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Jazznotes

Vol. 35 No.01 • 616-490-9506 • www.wmichjazz.org • info@wmichjazz.org

February-March 2021

Black History Month - 2021

WMJS would like to recognize, honor and celebrate five WMJS (MOY) Musician of the Year recipients, with an African-American heritage, during this month of Black History in February, 2021. WMJS is proud to present these fantastic musicians to you in honor of Black History Month.



Jimmy Forrest: (1920-1980) He was the inspiration and catalyst for which this society was formed. Jimmy was on the road with Duke

Ellington, was the featured tenor sax soloist with Count Basie and he had a hit tune, Night Train. I should also mention he recorded with Miles Davis! Once Jimmy settled in Grand Rapids, his influence and enthusiasm were infectious; he was truly an original and mentor to many young jazz players and always very supportive of local jazz. There is an LP that was recorded here in GR with Shirley Scott on Hammond B3 Organ, and our own Randy Marsh on drums!!! I also got to play drums with Jimmy. I remember Jimmy was featured with Dr. Bruce Early Big Band at the Calder Festival. Jimmy started soloing, Bruce brought in the backgrounds and then on to the out melody with Jimmy soloing throughout! The song ends and Jimmy's still playing! In between breaths he says in the mic, "I'm not done yet"!!! He proceeded to give us all a lesson in jazz saxophone that day! Wow!!!!

I got to experience jazz education cross over from learning this music from guys like Curt in a jam session, to learning in a formal classroom setting. Curt would get a big kick out of playing a bebop melody that he didn't even know the name of and asking us what we called it. We would tell him the title and ask where and how he learned it. He would give off that great big laugh of his and tell us that Bird came through town and taught it to us at an all-night session. Wow!! Remember, this music is an oral (African) tradition, which is how things were passed onto the next generation! Curt Purnell - a Master musician indeed! Curt was voted our first Musician Of The Year in 2000.



Mel Dalton: (1931-2008)

Once again, I will say Mel was a truly marvelous saxophonist, gentleman and mentor to many of us! He had a dynamic presence, a very unique individual sound and total control of his instrument. I'd like to share

a couple of stories... Mel always liked to dress to the nines! One time I came to a gig with a pair of (soft kid) leather shoes I purchased in Brazil. He went nuts for them! Lo and behold sometime later (I think it was the night WMJS honored him as MOY), he showed up on the band stand with the exact same style shoe! Enough Said!! (LOL)

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Curt Purnell: (1922-2006)

Man, could this guy play some saxophone! Curt was also a great showman. He could get an audience eating out of the palm of his hand. Curt had so many connections with the elite jazz

masters. Oftentimes, cats like Clark Terry would stay at Curt's when coming through town with Duke Ellington's Band. Curt once brought Rahsaan Roland Kirk to GR gigging his way to Chicago to record his first LP, way before anyone had even heard the name.



WMJS Musician of the Year (MOY) 2004, Tim Froncek, reminisces about five MOY musicians that he had professional contact with over the years. Tim shares his memories with observations and musical anecdotes.

One more quick story!!! Mel and I were on a gig with Edye Evans Hyde in Muskegon, opening for Arturo Sandoval and the great Ray Charles. We did our set, Arturo came out and killed it, then it was time for Ray! Now Mel was sitting backstage waiting for the show to start. (Side note Mel was in Ray's Band many years earlier traveling on the road as featured tenor soloist.) So Ray's band kicks into the intro tune as Ray is being led on stage to thunderous applause. As Ray passed Mel, all Mel said was "Hey Ray, how you doing?" Ray, hearing his voice, stops, turns and says "Mel, That You?" Man, I was blown away! I was in the presence of two master musicians indeed! A moment to remember!

Elgin Vines: (1935-) Here is a guy with energy and talent to spare!!! NO-BODY swings like Elgin Vines on the bass. He is a force to reckon with!



I first met Elgin with Bruce Early in a duo format. They were the jazz guys everyone talked about. Elgin had a fantastic career in music going for him. He decided to plant his roots here in GR with his wife and kids. After retirement from working the lab at Amway, he once again got busy playing music and swinging us all into bad health!

