

## OUR NEXT CONCERT

Dan Levinson and his  
Tiger Tulip Band



Photo by Neal Siegal

Sunday, September 18, 2016  
2:00 – 4:30 p.m.

Haddonfield United Methodist Church  
29 Warwick Road  
Haddonfield, NJ 08033

Directions at  
<http://www.tristatejazz.org/directions-haddonfield.html>

Longtime TSJS favorite Dan Levinson returns with a new sextet, featuring vocalist Molly Ryan.

Dan Levinson has included such names as Mel Tormé, Wynton Marsalis and Dick Hyman on his roster of musical associates. A Los Angeles native, Dan has been based in New York since 1983, although his busy schedule often takes him across the continent and around the world. Since 1993 he has been a member of Vince Giordano's Nighthawks, with whom he has appeared at Carnegie Hall, on Late Night with Conan O'Brien, and on Garrison Keillor's A Prairie Home Companion radio program. Dan's successful Benny Goodman tributes have been presented both on the East Coast with James Langton's New York All-Star Big Band - NYC's preeminent swing orchestra - and

throughout Germany with Andrej Hermlin's Swing Dance Orchestra. Dan has recorded over 150 CDs, including nine under his own name. He can be heard on the soundtracks to the films *The Cat's Meow*, *Ghost World*, *The Loss of a Teardrop Diamond*, and Martin Scorsese's *The Aviator*, as well as on virtually all of the newly-recorded music used on the soundtrack of the Grammy Award-winning HBO television series *Boardwalk Empire*, which ran from 2010 to 2014. His most recent TSJS appearance was with Banu Gibson in November, 2015, on which he was joined by bandmates Mike Davis, Mark Shane, and Kevin Dorn.

The band consists of:

Dan Levinson - Clarinet, Saxophones, Leader  
Molly Ryan - Vocals, Guitar  
Mike Davis - Cornet, Trumpet  
Jim Fryer - Trombone  
Mark Shane - Piano  
Mike Weatherly - Bass  
Kevin Dorn - Drums

For more about Dan, visit his website:  
<http://www.danlevinson.com>.

Dan appears with his Roof Garden Jass Band in "Look at 'Em Doin' It":

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MIQt2j7c\\_a8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MIQt2j7c_a8)

### Concert Admissions

\$10 First-time attendees and Members

\$20 General Admission

High school/college students with ID and  
children with paying adult admitted free

*Pay at the door*

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## LOOKING AHEAD TO OUR OCTOBER 2016 CONCERT

Ben Mauger's Vintage Jazz Band will play a TSJS concert on October 16 at the Community Arts Center in Wallingford, PA.



Photos by Dinko-Mitic

Cornetist Ben Mauger returns to Tri-State with his 6-piece Vintage Jazz Band, playing those good ol' tunes from the 1920s and '30s, as well as the Swing NYC-style revival jazz made famous in the '50s and '60s. His last performance for Tri-State was in September 2013, with his 10-piece Roaring '20s Jazz Orchestra. With their home base in central Pennsylvania, Ben's groups have become mainstays at prestige jazz venues and festivals up and down the East Coast. The Vintage Jazz Band recently released their 2nd CD, *Tunes of the Twenties*. Get yourself to Wallingford on October 16 for an afternoon of high octane, knock-your-socks-off, traditional jazz!

Ben Mauger - Leader, Cornet  
Bob Kreitz - Piano  
Bob Rawlins - Clarinet, Saxes  
Bruce Campbell - Bass  
Bob Peruzzi - Trombone  
Larry Bortz - Drums

Visit Ben's website for information and videos:  
[www.benmaugersvintagejazzband.com](http://www.benmaugersvintagejazzband.com), or hear samples at:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Me8LextQHsE>  
or  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RZOV9cEVlog>

## ROSSANO SPORTIELLO AUGUST 21 CONCERT REVIEW

By Jim McGann

The day did not start well. I was running late, and realized I had no money for the concert. Drove to the ATM, which took me miles away from the Walt Whitman Bridge. Then, going over the bridge, saw toll plaza construction signs. Fortunately, the construction did not interfere with traffic. The backup on I-95 near the Blue Route was another story. Adding to the dilemma were ominous, dark grey clouds awaiting to heave precipitation on the Delaware Valley. Fortunately, I made it to Community Arts Center about 15 minutes before the concert began. I then discovered that Rossano Sportiello, the pianist of the concert, had his own set of transportation challenges. Likewise, he arrived on time.



