BALTIMORE JAZZ ALLIANCE

FALL 2022 INSIDE THIS EDITION

Seth Kibel's Newest Album *Clarinetflix & Chill* 3
Jim Podgurski Will Be Missed 4
A Treasure Trove Of Jazz In Howard County 6
Baltimore Jazz Fest 2022 7
Baltimore Jazz Fest Photos 8-9
Music Lesson 11
Players and Listeners Make The Music Together 12
RIP David D. Crandall, Renaissance Man 13
Member Notes / Member Benefit, Community News 14
BJA Membership Form 15

VOLUME EIGHTEEN + ISSUE FOUR + THE BJA NEWSLETTER + WWW.BALTIMOREJAZZ.COM

CHUCK KARNER
Drummer With A Sense Of Fun

By Terry Koger

PHOTO COURTESY OF CHUCK KARNER

Drummer Chuck Karner is one of Baltimore's jazz treasures. "Chuck is a unique musician who brings a childlike mischievousness to his jazz stylings," says pianist Matthew George, who has often played with Karner. George adds, "He is an entertaining person as well as performer, and it has been a pleasure playing with him these many years." Liz Fixsen, who has been involved with Karner in various jazz settings, gives testimony to his playfulness. She recalls how once at a Django jazz jam at The Avenue Kitchen in Hampden, he played "percussion" while seated at the bar, using metal swizzle sticks and beverage glasses with various quantities of liquid, and other objects. Fixsen says, "Chuck's playing is always confident and tasteful. He is never intrusive, but he is never just marking time. He is always playing something interesting and inventive, sometimes changing the groove in the middle of the tune, just to liven things up."

Chuck Karner was born in Baltimore City and his family later moved to Harford County. Early in life Chuck's parents played music in their house and his mother often sang songs she knew. He received his early musical training in the Harford County public school system, developing an interest in drums in the fourth grade. In his middle school years, he landed his first professional gig with a rock band he had formed with friends. Karner continued to refine his drumming skills and musical knowledge through high school, and at University of Maryland, Baltimore County he studied

(continued on page 2)

How Your BJA Supports the Jazz Community

By Ian Rashkin

Back in May we reported that we received a National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) award for the third Baltimore Jazz Fest, and that got me wondering – do you know how your BJA is funded? And how we use those funds? As you may know, BJA is a small organization, run by volunteers for the good of the community (we hope), without staff, rent, or many of the other operating expenses of a larger, more traditional non-profit. We do have some regular expenses, including maintenance of our website, and editing and design services for creation of this newsletter, but most of our budget is funneled straight back to you, our jazz community, in the form of special events, sponsored performances, member grants, and educational programs.

Our most recent annual report shows this clearly (you can find the report at https://www.baltimorejazz.com/about/). In fiscal year 2022, nearly half of BJA's budget went toward producing our Baltimore Jazz Fest, with other performances, newsletter production and design, and the Baltimore Jazz Conference taking up 12%, 13%, and 3%, respectively. Only about 15% of our budget was spent on overhead (like web

(continued on page 5)

PHOTO CREDIT: EFRAIM RIBEIRO

Music lovers enjoying BJA's third Baltimore Jazz Fest

The Baltimore Jazz Alliance is a 501(c)(3)tax exempt organization.

The Baltimore Jazz Alliance (BJA) is a grass-roots organization of jazz aficionados, musicians and venues dedicated to enhancing and promoting jazz in Baltimore and the surrounding areas. New members sharing this passion are always welcome as the BJA continues its efforts to build a stronger and better networked jazz scene. Together we can help this music thrive in the region and reward listeners and musicians alike.

BJA Priorities

- To develop new audiences for jazz
- To strengthen communication within the jazz community
- To improve media relations on behalf of the jazz community
- To bring greater visibility to the entire array of jazz offerings in the Baltimore region
- To provide greater access to performance opportunities for Baltimore-area jazz musicians

Visit www.baltimorejazz.com for information about our accomplishments and future goals.

Baltimore Jazz Alliance
3000 Homewood Avenue #33347
Baltimore, MD 21218-9998

Please direct your questions and comments to:
webmaster@baltimorejazz.com

BJA Board

Nathaniel "Tre" Barr
Susan Carlin
Anna Celenza
Tyrone Crawley, President
Alice Downs
Steve Everette
Jean Farnsworth, Secretary, Vice President
Liz Fixsen, Editorial Committee Chair
Robin Houston
Kwamé Jamal Kenyatta-Bey
Ian Rashkin, Treasurer

Barry Glassman, Founder and Emeritus
Camay Calloway Murphy, Emerita
Mark Osteen, President Emeritus

Newsletter

Gail Marten, Jazz Palette Editor/Designer

CHUCK KARNER

Drummer With A Sense Of Fun

(continued from front page)

under Dr. Stuart Smith.

Among Karner's major influences on drums are Jack DeJohnette, Dennis Chambers, Tony Williams, Elvin Jones, and Max Roach. He once "tracked" Max Roach to a hotel near a performance to have a conversation and get some insight from the master.

He also learned several lessons from Steve Ashcraft, drummer in the Hank Levy Big Band: the unique role of the drummer as the driver of a big band; how to follow the form and know the melody throughout the song; the need to play an accent after every eight bars to keep the form together. He has internalized these lessons in his playing. Aside from Ashcraft, Karner credits others who have helped him develop, including drummer Tony Sweet, pianist Bob Butta, and saxophonist Ron Diehl.

Currently Karner plays with several house bands and other combos in the Baltimore area. He has performed with many of Baltimore's most noted players, including Michael Raitzyk, Seth Kibel, Michael Joseph Harris, Bob Boguslaw, and Darryl Brenzel. He often played with the late Paul Wingo at the erstwhile, famous Tuesday nights at Bertha's Mussels in Fells Point. Currently, he plays with the Worthy Brothers Band (Eric and Zach), and is rehearsing the music of Wayne Shorter with a trio, including Ned Judy on keys and Larry Melton on bass. Karner enjoys teaching music at his home studio and subbing for Eric Kennedy at the Music Workshop in Baltimore.

