

# The Strutter

VOLUME 32 NUMBER 9

Traditional Jazz in the Philadelphia Tri-State Area

March 2022

### Our Next Concert Ethan Uslan - Solo Piano

Sunday, March 20, 2022 2:00 to 4:30 pm

Community Arts Center, Wallingford, PA



Photo by Wayne St John

Hailed by the Chicago Tribune for his "vivid musical imagination" and "deep understanding of far-flung performance practices," Ethan Uslan is a ragtime/jazz pianist and raconteur. as well as a 3-time winner of the World Championship Old-Time Piano Playing Contest (yes -that really exists!). Ethan, who made his TSJS debut in 2014, has performed all over the USA, including at the Ravinia Festival, Scott Joplin Festival, and on NPR's A Prairie Home Companion. He has also practiced his art in England, Ireland, Switzerland, Netherlands, Belgium, France, and Cyberspace, where his jazzed-up treatment of Beethoven's "Für Elise" has gone viral.

View <u>Ethan's website</u> Listen to Ethan play

Chopin: Waltz in C-Sharp Minor - STRIDE VERSION

and

Cole Porter: Let's Misbehave

#### **Concert Covid Policy**

Tri-State Jazz Society will comply with our "landlord's" policies - we're waiting for clarification from the Wallingford Community Arts Center. When we learn more, we will update our website, closer to the concert date. The latest policy will also be included in the reminder email we send on the Wednesday before the concert.

You can enjoy the concert remotely, watching the live webcast on our YouTube channel or Facebook page.

CALL OUR HOTLINE for up-to-the-minute updates (856) 720-0232

Member admission is \$10; general admission is \$20. Introductory offer - start a new, first-time TSJS annual membership (\$20) at the door and receive free admission to this concert. Full-time students with ID, or children accompanied by a paying adult, are free.

### Al Harrison's Dixieland Band Sunday, February 13, 2022 REVIEW by Jim McGann



Photo by Jim McGann

Lew Leabman set down a march beat. Al Harrison grabbed a plunger mute. The other horns of Joe Midiri (clarinet) and Fred Scott (trombone) got in line. The rhythm section followed...on a trip down Bourbon Street, with a performance of "Joe Avery's Blues" (or in some references "Joe Avery's Piece"). If there ever was a great introduction to traditional jazz and a Tri State Jazz Society traditional

#### **Band Personnel**

Al Harrison - trumpet, flugelhorn, vocals, leader

Joe Midiri - clarinet, soprano sax, vocals

Fred Scott - trombone Ray Malach - piano Bill Stumm - bass Lew Leabman - drums

jazz concert, this is what I would expect to hear. One could envision the wrought iron tapestry, the smell of Cajun cooking... Now, truth be told, the band was not in New Orleans, let alone marching, but it felt like you were there. A good beginning.

Harrison and his Dixieland band have performed for TSJS several times since the millennium. You may not get the obscure numbers that some bands will go to great lengths to unearth, or intricate arrangements of trad jazz like others, but you will get an entertaining program with solid musicianship, and on occasion, like the aforementioned "Joe Avery Blues," a few surprises along the way.

Part of the first set was a musical tribute to trad jazz trumpet masters, beginning with Nick LaRocca, with Armstrong, Beiderbecke and Red Nichols acknowledged. The remainder offered a swinging version of "Washington and Lee Swing," Jelly Roll Morton's "Dr. Jazz" (with new lyrics dedicated to the leader's grandson, Quinn), a vehicle for Joe Midiri's clarinet ("Avalon") as well as a feature for his vocals ("Pennies from Heaven").

The aforementioned "Avalon," the slow Armstrong tribute ("When Its Sleepy Time Down South") and "Jazz-Me-Blues" came off best here, with Midiri's clarinet swinging mightily on "Avalon" and incorporating ascending clarion shrieks on "Jazz-Me-Blues." Harrison, on this number, performed on flugelhorn, and after Midiri's altissimo climbs, played quietly, minimally. Scott, too, swung quietly, providing a great contrast between the horns.

The second set provided feature spots for those who were not featured in the first set. Scott, on "Lassus Trombone," pianist Ray Malach on "Promenade," and perhaps best of all as far as the solo features go, bassist Bill Stumm with "Basin Street Blues" with the bassist taking the melody, and the band responding in kind, sort of a reminder of how Duke Ellington used to feature bassist Jimmy Blanton during his short tenure with the band.