I was on stage at Aquinas Jazz Festival one year with trumpeter, Clark Terry and ready to start a big band rehearsal when Elgin showed up, plugged his bass amp in and was ready to go. Now the first part of the day was quite uneventful, musically speaking, but when Clark counted off the first tune and Elgin kicked in, Clark smiled and said to me "That's what I'm talking about!" Thanks Elgin!!!

Edye Evans Hyde: (1957-) What a voice, what a talent! West Michigan is so blessed to have her around! Local girl "done good"! I remember when she first started singing and hanging around Aquinas College.

We all knew she had that something special in her voice. She has traveled many places - to the West Coast, to Europe and the Far East. Everyone loves her and wants to keep her for their



very own, but we are glad she comes back home to share her singing with us!! Edye has a gift which makes the listener feel like you are the only one in the room and she is singing to you. Very moving and inspirational!

Edye and her husband Mike have been broadcasting duo concerts during the Covid restrictions. We all hope that everyone can get together and share in live performances again soon!

I've had a little story of each person so far. I feel very close and proud to have started Edye and Mike's son Evan on drums. Evan has matured into a fantastic musician! He is residing in NYC and making a name for himself. (So Uncle Timmy couldn't be prouder!!)

- Tim Froncek

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Letter from the President, Michelle Needham

I would like to share a little about myself and how I evolved to be the President of the West Michigan Jazz Society. I grew up hearing music almost every day in our house. My mom taught piano and band instruments in schools and in our home. I only took piano lessons for a short time from my mom, but I loved to sing. I was in choirs and musicals, but I did not truly realize my love of jazz music until I joined vocal jazz at Aquinas College. That experience opened a whole new world to me.

When my son was around 5-years-old, I heard about the Jazz at the Zoo and began taking him to have a picnic and listen to music. At the time, I really did not know much about the West Michigan Jazz Society, but it gave me the opportunity to do something fun with my young son. I did not realize at the time that several years later I would be lead to the jazz society by my friend, Shannan Denison, and eventually be the president of the board. She invited me to a Jazz Gumbo at New Holland Brewing, and I started attending events and ended up joining the board in June, 2018.

Being part of the West Michigan Jazz Society and of the board has been a fantastic experience! I have met so many wonderful people and have enjoyed a lot of great jazz! As all of you know, this has been a very difficult year for all of us. It has completely changed how we give our members the music they love to hear. We have offered Jazz in the Parking Lots at Amore and Noto's and virtual Jazz Talks. There was a Supper Club event at Noto's and a Jazz Jam at Sandy Point Beach House. We are going to have a virtual jazz holiday concert at Blue Lake Radio and are working on having virtual concerts and having special jazz events for Black History month.

In order for the West Michigan Jazz Society to keep offering these events, we need the support of current members and new members. Not having our normal events and having a drop in membership renewals this year has been a financial challenge for the jazz society. We want to continue on with our mission to advance, uphold, and sustain live jazz in West Michigan through promotion, performance and education, but we need your help. Please show your support by renewing or becoming a new member or simply donating to the West Michigan Jazz Society.

Thank you, and I look forward to getting together again to hear live jazz music!

Jazz around West Michigan - February through March 2021

SUNDAYS

Edye and Mike Hyde, Live streaming on FB, 7pm

TUESDAYS

The New Standard at Snug Harbor Restaurant,
Grand Haven, 6-9pm

WEDNESDAYS

John Shea live streaming on FB with
Rob and Fred, 7-9:30pm
WMJS Jazz Talk Live Streams, weekly on FB, 8pm

THURSDAYS

Sandy Point Beach House, West Olive, 6-9pm
1st week The New Standard

2nd week In The Blue Jazz Ensemble

3rd week GVSU or Hope College Faculty jazz
jam, open for sit-ins

4th week JMM Jazz

Mary Rademacher Thursdays @ 4:30, live stream
on Facebook

FRIDAYS

John Shea live streaming on FB with
Denis and Fred, 7-9:30pm

SATURDAYS

John Shea live streaming on FB, 7-9:30pm

WMJS Membership Renewal 2021

Our membership renewal date is fast approaching for 2021. We know things have been very difficult financially for many of us due to the covid-19 pandemic. However, we at the WMJS are still committed to our objective to advance, uphold, and sustain live and virtual Jazz in West Michigan through promotion, performance and education. In order to do this we need your help. You can do this through renewing your membership this year.