Karner talks and plays with joy and pleasure. The only fear he has musically is a train wreck—which he is always prepared to remedy. In my experience, his playing and attitude are always positive and energetic; he is always eager to play and encourage others.

PHOTO COURTESY OF CHUCK KARNER

Karner believes music is a healing force. He believes that music is an art that can positively affect artists, their friends, students, the audience, and other artists. Music, he believes, can bring people together to realize what we all have in common.

Karner encourages people to go hear live music, visit art shows, or hear poetry. Supporting the arts will enrich your life, he says, not just because you enjoy the art, but also because you get to meet and converse with people. "If I can make someone feel something," says Karner, "that means everything to me! It's a privilege to take people on a journey for a while and be energized by music. . . . Music enriches life and eases troubles."

Karner is currently retired and staying at home as a "house father," enjoying home projects and his time with his grandchildren. But making music—and bringing joy while doing it—remains a big part of Karner's life.

Terry Koger is a jazz saxophonist and leader of the Terry Koger Quintet, which performs regularly throughout the Baltimore/D.C. region. He has taught saxophone, clarinet, oboe and bassoon in the Baltimore/Washington area for over 30 years. We are pleased to welcome Terry back to our team of writers.

www.baltimorejazz.com

Seth Kibel's Newest Album *Clarinetflix & Chill*

By Kris Belgica

Woodwind player extraordinaire Seth Kibel has received much praise for his stellar performances throughout the years, and has become a highly sought-after performer around the Mid-Atlantic region. He has recently released his fifth album—*Clarinetflix & Chill*—in which five tracks straddle a variety of musical styles, offering much delight to the listener.

The recording is a collection of Kibel's original compositions, written in late 2021. He selected some of the DMV area's top jazz performers to be a part of the project: pianist Ellington Carthan, guitarist Christie Macdonald, bassist Eliot Seppa, and drummer Joey Antico. In early 2022, the group came together at the Blue House Live audio/video facility in Kensington, Maryland to start the project, and found that within only a couple of hours they had a finished product—a testament to each musician's professional capabilities. The recording was done "live" with the entire ensemble recording together in the same room without headphones, overdubs, or any other studio activity.

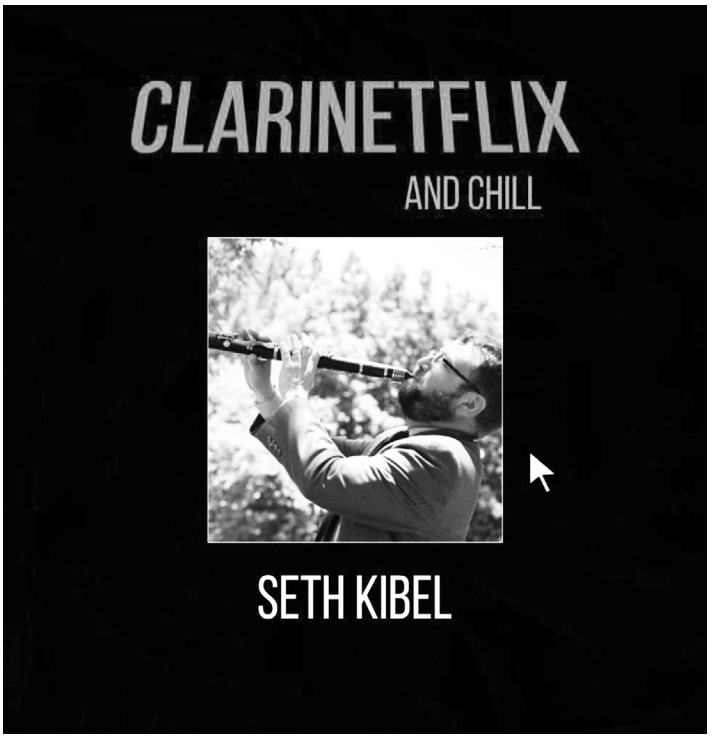
The album opens strongly with the jovial "Rapid Test." Kibel plays a tuneful melody on clarinet, then immediately unleashes a blazing solo. Macdonald's feisty guitar passages demonstrate her mastery of everything from blues licks to Django Reinhardt-style playing and smatterings of Middle Eastern colors. Drummer Antico keeps on course, then briefly trades eights with each member of the ensemble, returning to tapping a steady beat.

Kibel has proven to be one of the best entertainers of our region. On top of virtuosic playing, he keeps his audiences deeply engaged by sharing interesting historical tidbits about the music he plays and by cracking witty jokes in between songs.

"The Gaisin Shuffle" is a lovely Latin jazz/klezmer hybrid composition dedicated to the Ukrainian village Gaisin, where Kibel's grandfather was born and lived during his youth. Kibel says, "As I was writing this tune . . . I was imagining him as a boy, [idly] sauntering around the village." The track was released early, before the rest of the album, immediately following the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. All the proceeds of online sales—$900—were donated to the International Rescue Committee to aid Ukrainian refugees.

"The Just Soul is a Light" made a strong impression on me for its uplifting and soulful melody. I also enjoyed Seppa's expressive upright bass solo, during which he occasionally replicated motifs from the melody. This is a track that gospel music fans will especially enjoy.

On the thoughtful jazz waltz "How Will I Know?," Kibel and Carthan share an exceptional chemistry. The introspective nature reminds me of The Dave Brubeck Quartet's 1964 album *Jazz Impressions of Japan*. The album concludes with "Resolution Not Supported," where a relaxed melody rides atop a bouncing rhythm section. In this track, Carthan's exploration of several melodic and rhythmic ideas reveals his possession of a wide-ranging arsenal of skills.



I attended the debut live performance of this album at An die Musik in the spring of this year and was blown away by the show. During this concert (as in many of Kibel's other shows I have attended), there were many smiles and participatory foot taps from the audience.