All this was a build up for a wild swing version of Juan Tizol's "Caravan." Rocked by Leabman's creative percussion work, all the subtleties associated with the exotic composition were disposed of in favor of straight-ahead swing. Midiri, Harrison, Scott, and especially Malach reflected the swinging approach. The closest one who came into the world of Ellingtonia was drummer Leabman - his drumming kept the band (and us listeners) in check.

The concert concluded with "Just A Closer Walk with Thee," ending a pleasant afternoon of music by the Al Harrison Dixieland Band.



Photo by Jim McGann

# Coming in April Mike Davis and the New Wonders

Sunday, April 10, 2022 2:00 to 4:30 pm

The Main Sanctuary, Haddonfield United Methodist Church



Photo by Jane Kratchovil

#### **Band Personnel**

Mike Davis – Leader, Trumpet, Cornet, vocals
Ricky Alexander – clarinet, alto sax, vocals
Joe McDonough – trombone
Jared Engel – guitar, banjo, vocals
Jay Rattman – bass, sax
Dalton Ridenhour – piano
Jay Lepley - drums

The New Wonders, a New York City-based septet led by cornetist Mike Davis, makes a triumphant return to TSJS following its debut in January, 2019. The band vividly invokes America's Jazz Age during the 1920s, when jazz was the soundtrack for dramatic national

changes and played a central part in people's dreams, adventures, and romances. Exquisite attention to musical detail and the septet's deep passion for the original recordings is evident in each performance. Named for the model of cornet played by the enigmatic genius Bix Beiderbecke, the New Wonders craft each song as if it were a 78 rpm record, and the result has been praised by Downbeat Magazine and the New York Times. The New Wonders perform regularly around New York city, chasing the echoes of bootleg liquor and dancing feet.

For more, see Mike's website, Facebook page
Watch the New Wonders perform "Smile, Darn Ya, Smile", "Ain't That a Grand and Glorious Feeling"

Mike Davis, who made his TSJS debut as a leader in 2019, currently plays regularly around New York City with the New Wonders and with Dandy Wellington and his band, Emily Asher's Garden Party, Glenn Crytzer, Terry Waldo, Baby Soda, Dan Levinson, and many other traditional jazz and swing bands. Mike is familiar to TSJS audiences through his appearances with Dan Levinson and Emily Asher's Garden Party, in addition to serving as a regular at the celebrated Tuesday night jam sessions at Mona's Bar in Manhattan.

**Ricky Alexander** is a saxophonist and clarinetist based in NYC, specializing in early jazz. He performs regularly at both prestigious jazz clubs and hip nightlife venues with The New Wonders, Terry Waldo, The Glenn Crytzer Orchestra, Dandy Wellington band, and many more.

Joe McDonough is a freelance jazz trombonist living in New York City. He performs and has recorded with Philadelphian Christian McBride's big band, was featured with the Boston Pops Orchestra, and has appeared on ABC's Good Morning America. As an educator, Joe has conducted workshops with Jazz at Lincoln Center and The Juilliard School. Originally from the Philadelphia area, Joe stays active on the scene here as a member of the Jazz Orchestra of Philadelphia (JOP), under the direction of Terell Stafford. Joe has also enjoyed the privilege of performing with contemporary jazz legends Clark Terry, Herbie Hancock, and Philly natives Benny Golson and Jimmy Heath, among others.

**Dalton Ridenhour** has been a student of the ragtime and stride piano tradition since the age of 8. He performs locally and internationally with various groups including Vince Giordano and The Nighthawks, The Lovestruck Balladeers, Dan Levinson's Roof Garden Jass Band (with whom he was heard at TSJS in a 2017 centenary tribute to the first jazz recordings by the Original Dixieland Jass Band), Naomi and Her Handsome Devils, Mike Davis and The New Wonders, Goodbye Picasso, and Mona's Hot Four. He has been featured at many ragtime and early jazz festivals including The Scott Joplin International Ragtime Festival, The West Coast Ragtime Festival, The Bix Beiderbecke Memorial Jazz Festival, and The Blind Boone Ragtime and Early Jazz Festival. Dalton made his solo piano debut at TSJS several months after appearing with the New Wonders, and his solo album, Eccentricity, is on the Rivermont Records label.

