



ANNENBERG CENTER
FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

12/13 Season SEPT-JAN



Kenny Barron Trio

Kenny Barron piano
Kiyoshi Kitagawa bass
Johnathan Blake drums

Saturday, October 20 @ 8 PM

Zellerbach Theatre

Program

Set list will be announced from stage.

This performance is part of the Annenberg Center's Jazz Series.
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ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Kenny Barron

Philadelphia is the birthplace of many great musicians, including one of the undisputed masters of the jazz piano, Kenny Barron. Barron was born in 1943 and while a teenager, started playing professionally with Mel Melvin's orchestra. By 1959, Barron had worked with drummer Philly Joe Jones while still in high school.

At age 19, Barron moved to New York City and free-lanced with Roy Haynes, Lee Morgan and James Moody after the tenor saxophonist heard him play at the Five Spot. Upon Moody's recommendation, Dizzy Gillespie hired Barron in 1962 without even hearing him play a note. It was in Dizzy's band where Barron developed an appreciation for Latin and Caribbean rhythms.

After five years with Dizzy, Barron played with Freddie Hubbard, Stanley Turrentine, Milt Jackson and Buddy Rich. The early '70s found Barron working with Yusef Lateef who he credits as a key influence in his art for improvisation. Encouraged by Lateef, to pursue a college education, Barron balanced touring with studies and earned his B.A. in Music from Empire State College.

From 1973-2000, Barron joined the faculty at Rutgers University as professor of music, mentoring many of today's young talents including David Sanchez, Terence Blanchard and Regina Bell. In 1974, he recorded his first album as a leader for the Muse label, entitled *Sunset To Dawn*.

Following stints with Ron Carter in the late '70s, Barron formed a trio with Buster Williams and Ben Riley which also worked alongside of Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis, Eddie Harris, Sonny Stitt and Harry "Sweets" Edison. Throughout the '80s, Barron collaborated with the great tenor saxophonist Stan Getz, touring with his quartet and recording several legendary albums including *Anniversary*, *Serenity* and the Grammy® nominated *People Time*. Also during the '80s, he co-founded the quartet Sphere, along with Buster Williams, Ben Riley and Charlie Rouse. The band focused on the music of Thelonious Monk and original compositions inspired by him. Sphere recorded several outstanding projects for the Polygram label, among them *Four For All* and *Bird Songs*. After the death of Charlie Rouse, the band took a 15-year hiatus and reunited, replacing Rouse with alto saxophonist Gary Bartz. This reunion made its debut recording for Verve Records in 1998.

Kenny Barron's own recordings for Verve have earned him nine Grammy® nominations beginning in 1992 with *People Time*, an outstanding duet with Stan Getz, followed by the Brazilian influenced *Sambao* and most recently for *Freefall* in 2002. Other Grammy® nominations went to *Spirit Song*, *Night and the City* (a duet recording with Charlie Haden) and *Wanton Spirit*, a trio recording with Roy Haynes and Haden. It is important to note that these three recordings each received double-Grammy® nominations (for album and solo performance.)

Barron's, *Canta Brasil* (Universal France) linked him with Trio de Paz in a fest of original Brazilian jazz and was named Critics Choice Top Ten CDs of 2003 by *Jazziz Magazine*. His 2004 release, *Images* (Universal France), was inspired by a suite originally commissioned by The Wharton Center at Michigan State University and featured multi-Grammy® nominated vibraphonist Stefon Harris. The long awaited trio sequel featuring Ray Drummond and Ben Riley, *The Perfect Set, Live At Bradley's, Part Two* (Universal France/Sunnyside) was released October 2005.

In spring 2008, Barron released his first studio recording in four years with *The Traveler* (Universal France), an intoxicating mix of favorite Barron tunes set to lyrics and newly penned compositions. In a first for the noted pianist, he was joined by vocalists Grady Tate (who sheds his drumsticks for this special appearance), Tony® award winner Ann Hampton Calloway and the young phenom Gretchen Parlato, winner of the Thelonious Monk International Competition for Jazz.