Kibel has proven to be one of the best entertainers of our region. On top of virtuosic playing, he keeps his audiences deeply engaged by sharing interesting historical tidbits about the music he plays and by cracking witty jokes in between songs. Not to mention his famous "disappearing clarinet" shtick where he takes apart the instrument piece by piece and continues to play until he is making music with only the mouthpiece! If there is ever a recurring theme in any of Kibel's shows, it's this: *Have fun.*

The album is available only digitally; you can listen to it on Spotify, Apple Music and Bandcamp. You can also find the album here: sethkibel.bandcamp.com/album/clarinetflix-chill.

Kristoffer Belgica is a Baltimore-based guitarist who plays in local Gypsy jazz ensembles Hot Club of Baltimore and Swing 5. He also leads the 27th Street Klezmer Band. After seven years of service in the U.S. Air Force, Kristoffer now studies anthropology at Towson University while contributing to the Baltimore jazz community. He has written several articles for the BJA newsletter.

Jim Podgurski Will Be Missed

By Bob Jacobson

On May 30th, the Baltimore jazz community lost one of its best, most versatile musicians, guitarist and vocalist Jim Podgurski, who died at age seventy-six. Podgurski had come full circle. He grew up in Dundalk and had bought a home there just over one year ago. He had lived in many other places between the 1960s and 2020s, notably Fells Point.

Podgurski's father bought him a beginner's guitar at age nine or ten, upgrading to a Gretsch when he noted his teenage son's persistent interest in the instrument. Podgurski attended Dundalk High School, dropped out, received his GED and later attended Essex Community College. He served as a Navy shore patrolman in Vietnam. Later, Podgurski toured with two of pop music's most beloved and successful stars— pianist Roger Williams, who had twenty-two hit singles, and vocalist Jack Jones, who received two Grammy awards. He spent the rest of his life in Baltimore.

Trombonist, educator and band leader Charles Funn says of Podgurski, "That guy could play anything." Bassist Larry Kinling—who played Sunday brunch gigs with Podgurski for sixteen years at Kelsey's Restaurant in Ellicott City, one year at Birds of a Feather in Fells Point, and one year at Café de Paris in Columbia—agrees with Funn, adding, "Jim was really well-rounded musically. He could read well and knew a lot of different styles—country, blues, rockabilly, jazz—and he definitely had his pop thing together." When asked about Podgurski's singing, Kinling replied, "He was a very melodic singer who sang in a very pleasing range. I remember him singing 'I'll Be Around,' 'The Night Life,' and 'Autumn Leaves' at Kelsey's. I loved it when Jim sang."

Although Podgurski played mostly in jazz duos and trios, he was also a member of big bands led by Gene Walker, Bing Miller and Warren Kellerhouse. "Jim said that Warren liked him because he was selective in what he played," says drummer Kevin Hayes, who became a close friend of Podgurski's after meeting him at a jazz brunch in Timonium in 1985. Hayes, an alumnus of the Jazzmobile big band in New York City, adds, "I thought he was a great guitarist. I loved playing with him." Guitarist Dave Leoni met Podgurski when they were both teachers at Music City in Essex in 1974. "Jim was a great musician, knew his theory and was very dedicated to his music," says Leoni. Podgurski later taught and was a sales clerk at Dundalk Music, which Leoni owned for 35 years.

Podgurski was not only an accomplished musician; he was skilled in carpentry, roofing and general home improvement. "I remember him hanging doors at (saxophonist) Whit Williams's house in the '90s and coming in tired and worn to a Sunday brunch gig the day after working on a roof," says Kinling, who also cites Podgurski's skills in auto repair and guitar repair and construction.

PHOTO CREDIT: LARRY KINLING

In Memorium

And now for some personal remembrances. I just came across set lists from 2007 to 2011, when I led a trio with Kinling and Podgurski at Donna's Café, in Columbia. The tunes really cover the waterfront—swing, ballads, blues, calypso, bossa nova, samba, waltzes and other styles. Podgurski was open to performing the whole gamut, from tunes that he and Larry had played together for years at Kelsey's, to tunes that were totally new to him, such as "Chim Chim Cheree," from the movie *Mary Poppins*. I also remember a night when my uncle, a retired music professor and band leader, sat in with us on clarinet. He had a great time, leaving me with this advice: "Make sure you hang on to these guys."

In the last few years before the pandemic lockdown, Jim was part of a group of retired and semi-retired musicians who got together frequently at a Nepalese restaurant on Belair Road near the Beltway, trading songs or jamming after lunch. I remember him choosing the theme from the movie *Black Orpheus*, "Manha de Carnaval," playing beautiful chords on an acoustic guitar and, with his head tilted back and eyes closed, singing with great depth of feeling. I have no doubt that many local jazz players and fans will remember similar experiences with Jim Podgurski.

Bob Jacobson has written for *DownBeat*, allaboutjazz.com and jazzreview.com. He also wrote chapters on Ellis Larkins and Hank Levy in the 2010 book *Music at the Crossroads: Lives and Legacies of Baltimore Jazz*.

How Your BJA Supports the Jazz Community

(continued from front page)

servers, insurance, and bank fees), while 7% was spent on grants to members for projects they proposed.

Just under 13% of our income came directly from our members in the form of dues and direct contributions—a significant amount and one that tells us and our other funders how much we mean to the community. But the majority of the money we spend on events, programs, and information comes from public and corporate sources including not only the NEA, but from the Baltimore Office of Promotion and the Arts (BOPA), the Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC), Johns Hopkins University (JHU), along with a number of other small businesses and corporate donors.

We are extremely grateful for this support from all of these sponsors, but we know that none of them is a bottomless well, and we are continually seeking new sources of funding so that we can continue to support programs and events in the Baltimore region. FY22 was great year for the BJA, and we hope to continue to sustain and increase our level of programming in the jazz community for years to come.