Rossano Sportiello Photo by Jim McGann

All of this would have the makings of a disaster, but it was one of TSJS's best concerts. Sportiello, attired in a dark blue suit, captivated the audience with his pianistic talent. Offering a "spontaneous" program of stride and selections from the American song book, the pianist made everyone forget about traffic stress, dark, grey skies and forthcoming rain.

When you hear musicians, jazz musicians in particular, you can pick up the influences. You can tell what reed player is influenced by Noone, Bechet, Hawkins, et. al. The same goes for the other instruments. Aside from a nod to pianist Teddy Wilson and Art Tatum, Sportiello is his own man considering the constraints of the genre.

The concert began with "Don't Blame Me," highlighted with beautiful bell tone treble keys and

## JAZZ MUSICIAN OF THE MONTH HAYES ALVIS

Wilson-Tatum arpeggio runs. The following number, Fats Waller's "Minor Drag", was noteworthy for its mournful intro and coda with raindrop effects, perhaps anticipating the weather taking place outside the Center.

A contrasting tribute to stride pianist Willie "the Lion" Smith, "Echoes of Spring" always exuded a spring like quality, regardless of the interpreter. Mr. Sportiello took it one step further. With his light touch, Smith's composition became classical, even somewhat angelic with nice octave key runs, enhancing the composer's delicate illustration. "Fussin'" is a raucous minor stride ride, with 'fussin' fingering, swing, and a surprise, stompy ending, much like the abrupt codas of pianist Jimmy Yancey.

Although Erroll Garner was acknowledged by Sportiello's interpretation of "Misty," I have to include the performance of "Laura," which took place in the second set. On "Misty," the pianist managed to avoid the classic Garner chord clusters, his heavy monotonous left hand, and his very definite treble runs, yet evoking a different kind of beauty whereas "Laura" made up for the loss - Garner's chord clusters and treble run very much present, excellently done.

There were eight - count 'em - eight medleys performed at the concert. Some were creative themes in song titles (For example, a "dream" medley consisting of songs with the word dream in the title) or songs by composers (Gershwin, Waller, Johnny Mandel, Rodgers and Hammerstein). All were excellent, but the aforementioned "Dream" and "Time" stood out for me. In both cases, it was the closing song in the medley that sealed the deal. "If Dreams Come True," featured a walking bass line which eclipsed the melody, and "Just in Time" presented more walking bass, a jumpy right hand, and a funky cut-time chorus to conclude the medley. The "classical" medley deserves mention if only for the fact of how brilliantly Sportiello turned classical works like Chopin's Nocturne No. 2 in E Flat and Revolutionary Etude into stride vehicles.

For an encore, Sportiello offered "something from my own country" and turned "O Solo Mio" into a stride warhorse, ending a beautiful concert. That beautiful sound made the drive home, bedaubed with traffic congestion and inclement weather, worthwhile.

"Hayes Alvis (Bass) - A Chicagoan who used to play with Jelly Roll Morton...mystery man when it comes to age...outstanding amateur photographer...has passed his aviator's test...a member of the new trio...used to have charge of Mills Blue Rhythm Bunch...possesses some sort of mysterious office in California."

The above paragraph appeared in a Metronome magazine section entitled "Meet the Band." The band in question was Duke Ellington's, and possibly for publicity purposes, then-manager Irving Mills created the capsule bio for the tabloid. As with most profiles of this kind, there is a penchant for sensationalism. However, in the case of "mystery man" Hayes Alvis, the author may not have been far astray in his remarks.

Alvis was born on May 1st, 1907, in Chicago, Illinois. His first instrument was the drums, and performed in the Chicago Defender's youth band. The Chicago Defender was the leading African-American newspaper in the city, and its owner, Robert Abbott, was influential in encouraging the black population in the southern states to head north where there was more opportunity. Many heeded the call.