Banjoist/guitarist **Jared Engel** is a professional musician who has been living and working in New York City since 2003. An accomplished multi-instrumentalist, Jared splits his time between performing on the upright bass, tuba, and the 4-string plectrum banjo. He is specialized in many forms of traditional American music and maintains a very active career of playing concerts all over the world.

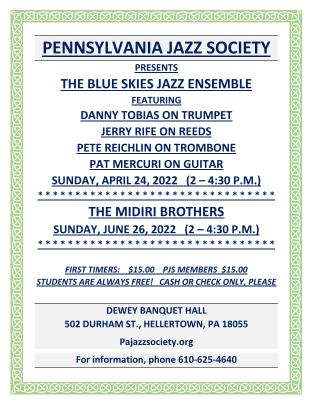
Bass saxist **Jay Rattman** boasts an impressive discography that includes Urbanus by vibraphonist Stefon Harris, nominated for the 2010 Best Contemporary Jazz Album Grammy, and New Celebration, the last big band album by the late NEA Jazz Master Phil Woods. His musical sensitivity and spontaneity have placed him in demand in a wide range of settings from contemporary classical chamber music to early jazz, klezmer, creative improvised music, straight ahead jazz and everything in between. He has performed at most of the major clubs in New York in addition to MoMA, the Coachella Festival, Red Rocks Amphitheater, The Late Show with Stephen Colbert, and The Tonight Show with Jimmy Fallon.

Drummer **Jay Leple**y has lived and performed in New York City for nearly two decades. Hailing from Seattle, he has developed a reputation as a passionate and stylish performer and appeared with many jazz and traditional jazz groups, including Michael Arenella and His Dreamland Orchestra, Dan Levinson (including an appearance at TSJS), Champian Fulton, Tamar Korn, Terry Waldo, and the Tom Abbott Orchestra. In addition to the New Wonders, he performs regularly with Emily Asher's Garden Party (with whom he was heard at TSJS in October, 2018) and Dandy Wellington & His Band.



Made possible by funds from the <u>Camden</u> <u>County Cultural & Heritage Commission at Camden County College</u>, a partner of the <u>New Jersey State Council on the Arts.</u>

**AREA JAZZ** 



## A Preview of our May Concert The New York Classic 7

Sunday, May 15, 2022 2:00 to 4:30 pm

Community Arts Center, Wallingford, PA
By Bill Hoffman

The return of multi-instrumentalist Colin Hancock on May 15 is a concert not to be missed. His band, the Original Cornell Syncopators, first played for Tri-State in November, 2018. A few days later they were on the card at the San Diego Jazz Festival, their first of two consecutive appearances at that annual event.

The Syncs, if you saw them here in 2018, was an expanded version of the quintet Colin formed from Cornell students (plus one faculty member) to re-create the seminal recordings of February 26, 1917 by the Original Dixieland Jazz Band. Those are widely, though not universally, considered the first examples of recorded jazz. I went to Ithaca to see this performance, and that's where I met Colin.

Not content to rest on those laurels, he expanded the band so it could perform arrangements of the Wolverines, Fletcher Henderson's first band, and other pioneer bands of the early and mid-20s. That's the aggregation that played at CAC about 18 months later. I remember mentioning at that concert that I was prouder to present this band to Tri-State than any other I had booked up to that point, or since, and many of the bands that have performed for us are led by my good friends.

The Syncs went on to record two CDs and made many performances in and around Ithaca, as well as one in New York City that I also attended, before Colin and some of the original members graduated by 2019. Colin then went to grad school for a degree in urban planning at Columbia, a 2-year program. While in NYC he quickly developed a reputation for not only his playing but his deep knowledge of the music. I've been listening to this music for nearly 60 years and my knowledge pales compared to his. While at Columbia he formed bands made up of a couple of his fellow Cornellians and other well-respected young jazz musicians in New York, many of whom have played for us with their own or other bands. He has caught the attention of New York heavyweights like Vince Giordano and Dan Levinson who have served as mentors.