To that end, we welcome your support—as a member, as a donor, perhaps as an employee of a corporation with a matching program, or even as a volunteer to help us connect to potential funders. This is your Jazz Alliance, and if we are doing good for our community, it is because of you and your support. Thank you!

Ian Rashkin served as the president of the Baltimore Jazz Alliance from 2016 through 2021, and currently serves as its treasurer. Recently relocated from Baltimore to Los Angeles, he works as a software engineer by day, playing bass and writing music as time allows.

George Spicka

COMPOSER
PIANIST

Jazz
Classical
Popular
Experimental

JAZZSTREET@AOL.COM / HTTPS://GEORGEFSPICKA-COMPOSER.WEEBLY.COM

You can't use up creativity.
The more you use, the more you have.
– MAYA ANGELOU

Saxophone Lessons with
GREGORY THOMPKINS

Music Director of the Baltimore Jazz Education Project

"One of Baltimore's Premier Tenor Saxophonists"
– The Baltimore Sun

If you like an instrument that sings, play the saxophone.

Contact:
Greg@rolandparkjazz.com
443-854-5876

www.jazzbjep.com / www.rolandparkjazz.com
www.gregthompkinsjazz.com

WE PAY
CASH
FOR RECORDS
AND CDS
JAZZ
ROCK
SOUL
MORE
CALL TODAY
410-627-6017

CashForMusic.com

A Treasure Trove Of Jazz In Howard County

By Liz Fixsen

Baltimore City is a Sinbad's cave of riches for fans of jazz, with a plethora of venues presenting all types of jazz, just about any night of the week. But for those who'd like to venture a bit farther out, more treasures lie a mere twenty to twenty-five miles outside the borders of the city. Howard County, whose northern border comes within 2 1/2 miles of Baltimore city's edge, boasts several venues offering live jazz.

In Ellicott City, about twenty miles west of Baltimore, at the **White Oak Tavern**, in the Enchanted Forest Shopping Center at 10300 Baltimore National Pike, you can enjoy a relaxing Sunday jazz brunch from 11 am to 2 pm. Two trios alternate Sundays: one is led by bassist **Ben Grant** with guitarist Jim Cunningham and drummer John Parsons; the other by guitarist **Tom Lagana**, with bassist Tom Baldwin and drummer Dominic Smith. The establishment prides itself on locally sourced, seasonal, sustainable foods and on its wide array of craft beers, served in a lively pub atmosphere. The brunch includes "unlimited brunch cocktails." Live music of other genres is presented throughout the week.

Also in Ellicott City, at 8180 Main Street in the heart of the historic district, you'll find **Syriana Café**, in a four-story building, constructed in the 1790s of local granite. They host live jazz on Friday nights, 7 to 9 pm. Jazz is also presented on some Saturday nights and Sunday afternoons; on others, pianist Jim Carothers entertains on piano and voice with a mix of classic pop. The jazz lineup includes Baltimore favorites such as The Worthy Brothers (Eric on bass and Zach on piano), Joel-Michael Schwartz (mandolin, guitar), Max Jacobs (violin), and other duos playing in the second-floor dining room. The Café offers a menu of Middle Eastern dishes, and on the first floor, the Syrian owners have set up an eye-catching display of Middle Eastern objects d'art, many for sale.

Another Ellicott City gem is the **Little Market Café**, facing Tonge Row and Parking Lot D, and flanked by venerable stone buildings from the 1800s, once housing for mill workers, now occupied by specialty shops. The café offers an array of sandwiches, wraps, pizza, and salads in a delightful outdoor eating area facing the stage where live music, including the occasional jazz performance, is presented. If the weather is chilly, guests can stay warm by an open-pit fire in front of the stage. In July, the café hosted The Main Street Jazz Group.

There is also the **Judges Bench Pub**, 8385 Main Street on the west end of town, hosting jazz jam sessions on the first and third Tuesday of the month. Guitarist **Michael Banham** hosts the first Tuesday, with bassist Walter Heber and drummer Jim Deshler. Pianist and trumpeter **Mike Grasso** hosts the third Tuesday with bassist Steve Zurier and drummer Neal Bam Feldman. Lots of Baltimore jazz folk are regular participants, including Mark Kraemer, Jim Martino, Lionel Lyles, Michael Weber, Mike Graham, and others, and singers often sit in with the band. The pub offers typical pub fare and features craft beer, boasting the "largest selection of single malt whiskies in Maryland," and numerous bourbons, ryes, wine, and other spirits served up by Tony and Natalie in a crowded but convivial atmosphere bathed in the light of the colorful neon window signs.

Heading down Route 29 into Columbia, you'll find two more great establishments featuring live jazz. One is **Stanford Grill**, 8900 Stanford Blvd, a hidden treasure up on a hill overlooking Route 175, tucked away in a maze of nondescript office buildings and parking lots. A jazz trio plays there

Thursday through Sunday, 6 to 9 pm, with pianist **Bob Deiner** presiding at the baby grand next to the bar. He is accompanied by some of the region's most accomplished sidemen, including guitarists Steve Abshire (Thursdays and Fridays), Rick Whitehead (Saturday and Sunday) and bassists Amy Shook, Peter Nevell and Max Murray. Tim Smith writes in his 2018 review in the *Baltimore Sun*, "This establishment has the clubby-but-not-too-exclusive look down pat—lots of wood; crisp white shirts and black vests for the servers; rows of cozy booths; a long rectangular gas fire casting its refined glow; a suave jazz combo playing nightly in a corner of the bar area." (If you want to hear the music, sit at the bar; unfortunately, the sound doesn't carry far into the dining room.) The specialty at Stanford Grill is roast chicken, and they keep a row of whole birds turning on a spit in full view on a wood-fired rotisserie.

