Sawano featuring Lawrence Fields, Bigyuki and Clarence Penn which received album of the year 2017 in *Jazz Life Magazine*.

Savannah Harris (Drums)

Harris is a New York City-based drummer, composer and producer. Raised in Oakland, California by musician parents, she gravitated towards the drums at age two. Steeped in a jazz tradition, Harris' more recent work reflects her versatility. She's recorded with indie and experimental artists Helado Negro, Kate Davis, Justin Allen and Standing on the Corner. Her jazz recordings include releases from Peter Evans, María Grand and Or Bareket. She's performed with Jason Moran, Ambrose Akinmusire, Kenny Barron, Terence Blanchard, Billy Childs, Christian Scott, José James and Georgia Anne Muldrow. Currently, she's been working extensively with Nick Hakim and Roy Nathanson, Aaron Parks, Melanie Charles, Or Bareket, Peter Evans and Joel Ross. In 2019, Harris was awarded the Harlem Stage Emerging Artist Award, and she received her master's in jazz performance from Manhattan School of Music. She was featured twice in the January 2021 issue of *Modern Drummer* as both a featured artist and a contributing writer. In October of 2021, she debuted her solo piece, "With Inner Sound, Truth," commissioned by Issue Project Room as a tribute to composer Ruth Anderson. Harris was also featured in *Sixteen Journal's* "JAZZ" edition, with portraits shot by photographer James Brodribb.

UPCOMING JAZZ

Fima Chupakhin
FEB 29

Orquesta Akokán
APR 12

Ruth Naomi Floyd
Are We Yet Somehow Alive?
APR 25

NDR Bigband & Kinan Azmeh
Flow
MAY 10

Madeleine Peyroux
MAY 12

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