Colin got his master's at Columbia in 2021 and had plans to go to law school. Columbia was his first choice so he could stay in New York and continue to make music. But the pandemic put a halt to that, and he is now finishing up what's called a "gap year." But he stayed in the city, and with some friends rented a brownstone in Brooklyn where he has set up a recording studio in the basement and continued to lead and sit in with various trad bands in the city. He plans to make a record there for which he has brought in the acclaimed fellow multi-instrumentalist Andy Schumm from Chicago. (Andy is in the band you'll be seeing on May 15.) He has also made cylinder records on home equipment and traveled to festivals in Europe. He's played in the house band at Mona's several times, and the first two sets there are streamed every Tuesday evening beginning at 9 on Facebook and YouTube.

As for law school, Colin has been accepted at the University of Texas where he'll start in the fall, so for a few years he'll be scarce, though not entirely absent, from the New York scene. Meanwhile, Colin has left a rich trove of self-produced recordings on YouTube which I encourage you to check out. On many of them he plays every instrument in the band, having recorded each track and then dubbed them together. But you needn't be satisfied just with YouTube.

I've given you only a brief sketch of what Colin's been up to musically the past three years. Come to the May 15 concert and see for yourself. Colin is a true Renaissance man of traditional jazz.

## This Month in Recorded Jazz History By Jim McGann

March 2 (1931) Blanche Calloway and Her Joy Boys recorded in Camden, New Jersey on the Victor label. Blanche Calloway was Cab Calloway's sister, and like her sibling, could put on quite a show. The accompanying band was Andy Kirk's Clouds of Joy, a band based in Kansas City which would become a popular big band as the swing era progressed.

**Personnel:** Calloway – vocals\* and bandleader; Harry Lawson, Edgar Battle, Clarence Smith – trumpets; Floyd Brady – trombone; John Harrington, John Williams, Lawrence Freeman - saxes; Mary Lou Williams – piano; Bill Dirvin – banjo; Andy Kirk – tuba; Ben Thigpen – drums; Billy Massey – vocals.

"Casey Jones Blues (Casey Jones)," "There's Rhythm In The River,\*" "I Need Lovin'\*"

March 5 (1929) Louis Armstrong and His Orchestra recorded in New York City, on the Okeh label.

This recording session was the first meeting of Armstrong and Teagarden.

**Personnel:** Armstrong – trumpet and bandleader; Jack Teagarden – trombone; Happy Caldwell – tenor sax; Joe Sullivan – piano; Eddie Lang – guitar; and Kaiser Marshall – drums.

"Knockin' A Jug"

March 6 (1934) Fletcher Henderson And His Orchestra recorded in New York City, on the Victor label.

**Personnel:** Henderson – piano, arranger and bandleader; Russell Smith, Joe Thomas, Henry "Red" Allen – trumpets; Claude Jones, Keg Johnson – trombone; Buster Bailey, Russell Procope, Hilton Jefferson, Coleman Hawkins – saxes; Bernard Addison – guitar; John Kirby – bass; Vic Engle, drums; Charles Holland – vocals\*; Will Hudson, Russ Morgan arrangers.

"Hocus Pocus," "Phantom Fantasie," "Harlem Madness,\*" "Tidal Wave"

March 14 (1938) Bob Crosby's Bob Cats recorded in New York City, on the Decca label.

**Personnel:** Crosby – leader; Yank Lawson – trumpet; Warren Smith – trombone; Irving Fazola – clarinet; Eddie Miller – tenor sax; Bob Zurke – piano; Nappy Lamare – guitar, vocals\*; Bob Haggart – string bass; and Ray Bauduc – drums.

"March Of the Bob Cats," "Palesteena,\*" "Slow Mood," "Big Foot Jump," "The Big Crash From China," "Five Point Blues"

March 16 (1924) Fate Marable's Society Syncopators recorded in New Orleans, Louisiana, on the Okeh label. Marable led bands on steamboats sailing up the Mississippi River during the late 19 teens and early 1920s. Among the musicians who played for Marable were Louis Armstrong, Henry Red Allen, Jimmy Blanton, Johnny and Baby Dodds, Pops Foster among others. This was Marable's only recording.

**Personnel:** Marable - piano and bandleader; Sidney Desvignes, Amos White – trumpets; Harvey Lankford – trombone; Norman Mason, Bert Bailey, Walter Thomas – saxes; Willie Foster – banjo; Henry Kimball – tuba; and Zutty Singleton – drums.