PHOTO COURTESY OF 18TH & 21ST

18th and 21st is another classy establishment in the heart of Columbia, at the corner of Broken Land Parkway and Little Patuxent Parkway, a short distance from Merriweather Pavilion. Named for the constitutional amendments that imposed and then lifted Prohibition, the club aims to emulate the atmosphere of a posh Prohibition-era supper club. Like Stanford Grill, the club boasts a small grand piano, and features duos and trios playing jazz from 6 to 10 pm on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, 6 to 11 pm on Friday and Saturday nights, and 5 to 9 pm on Sunday evenings. Recent performers include the Unified Jazz Ensemble, Sara Jones, Bob Butta, Todd Simon, and others. The menu includes small plates, mid-Atlantic seafood, and classic cuts of beef, with more unusual dishes such as lobster Poutine and duck pastrami. The bar offers barrel-aged cocktails like the "Smoked Old Fashioned," with Henry McKenna 100-proof bourbon and brown sugar.

Make that half-hour drive outside the city to enjoy some vibrant jazz experiences in Howard County—and help those venues continue to support live jazz.

Liz Fixsen is a long-time jazz fan and a regular presence in the Baltimore jazz scene. She plays jazz piano and also performs occasionally as a jazz vocalist. She is a member of the board of the Baltimore Jazz Alliance; she edits and writes for the BJA newsletter. Transparency notice: Liz has performed at Little Market Café and Syriana Café.

PHOTO CREDIT: EFRAIM RIBEIRO

By Ian Rashkin

It was another beautiful June day in Baltimore—Father's Day, Juneteenth, and the third Baltimore Jazz Fest, free to the public. This year we were thrilled to have some of the best musicians in the area, from up-and-coming guitarist Milo Simon and his group Colesville Collective, to seasoned pros such as Andrea Brachfeld, Aaron Hill, Elijah Balbed, Ray Winder, Irene Jalenti, and Sean Jones. With the addition of amazing poets/rappers/speakers Keith Snipes, Wordsmith, The 5th L, and the youth and leadership of Dewmore Baltimore, the crowd was kept alternately smiling and dancing and still entranced by the emotional depths and creativity on the stage. It was a perfect way to celebrate the amazing talent that can be found in the Baltimore area year round. This was but a taste—a delicious, rich, taste, but only breaking the surface of what Baltimore's jazz scene, and its creative scene in general, has to offer.

If you were there—you know. If you weren't, we hope you make it next time! But regardless, we hope every one of you can savor some of this amazing Baltimore jazz culture throughout the year, in parks, clubs, theaters, restaurants, and street corners. It's why we—the BJA—do what we do, and frankly, it's what keeps us all going! We thank all the performers and audience members, as well as our excellent volunteers, vendors, and sponsors, for celebrating with us.

See you next year at Baltimore Jazz Fest!

BALTIMORE JAZZ FEST

A CELEBRATION OF BALTIMORE JAZZ

PHOTO CREDITS:
MICHAEL B. FRIEDMAN
STEVE ONEY
EFRAIN RIBEIRO

PEABODY

2022–23 CONCERT SEASON

Peabody's **FREE in-person** and **online** performance season begins this fall, with programs from classical to contemporary, from jazz to dance.

Find your favorites at **peabody.jhu.edu/events**.

Peabody Jazz Ensemble
November 4 • 7:30 pm
Miriam A. Friedberg Concert Hall

Pan American Jazz Ensemble
December 1 • 7:30pm
Joe Byrd Hall

Jazz Combos
December 9 • 7:30pm
Joe Byrd Hall

Peabody Repertoire Jazz Ensemble
November 15 • 7:30pm
Joe Byrd Hall

Peabody Jazz Ensemble
December 8 • 7:30pm
Miriam A. Friedberg Concert Hall

Jazz Combos
December 11 • 7:30pm
Joe Byrd Hall

JOHNS HOPKINS
PEABODY CONSERVATORY

Music Lesson

By Stuart Rosenthal

PHOTO CREDIT: DIDGEMAN, PIXABAY.COM

The following take on jazz appears in the September, 2022 issue of the *Baltimore Beacon*, a monthly publication for people over 50. Incidentally, Rosenthal's jazz teacher at Peabody, Joshua Espinoza, is a charter member of BJA.

Readers won't be surprised to learn that I was a pretty nerdy kid. All right, a ver*y nerdy* kid

In addition to being a diligent student and editor of the school newspaper, I was a classical music buff, very fond of Bach and Beethoven even in my early years.

Oh, but there was one thing I definitely didn't like about music: what my piano teacher called music "theory." That involved learning the various scales and keys, chord types and their inversions, how to transpose and lots of other complex stuff.

At the same time, I knew what the cool kids did. Well, the cool musical kids. They played in the marching band and knew how to improvise jazz. I always envied their latter skill the most.

Well, in July I participated in a one week "piano camp" (for aging pianists like me) at the Peabody Institute of Music in Baltimore. We reveled in our shared love of classical music, enjoyed trying out the harpsichords, and eagerly learned about Debussy and 21st-century composers.

But one of the highlights of the week was the first class of each day: Jazz Improvisation 101, taught by pianist Joshua Espinoza. Wow, I would finally get to learn how to do what the cool kids did!

So imagine my surprise when our daily lessons ended up being about scales, chords, inversions, transposing and more.

In fact, it quickly became clear that the basics of jazz involve not only knowing and memorizing all those things, but *internalizing them* to the extent you don't even have to think about how to play a D minor seventh half-diminished chord in the second inversion. Sheesh!

In addition, it turns out that jazz musicians have to be counting all the time. Have you ever wondered how it is that the different players in a jazz trio or quartet know when to start and stop their turns at improv? I always thought there was some secret signal between the players, but no.

There's a strict method to their apparent madness. For example, in the "blues" style, songs are traditionally made up of 12-measure choruses. After playing it all through once, the improv starts, with one performer allowed to go wild, while the rest of the band keeps the beat going while carefully keeping count (and looking totally relaxed, to boot) until it's another player's turn.

Well, I was dumbfounded. You mean to tell me all those anti-intellectual, pot-smoking, fun-loving jazz musicians in high school spent hours mastering this stuff? I would never have believed it at the time.