Chicago in the 1920s was the place to be for Jazz. Despite its marriage to corruption (the 18th Amendment would add fuel to this fire), the windy city was a land of opportunity in the entertainment field. The city's State Street alone had the Grand and the Vendome Theaters, the Dreamland and the DeLuxe Cafes (where Jelly Roll Morton and King Oliver performed) within blocks of each other, and nearby 35th Street hosted The Apex Club (where Jimmie Noone headlined), The Entertainer's Café and the Plantation Café. Alvis probably made note of the venues, when seeking opportunity once his Defender's days came to a close.

It was Alvis' association with pianist Jelly Roll Morton which raises some questions - How long was Alvis employed by the pianist? Did Alvis make the switch from playing drums to tuba/bass during his tenure with Morton? And was it Alvis who played on the Levee Serenaders' recording session with Morton in January, 1928, which would be Alvis' first recording? Unfortunately, the answers

are less than concrete and leave room for doubt. Peter Haby authored an article about Punch Miller, shared a story about the trumpeter and Jelly Roll Morton, which unwittingly sheds some light on the extent of Alvis' participation with the pianist:

"During the early months of 1928, Hayes Alvis, the drummer in Jelly Roll Morton's band, was sent (to Milwaukee?) to get Punch to join Morton, who relates in an interview which appeared in *Jazz Journal*: 'I had to keep Punch straight during the whole trip and that was not easy. Anyhow I got Punch safe and moderately sober to Chicago where he joined Morton.'"

If the Haby article is correct, not only was Alvis a drummer, but with Morton's working band had the added responsibility of acting as go-between for potential hires. If Alvis mastered tuba by January 21st, there is an outside chance he was a last minute substitution.

It is possible that Alvis encountered tubist Lawson Buford while the latter was employed with Jimmie Noone at the Apex Club. If this was the case, he may have received word that Earl Hines, Noone's pianist, was going to start a big band to open at the Grand Terrace in late December, 1928. This would explain Alvis whereabouts for the balance of 1928.

Alvis stayed with the Hines orchestra until 1930. It was with Hines where Alvis provided his first vocals on record as well as the only documented arrangement by the bassist, "Blue Nights." Alvis took advantage of recording sessions featuring Hines sidemen clarinetist Omer Simeon and drummer Wallace Bishop, but most prolifically with a non-Hines sideman - trumpeter Jabbo Smith, who arrived from the east coast with James P. Johnson's "Keep Shufflin'" revue.

In early 1931, Alvis traveled with Jimmie Noone to New York for an engagement at the Savoy Ballroom. The engagement proved beneficial for Alvis. A subordinate for Irving Mills or perhaps the entrepreneur himself hired Alvis for his latest creation - a substitute band to fill in at the Cotton Club and other venues while his main attractions - Duke Ellington and Cab Calloway - were on tour. This band would be known as the Mills Blue Rhythm Band, and was here where Alvis recorded his best work.

With the MBRB, Alvis performed a bass solo (one of the first) on the band's recording of "Rhythm Spasm." As groundbreaking as that was, it was Alvis' ability to make the presence of the bass felt, that set his bass playing apart. Alvis' bass is definitely in the foreground on the MBRB recordings "Heat Waves" (1932) and on Spike Hughes' "Weary Traveler" (1933). Future bassists such as Israel Crosby and Walter Page would expand on this type of bass "presence".

In 1935, bassist Wellman Braud left the Duke Ellington Orchestra, but prior to his departure, Ellington added bassist Billy Taylor to make a two bass team in the orchestra. When Braud left, Alvis replaced him, keeping the two basses in the band. Why two basses? One source claims Ellington and/or Mills wanted the veteran Braud replaced and used the extra bass as a ploy to get Braud to quit. It is possible that Ellington, self-conscious of his pianistic abilities, added the extra bass to boost the rhythm section. With the adventurous musical mind of Ellington, the two bass experiment was exactly that: an experiment. After Alvis left the band, his replacement was a young talent from Chattanooga, Tennessee. His name was Jimmy Blanton.