Barron consistently wins the jazz critics and readers polls, including *Downbeat*, *Jazz Times* and *Jazziz magazines*. In 2005, he was inducted into the American Jazz Hall of Fame

and won a MAC Lifetime Achievement Award. He is a six-time recipient of Best Pianist by the Jazz Journalists Association and was as a finalist in the prestigious 2001 Jazz Par International Jazz Award.

Kiyoshi Kitagawa

Bassist and composer Kiyoshi Kitagawa is an integral part of today's jazz scene. Soon after moving to New York City from Japan, he joined the Harper Brothers, recording on *Remembrance: Live at The Village Vanguard*. Kitagawa has toured and recorded *Triology* with the alto great Kenny Garrett and drummer Brian Blade. He has gone on to work with many of the leading names in jazz including Tommy Flanagan, the Jimmy Heath Quartet, the Andy Bey Quartet and the Maria Schneider Orchestra, among others. In 1996, he formed The Trio with the versatile Japanese pianist, Makoto Ozone, releasing four albums together.

As a leader, Kitagawa has released five albums in Japan on the Atelier Sawano label including *Ancestry*, *Prayer*, *Live at Tsutenka* and *Live in Japan*, all featuring Kenny Barron and Brian Blade. His latest release is *I'm Still Here* featuring Danny Grissett and Brian Blade. As a sideman, he has recorded with Pete Minger, Jimmy Heath, Terell Stafford, Andy Bey, Jon Faddis, Kenny Barron and Dayna Stephens. Most recently, Kitagawa has been touring the world with the Kenny Barron Trio/Quartet/Quintet, the Jon Faddis Quartet, the Michael Rodriguez Group and the Dayna Stephens Group.

Johnathan Blake

Grammy® nominated drummer and composer, Johnathan Blake has been working steadily in the contemporary jazz scene for the past 10 years. He has been a first-call drummer for many notable jazz musicians such as Tom Harrell, David Sanchez, Russell Malone, Kenny Barron, Randy Brecker and Oliver Lake, to name a few. In addition to being a sideman, Blake performs with his own group internationally.

Johnathan Blake was born in Philadelphia on July 1, 1976 as a son of a world-renowned jazz violinist, John Blake, Jr.. Naturally, Blake was introduced to the world of jazz music by his father from early on. Although he began playing violin at age three under his father's guidance, he never felt at home with the instrument. He always felt a close connection to the drums in spite of his father's wish for Johnathan to become a violinist.

When Blake was 10 years old, a visiting music teacher at his elementary school allowed him to choose an instrument after Johnathan scored perfect on the music aptitude test. Without hesitation, he picked the drum set. He started taking lessons at the school and it became clear to everyone very quickly that the drums, indeed, were his instrument.

Blake went on to George Washington High School in Philadelphia, where he was a drum captain of the marching band and started playing with Settlement Music School under the direction of Robert Landham. During the summer, he participated in many music camps such as Jazz Opportunity for Youth at Montclair State College and Jazz in July Summer Workshop at the University of Massachusetts.

While in school, he started working professionally with the Oliver Lake Big Band, Roy Hargrove and David Sanchez. When McCoy Tyner asked Blake to join his group, he pondered leaving school for good to pursue his professional career; however, he decided to complete his education.

In the spring of 2007, Johnathan received his Master's degree from Rutgers University. He studied with Ralph Bowen, Conrad Herwig and Stanley Cowell, focusing mainly on honing his compositional skills. He was a recipient of the 2006 ASCAP Young Jazz Composers Awards.

Blake is currently a member of Tom Harrell Quintet, Russell Malone Quartet and Kenny Barron Trio. He also performs regularly with Donny McCaslin, Jaleel Shaw, Avishai Cohen and Omer Avital, among others. His own group often sells out premier venues such as The Jazz Gallery and Smalls in New York City.

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