At Peabody, our five classes on a simple six-note blues melody got us far enough along that, after days of baby steps, we could actually take turns improvising 12 whole measures over a boogie-woogie bass line. We high-fived each other at our "success," but really, it was pretty pathetic when you think about it.

But it was fun, all the same. And it gave us a glimpse into the hard work it takes to make music sound and look effortless, as jazz musicians do.

Thinking back on the experience, I see clearly now that there are important life lessons embedded in learning and playing jazz.

To get to the point where you can comfortably riff on any melody, you need a firm foundation in the basics. And the more adept you become at mastering the requisite skills, the better you get at cutting loose and being creative.

Isn't that true about almost everything that qualifies as an art or science?

Architect Frank Gehry no doubt had to master the rules of architecture and engineering before he could design gravity-defying buildings that appear to be made of folded cloth or crushed boxes.

Students at cooking schools start out learning to follow recipes closely, develop their sense of taste, and learn the technical elements of cooking and baking before they can ultimately create a menu full of delicious concoctions.

The same can be said of pilots, fine painters, good doctors and almost any other profession you can think of.

Only after mastering the basics are you truly able to take flight creatively. Oh yes, and play some darn good jazz.

Stuart Rosenthal is the publisher of the *Baltimore Beacon*, where this article originally appeared. Read more at: TheBeaconNewspapers.com. Hear Stuart's original music at: stuartsmelodies.com.

Players and Listeners Make The Music Together

By Michael B. Friedman, LMSW

PHOTO CREDIT: MICHAEL B. FRIEDMAN

During a recent performance at Keystone Korner, Samara Joy—a fine young singer—said how glad she was to be appearing before a live audience again. "I love hearing an audience speaking back to me," she said. Samara Joy is young, but she gets it. Jazz at its best is a conversation—not just among the musicians but also with the audience.

It isn't necessarily that way. Sometimes the musicians are just playing mechanically, following the changes and not really interacting with each other, like children engaged in parallel play. And sometimes audience members are immersed in conversations with their friends, so that for them, the music becomes just background sound.

But sometimes something magical happens, and the players and the listeners join together in what, for me, both as a player and a listener, is an experience of transcendence, a shared spiritual journey. Frankly, these moments are why I play and why I go to live performances rather than just listening to recordings.

I am not alone. Other jazz fans who were recently interviewed by Liz Fixsen shared their experiences in listening to jazz. Sue Carlin, a member of the Baltimore Jazz Alliance board of directors, said, "When I am at a jazz performance, I feel a close togetherness with everyone there. It is like we share a wonderful secret." Carol Kowarski, another devoted fan of jazz, commented, "Musicians become more inspired and animated when playing in front of an enthused audience." Saxophonist Derrick Michaels observed, "Undivided attention is the best recipe for music of depth and substance. This is true both on the bandstand and in the audience."

Alice Schlothauer, who described herself as both a performer and a listener, said of her experience, "The folks in an audience absolutely have an influence on how I present any piece of music. I set out to tell a story and to create a mood—a feeling. The people listening—their eyes, their body language, their smiles and their tears—tell me what is working for them and bringing them with me into the music. It is gold." She added, "As a listener, I try to connect with the musicians on stage. I listen for their souls and hope to feel that magic only music seems to bring. To look into the eyes of a musician who is truly passionate about what they are doing is a very personal and special moment to me. I feel that jazz musicians make music out of pure love and joy."

Clearly, Schlothauer feels the same powerful emotions that I experience as a player and a listener, at least when the playing is inspired and the audience is attentive. Also, whereas she seems to be moved by what she sees, I—and I believe many others—get our sense of connectedness not from seeing the players and the audience, but from feeling them.

Music obviously is an experience of the senses but—at its best—it is more than that. It is like tapping into an underground channel of energy and enlightenment. Carl Jung, a psychoanalytic theorist of the first half of the twentieth century, called this a "collective unconscious." Players obviously feed into it and draw from it, but so does the audience.

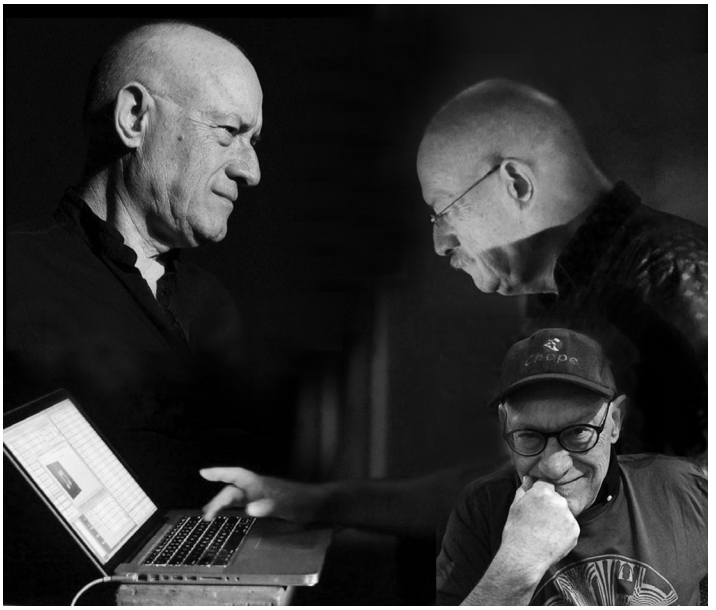
Many years ago, I dropped by the Village Gate on Bleecker Street in New York City to listen to Marian McPartland, a wonderful piano player. Her first set was terrific, and when she took a break, I was delighted to discover that the interim piano player, working solo, was Joel Schulman, a blind musician who used to work across the street at the Surf Maid, where years previously I often had stopped, after working an evening shift, to listen and to play. I called out requests for tunes I had heard him play at the Surf Maid. He came alive. He became more than a journeyman musician filling in for the star; he became the star himself. When I asked him to play "On Green Dolphin Street," he called back, "I need a bass player for that. Is there a bass player in the house?" Marian McPartland's bass player came on stage. They began to play. Then her drummer joined them. It was an electrifying performance. Schulman played at a level I had never heard before, in a fresh, exciting, and connected performance. And the room was with him. The audience and the performer were united. Although Schulman could not see the audience, he could feel us.