A Leonard Feather recording date in April, 1939 introduced Alvis with the multi-instrumentalist Benny Carter, who had returned from a five year tour of Europe. Alvis made an impression on Carter and for the next month he was in the recording studio with Carter's big band. He would remain with Carter until November of 1940. Having worked with Jelly Roll Morton, The Mills Blue Rhythm Band and Duke Ellington, Alvis, in an interview, had interesting commentary on Carter:

"Working with Benny was the happiest period in my life...Benny is just about the greatest musician and the nicest fellow there is. We didn't make much money, but when one has the privilege to play in Benny Carter's band one does not think of such things. If you are able to hold a chair with Benny, you are made."

One can understand Alvis' praise. The 1939-1940 Benny Carter big band was critically one of the leader's best, highlighted by a January, 1940 recording session with Coleman Hawkins. Alvis made his presence felt throughout Carter

recordings of "Shufflebug Shuffle," "Riff Romp," "Sleep," and "Fish Fry" among others.

After two brief engagements with Joe Sullivan and former Charlie Barnet trumpeter Bob Burnet, Alvis joined the Louis Armstrong big band for most of 1941. He was present on the 1941 recording of Pops' theme, "When It's Sleepy Time Down South."

After another Sullivan engagement in 1942, Alvis served in the US Army from 1943 to 1945. Upon his return to civilian life, the world of jazz had changed. He spent some time working at Café Society until the club closed in 1948, but aside from a 1952 Sy Oliver date, Alvis would not return to the recording studio for seventeen years.

It should be said that Alvis had diversified interests in and outside of music. While there is no evidence of his photographic abilities or of his "mysterious" West Coast office as described in the Metronome article, Alvis did obtain an aviator's license. For a time he headed a millinery business, had an interior decorating business, was an accomplished dental technician, was a Red Cross volunteer, and in the 1960s was a local 802 (musicians union) representative.

In 1958-1961, Alvis joined Wilbur DeParis New Orleans Jazz Band. The exposure from working with this band helped reactivate Alvis' career. The band played regularly at Jimmy Ryan's in New York until 1962, but during Alvis' stay toured France in the summer of 1960. There would more recording and live appearances scattered throughout the 1960s into the early 1970s.

In 1972, Alvis put together a band for a concert in Connecticut called Hayes Alvis Pioneers of Jazz. For the first time in his career, he was leading a band of his own. According to trombonist Clyde Bernhardt, Alvis had planned future dates for this band but it was not to be.

On the morning of Sunday, December 30, 1972, a neighbor of Alvis phoned the police, noting that Alvis' car was not moved to comply with parking regulations. After police forced an entry, Alvis was found dead. He had died in his sleep.

A service at St Peter's Lutheran Church was well attended according to Storyville magazine:

"Francis Williams and Doc Cheatham played muted trumpets, Gene Mikell was on tenor sax, Lawrence Lucie on guitar, Tommy Benford on snare, and Milt Hinton, who arranged the music, on bass. They played 'Stardust and My Buddy', then Natalie Lamb, of the Red Onion Jazz Band, sang a very moving "Amazing Grace" with Jimmy Evans on piano, and there was scarcely a dry eye to be seen. Then Milt Hinton moved up to the coffin for a bass solo of Prelude To A Kiss."

Why is Hayes Alvis a mystery man? In all the research, there is very little known about the man himself - no mention of parents, siblings, marriage partner or children. A line from the Storyville article was the most detailed summary about the man: "He was a kind man, deeply concerned in helping others less well-placed than himself." The research does show a man who was ambitious, industrious, not willing to rest on his laurels. Until future mysteries unfold, this will have to suffice.

Jim McGann

Bibliography available from Jim at "jmcgann@aol.com"

## Quiz Time

By Rabbi Lou Kaplan

Never heard of Buzzard Lope and Grizzly Bear, two early dances to ragtime and jazz music? Well, see if you know enough about jazz dances to fill in the names of these more familiar seven dances.

1. B \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ ' t \_ \_ \_ \_ J \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
2. B \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ H \_ \_ \_ \_
3. C \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ n
4. L \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ H \_ \_ \_ \_
5. S \_ \_ \_ \_ g
6. S \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ y
7. S \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ Q

Answers elsewhere in this issue.