"Frankie And Johnny," "Pianoflage"



With a passion for traditional jazz, Jim McGann has reviewed and photographed Tri-State Jazz concerts since the early 2000s.

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And THANK YOU to **ALL** our members for renewing memberships enabling Tri-State Jazz Society to fulfill our mission of the preservation and live performance of traditional jazz.

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#### **TSJS CONTACT INFORMATION**

**Mailing Address:** 

PO Box 896 Mount Laurel, NJ 08054

Click to Send us an Email

Hotline Phone for updated concert information:

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Online enrollment and renewal are available with PayPal. You can use your PayPal account or make credit card payments using PayPal's secure website, accessed directly from our Tri-State Jazz Society website.

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#### THE STRUTTER IS ON THE WEB

Current and back issues of The Strutter are on the Tri-State Jazz Society website. The Strutter archives cover over ten years of back issues listing all the bands and soloists who performed during that period.

Read back issues of The Strutter

Take a look at our **NEW Tri-State Jazz Society website!** 

## CONCERT SCHEDULE Sundays from 2:00 to 4:30 pm

Visit our <u>Tri-State Jazz Society website</u> for up-tothe-minute news about schedule and concert changes, or call our Hotline at (856) 720-0232.

4/10/22 Haddonfield (Also online)	Mike Davis's New Wonders This youthful band from New York wowed our audience at their initial concert in 2019. They're coming back with hot jazz and dance music from the 1920s, including many tunes that are rarely played.		
5/15/22 Wallingford (Also online)	New York Classic 7 This band led by Colin Hancock made its debut in Switzerland in October. They make their US premiere for us! Colin was a big hit with Cynthia Sayer's band in November, and with his Original Cornell Syncopators in November, 2019. Also live on the web.		
6/12/22 Haddonfield (Also online)	Neville Dickie and the Midiri Brothers  After a COVID-enforced absence, stride and boogie- woogie pianist Neville Dickie from England returns, accompanied by his favorites Joe (reeds) and Paul (drums) Midiri.		
7/10/22 Wallingford (Also online)	TBA Check the TSJS website for updates.		
8/21/22 Haddonfield (Also online)	Midiri Brothers Sextet This always-popular band returns.		
9/18/22 Wallingford (Also online)	Rossano Sportiello - pianist Internationally acclaimed pianist Rossano Sportiello first performed for TSJS in August, 2016. Due to his busy schedule, we've been unable to get him back— until now. Also live on the web.		
10/16/22 Haddonfield (Also online)	Richard Barnes & the Blackbird Society Orchestra The BSO returns to Tri-State, today in Haddonfield. Come early, there's sure to be a big crowd for this TSJS favorite!		

Streaming concerts can be viewed on the <u>Tri-State Jazz Society</u> website, <u>Facebook page</u>, or our <u>YouTube channel</u>

**Wallingford** concerts are held at the Community Arts Center, 414 Plush Mill Rd., Wallingford, PA 19086; one mile from Exit 3 of I-476 ("The Blue Route"). Located between Media and Swarthmore. **Directions** 

**Haddonfield** concerts are held at the Haddonfield United Methodist Church, 29 Warwick Rd., Haddonfield, NJ 08033; just south of Kings Highway near the center of town; two blocks from the PATCO station. **Directions** 



Tri-State Jazz Society, formed in 1988, is dedicated to the preservation and live performance of traditional jazz. Concerts featuring leading professional soloists and bands are presented throughout the year. Events are open to the public and all who enjoy traditional jazz are invited to join. The society is a non-profit educational corporation supported by its members.

### Membership

Basic dues are \$20 per person. New and renewal memberships can be started in any month and run for one year. In addition to half-price concert admissions, members receive The Strutter newsletter by email.

Premium memberships help sustain and expand the work of Tri-State Jazz Society. Individual Sponsors contribute at the \$50 level (\$70 for couples); Patrons, \$100 (\$120 for couples); Sustainers \$200 or more (\$220 or more for couples). Premium-level members are eligible to attend an annual reception for Sponsors, Patrons and Sustainers.

Visit our website for more details:

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Dues and donations may be tax deductible under IRS Section 501(c)(3).



## **Membership Form**

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