Audiences can, and do, have a powerful impact on the music. They can be, and are, part of it. Sadly (this is a player and a listener speaking), audiences sometimes are too immersed in their own conversations, whether at venues where the music is supposed to be in the background or even at the very best listening clubs, such as Keystone Korner. Thus they lose the opportunity for a magical and transcendent shared experience.

Audiences everywhere should listen to Todd Barkan's admonition at every performance at the Keystone Korner. "Take care of the music and the music will take care of you."

Michael B. Friedman is a semi-professional jazz piano player and also a photographer of jazz performers. A retired social worker, he continues to teach at Columbia University School of Social Work and has published over 250 articles, essays and book chapters.
www.michaelbfriedman.com / www.photography.michaelbfriedman.com

RIP David D. Crandall, Renaissance Man



In Memorium

By Liz Fixsen

Baltimore recently lost a true Renaissance man: David Crandall, age 70, who suffered a fatal swimming accident while on a family vacation in North Carolina. Crandall was a familiar figure in the Baltimore jazz community as a saxophonist and, in the words of his sister Cora Wise, "a gifted musician, multi-instrumentalist, composer, computer whiz, voracious reader, and innovative cook," as well as "a crucial figure in the Washington D.C. and Baltimore theater and arts community, especially in the Station North Arts and Entertainment District, which he helped to establish."

During the early days of the coronavirus pandemic, Crandall was very concerned about how the arts could be kept alive during conditions of lockdown and isolation. He contributed an article in the May 2020 Baltimore Jazz Alliance newsletter on methods for collaborating musically online, and he gave a presentation on the same topic in the BJA's jazz conference in October of 2020.

Allison Wise Currin, Crandall's niece, wrote on Facebook: "David could play just about any instrument and had an important role in the DC/Baltimore theater community for decades, yet he was so humble. He always brought his MacBook with him, ready to work on the next project from the kitchen table whenever he had a spare moment. He often brought at least one instrument to practice for upcoming gigs."

Crandall was also a popular performer at the Christmas Country Dance School (CCDS) in Berea, Kentucky, one of his former homes. Kent Gilbert, a member of the CCDS, recalls: "David was . . . a consummate musician, master of nearly every instrument he touched. His flute and woodwind additions to Christmas School dances were only some of his many contributions over the many years he attended and played on staff."

Gilbert continues: "David was renowned for a certain acerbic perspective tinged with both cynicism and humor in equal measure, even if they were sometimes in competition with each other. But in music, in jam sessions, and in fellowship with musicians riding the waves of melody and rhythm, he truly came alive." Crandall was part of a band called The Bluebird Special in the 1970s and 1980s. They played a wide range of styles, from jazz to traditional folk to original songs. In September of 2020, Crandall remastered and reissued the album in digital form and on major streaming services: www.facebook.com/theBluebirdSpecial/

Musician Rob Hatch reminisced on Facebook about a musical project he shared with Crandall, who did some technical wizardry to put a "crazy Hendrix vibe" on the guitar parts played with French horn and sax. "When I peered into the computer screen and saw the complexity, magic, and vision of what he was cooking up," wrote Hatch, "it made me say "Yep. That's why I'm just the bass player."

Crandall held a Master of Fine Arts degree in Imaging, Media, and Digital Arts from University of Maryland, Baltimore County. Back in the early 2000s, he co-edited *Radar,* a free monthly publication distributed at businesses and arts venues in Baltimore, which, in Crandall's words, was intended to "create a local culture of criticism and an on-going dialogue between writers and artists." Lee Gardner, who worked with Crandall while Gardner was at *City Paper*, said, "He was smart, voluble, and passionate about what people were up to around here."

Laure Drogoul, who describes herself as an interdisciplinary artist, also gave a tribute on Facebook: "Thanks for your wry humor, expansive mind, and endless support of the weirdo, difficult crackpot expressions of our fragile cultural landscape. Thank you for nurturing the brilliant raucous chaos of the unseen art scene and for working in the trenches on multiple peculiar theatrical events . . . my own works included."

More about the life and work of David Crandall can be found at an obituary by Jacques Kelly, in the August 4th issue of the *Baltimore Sun*: www.baltimoresun.com/obituaries/bsmd-ob-david-crandall-20220804-ls3rbl5rqnc45ni74tmproqp64-story.html.

This extraordinary man will be greatly missed.

Membership in BJA
is the perfect gift for jazz lovers!
It's the gift that keeps on giving!

See page 15 or visit: www.baltimorejazz.com

BJA Member Notes

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Jane Backert, Ray Baylor, Nadja Beverly-Balde, Hannah Boland, Mariah Bonner, Mark Deffenbaugh, Megan Dunn, Toni Gross, John Harris, Russell Hayward, Donnetta Johnson, Ebony Kenney, Andrus Lugo Cruz, Joe Mannherz, Donna McClurkin-Fletcher, Joel Michael-Schwartz, Sharon Moore, Fern Shen, Milo Simon, Cheryl Summerlin, Joseph Turner

Saxophonist/clarinetist **Bob Jacobson** was featured in the 8/22/22 Baltimore Banner article "Baltimore street entertainers say they are being shortchanged by the city".

In July, *DownBeat* magazine featured **Sean Jones** on its cover and in its lead article.

Saxophonist, band leader and teacher **Terry Koger** will receive an Annie Award for performing arts from the Arts Council of Anne Arundel County on October 11, 2022 at Maryland Hall for the Arts.

Todd Marcus Jazz Orchestra's latest album, *In the Valley*, received a 4-star rating from veteran critic Scott Yanow in *DownBeat's* August issue.