## FUTURE CONCERTS



**All Concerts from 2:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.**

**November 13, 2016 Midiri Brothers Sextet.**

Joe and Paul have most recently been seen at TSJS with Neville Dickie, but the twins return to lead their own band. With Paul on vibes, expect mostly swing, Haddonfield, NJ

**January 15, 2017 Barbone Street Jazz Band.**

Clarinetist Steve Barbone leads one of the area's best and most experienced Dixieland bands. It has become the busiest trad jazz group in the Delaware Valley, Wallingford, PA

**February 12, 2017 Marty Grosz and the Hot Winds.** Guitarist and raconteur Marty Grosz is a legend of the jazz world. He returns with another edition of his quartet to perform old tunes you may not remember, Haddonfield, NJ

**March 12, 2017 Richard Barnes & the Midnight Society Orchestra.** Led by guitarist Richard Barnes, this Philadelphia dance orchestra is dedicated to the preservation of 1920s red-hot jazz from the era of the flappers, Wallingford, PA

**April 9, 2017 Stephanie Trick - Solo Piano.** On tour from St. Louis, Stephanie first played at TSJS in March 2015. Widely considered one of the country's top stride pianists, she performs throughout the world, Haddonfield, NJ

**April 30, 2017 Jerry Rife's Rhythm Kings.** Hot jazz inspired by the legendary early bands of New Orleans. Clarinetist Jerry Rife last led this great trad band for TSJS in Haddonfield, February 2015.

**Wallingford:** Concerts are held at the Community Arts Center, 414 Plush Mill Rd; just west of exit 3 of I-495 ("The Blue Route").

**Haddonfield:** Concerts are held at the Haddonfield United Methodist Church, 29 Warwick Rd., just south of Kings Highway; about a ten minute walk from the PATCO train station.

## OTHER JAZZ CONCERTS

### PENNSYLVANIA JAZZ SOCIETY

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

(610)-625-4640

Dewey Banquet Hall, 502 Durham Street, Hellertown, PA. Concerts 2:00 to 5:00 p.m.

**October 23** Big Band Swing with Bill Warfield, this concert from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

**November 13** Jam Session

### NEW JERSEY JAZZ SOCIETY

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

(800)-303-NJJS

NJJS also co-sponsors events at the Bickford Theatre and Ocean County College.

**September 16** Central Jersey Jazz Festival, Deer Path Park, Flemington, NJ

**September 18** 25th Annual Jazz Feast, Palmer Square, Princeton, NJ

### THE BICKFORD THEATRE

6 Normandy Heights Road

Morristown, NJ

[www.njjs.org/p/services/bickford.html](http://www.njjs.org/p/services/bickford.html)

All concerts 8:00 p.m. (973)-971-3706.

**September 19** Lenore Raphael Trio

### 1867 SANCTUARY AT EWING

101 Scotch Road (Rt. NJ611), Ewing Township, NJ

**September 10** Danny Tobias and his Quintet

**September 23** Tom Littwin Quartet

### OCEAN COUNTY COLLEGE

Toms River, NJ 08753

[www.njjs.org/p/services/ocean.html](http://www.njjs.org/p/services/ocean.html)

(732)-255-0500

All concerts start at 8:00 p.m. Ocean County College campus, Community and Arts Center, College Drive.

**September 21** Bucky Pizzarelli

### CAPE MAY TRADITIONAL JAZZ SOCIETY

VFW Post 386, 419 Congress St.,

Cape May, NJ

[www.capemaytraditionaljazzsociety.com](http://www.capemaytraditionaljazzsociety.com)

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[www.tristatejazz.org/officers.html](http://www.tristatejazz.org/officers.html)

### TSJS CONTACT INFORMATION

**Mailing Address:** PO Box 896, Mount Laurel, NJ.  
08054

**E-mail:** [info@tristatejazz.org](mailto:info@tristatejazz.org)

**Hotline Phone for updated concert information:**  
(856) 720-0232

### Quiz Time Answers

1. Ballin' the Jack
2. Bunny Hug
3. Charleston
4. Lindy Hop
5. Shag
6. Shimmy
7. Susy Q



# Membership Renewal Form For 7/1/2016 to 6/30/2017

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***This form is for renewing members and former members only. New members must use a different form.\****

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[www.tristatejazz.org/application-to-mail.html](http://www.tristatejazz.org/application-to-mail.html).

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