Philip Ravita has become an endorsed artist for Aguilar Bass Amplifiers as well as REMIC Microphones. He continues to teach at Mount St. Mary's University, Prince Georges Community College, College of Southern Maryland and Harford Community College. His new CD *City Light*s is scheduled for release in February 2023.

Warren Wolf placed second on vibraphone in *DownBeat's* 2022 critics poll.

BJA Member Benefits

Your support is crucial to the success of the Baltimore Jazz Alliance! When you join, membership benefits include receipt of our quarterly newsletter, discounts on BJA merchandise, advance notice about all BJA events, and of course the satisfaction of being a part of Baltimore's best source of information and advocacy for Jazz. You can also help us to shape our support for jazz in Baltimore – apply for a member grant to help fund new programming, be it a recording, an event, an educational idea, or almost anything else! If you're not yet a member, JOIN TODAY!

BUT THAT'S NOT ALL! The following venues and other businesses offer discounts to BJA members:

- **An die Musik** offers 10% discount for BJA members for music purchases at the An die Musik record store.
- **Chamber Jazz Society of Baltimore** offers BJA Members a $2 discount off the general admission price. Just indicate your affiliation when ordering tickets.
- **Eubie Live!** at the Eubie Blake Cultural Center at 847 N. Howard Street offers a discount to BJA members on rentals of its performance and events spaces.
- **Jazzway 6004** offers BJA Members a $5 discount on performances at their venue. (currently closed)

BJA is supported in part by a grant from the Creative Baltimore Fund, a grant program funded by the Mayor's Office and the City of Baltimore.

Thank you!

Mayor Brandon Scott
& the City of Baltimore

CREATIVE
BALTIMORE
FUND

Community News

- **Ernest Shaw**, the mural artist who painted Billie Holiday at Pennsylvania and North Avenue and Nina Simone at 401 E. Lafayette Street, both in Baltimore City, won the Mary Sawyers Imboden Prize for 2022, with a cash award of $40,000.
- **Kris Funn** was voted seventeenth in the Rising Star category on bass in *DownBeat's* 2022 critics poll.
- **Geoffrey Himes** was among those voting in *DownBeat's* critics poll.
- Flutist **Andrea Brachfeld's** latest album, *Evolution*, received a 3 1/2 star review in *DownBeat's* August issue. Reviewer Josef Woodard noted Brachfeld's use of "indigenous instruments not usually heard in jazz circles" and "ethnic detours into Inuit cultures . . . and African Baka tradition."

Find the BALTIMORE JAZZ JAMS at www.baltimorejazz.com/jazz-jams

display advertising

LOW RATES FOR AD PLACEMENT

Reach a targeted jazz market by advertising in the BJA Newsletter. LIMITED SPACE. Reserve early.

Deadline for WINTER 2023 issue: NOVEMBER 15, 2022

Print-ready display ads* to: jazzpalette@gmail.com

BJA reserves the right to reject inappropriate copy.

***Ad Specs:** Original B&W line/vector artwork in jpg format at 600 dpi are preferred. Pixel-based images (photos) should be 300 dpi or higher resolution.

AD PLACEMENT RATES AND SIZES:

$15 for 1/8 page	(3⅝ in. wide x 2¼ in. high)
$30 for 1/4 page	(3⅝ in. wide x 4¾ in. high)
$60 for 1/2 page	(7½ in. wide x 4¾ in. high) horizontal
$60 for 1/2 page	(3⅝ in. wide x 9¾ in. high) vertical
$120 for full page	(7½ in. wide x 9¾ in. high)

Payment (checks only) payable to BJA should be mailed to:

BJA, 3000 Homewood Ave. #33347, Baltimore, MD 21218-9998 or via PayPal at www.baltimorejazz.com (click Donate button) Please indicate ad size and month(s) for placement.

REMEMBER…BJA offers FREE online promotion of your jazz events!

Enter your gigs at: www.baltimorejazz.com

Direct questions or comments to: webmaster@baltimorejazz.com

Do you need a display ad?

JAZZ PALETTE GRAPHIC DESIGN will design your print-ready display ad for a reasonable fee.

jazzpalette@gmail.com • 410-294-0193
www.jazzpalette.com

GAIL MARTEN, EDITOR/DESIGNER
BJA NEWSLETTER
jazzpalette@gmail.com
www.jazzpalette.com

BALTIMORE JAZZ ALLIANCE MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please return this form along with your check to:
THE BALTIMORE JAZZ ALLIANCE
3000 Homewood Avenue #33347, Baltimore, MD 21218-9998

Note: All contributors of $75 or more get a free BJA baseball cap.

Join Online at: www.baltimorejazz.com

First Name _____ Last Name _____

Street Address _____ Apt/Suite No. _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone(s) _____ Email _____

Please DESCRIBE yourself: (just one please) ❍ Music Lover ❍ Musician ❍ Producer/Promoter ❍ Agent

❍ Media ❍ Club Owner/Manager ❍ Non-profit or Educational Institution ❍ Other _____

AMOUNT OF CONTRIBUTION: ❍ $25 Basic ❍ $50 Sustaining ❍ $50 501(c)3 Organization ❍ $75 Other

❍ $100 Patron ❍ $200 Corporate ❍ $15 Student – (copy of ID required)

BJA has been granted 501(c)(3) status by the IRS. All donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Thank you for joining! Your membership makes a difference!

BALTIMORE JAZZ ALLIANCE

3000 Homewood Avenue #33347
Baltimore, MD 21218-9998

BJA is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization

FALL 2022

OCTOBER / NOVEMBER / DECEMBER

Dedicated to promoting Jazz in Baltimore!

Soundtrack for your Everyday CHILL !!!

24/7 Streaming Jazzy Music Station

CREATIVELY CURATED

TheBocX.com
Get the App!

Get your *Free*

BocX Mobile APP

Scan the QR code

" if you're here...You're Far from Square !!! "