In normal times a membership would give our members preferred parking for our events, our newsletter and reduced fees for attending our events like our Annual Holiday Party and Musician of the Year Party. This year we needed to be innovative since we could not offer in person concerts. We held drive-in jazz concerts at Amore and Noto's. The West Michigan Jazz Society has been offering "Jazz Talks" on Facebook Live where you can learn about various jazz musicians and singers and how/why they became a jazz musician or singer, hear panels of jazz teachers discuss how they are handling the pandemic with their classes, a panel of students talking about jazz and many other informative and interesting jazz talks. We also held a free holiday livestream event on December 18th, 2020. We would like to continue to offer live stream concerts on a consistent basis while we are not able to have live concerts, and are looking forward to being able to have live concerts again in the future.

We need your support to help keep this Great American Art Form alive in West Michigan. All of these events, newsletters, online offerings, etc. incur costs. The West Michigan Jazz Society is solely funded by membership and donations. These funds pay for musicians and singers to perform at events, for the costs incurred to create the newsletters, the website and various other expenses to keep our organization in existence.

Please consider renewing your membership or becoming a new member this year so we can offer more programs and options in 2021, whether they are virtual or in person. We would like to continue to give our members various options to listen to and learn more about jazz with your help. We have some exciting ideas for 2021 which we are working on now and look forward to sharing more details soon!

If you are not a member of WMJS:

Become a member of the West Michigan Jazz Society and begin to enjoy the benefits of belonging to a successful organization dedicated to the preservation, scholarship, and promotion of jazz in the West Michigan community.

The West Michigan Jazz Society is a non-profit (501) (c) (3) organization and is open to all on a non-discriminatory basis. Members will become a part of our constantly updated database of information and will be able to take advantage of many events, offers, promotions and activities that are organized or supported on a regular basis by our Society.

To Renew your membership:

Here are our Regular Membership Levels

Student - \$20

Single - \$35

Couple - \$50

Donor - \$100

Patron - \$250

Benefactor - \$500

WMJS now offers these NEW annual membership levels for musicians, groups, and venues!!

Individual Jazz Musician (\$35...or \$20 for students)

- Premium jazz notes gig listing periodically
- Premium web listing for gigs periodically
- Artist bio added online and featured social media post after joining
- Added to WMJS referral list (posted online)

Jazz Band (2-4 members) (\$100)

- Premium jazz notes gig listing periodically
- Premium web listing for gigs periodically
- Band bio added online and featured social media post after joining
- Added to WMJS referral list (posted online)
- Each band member will be covered as a member (Up to 4)
- This would be registered to the director of the group or four members of the group only if the band exceeds four members (for a group such as a big band)

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Featured Jazz Venue (\$250 or equivalent product donation)

Listed as an official WMJS partner venue

- 1/3-page ad in jazz notes annually
- Premium web listing annually
- Social media post after joining
- Must host jazz events on a minimum quarterly basis for consideration
- Recommended to offer a benefit to WMJS members (such as a free appetizer)
- These same benefits could be offered, but could also include the underwriter benefit if the venue donated at the benefactor level (\$500+)
- Sponsor (\$500 minimum donation or equivalent product donation)
- Listed as an official WMJS sponsor
- 1/2-page ad in jazz notes annually
- Premium web listing annually
- Social media post after joining
- Underwriter level sponsor for 1 event per year included (first come, first served. Ex: WMJS Jazz Gumbo presented by "XYZ corporation"). They could also receive verbal recognition to the audience at an event for supporting WMJS.

Sponsor (\$500 minimum donation or equivalent product donation)

- Listed as an official WMJS sponsor
- 1/2-page ad in jazz notes annually
- Premium web listing annually
- Social media post after joining
- Underwriter level sponsor for 1 event per year included (first come, first served. Ex: WMJS Jazz Gumbo presented by "XYZ corporation"). They could also receive verbal recognition to the audience at an event for supporting WMJS.

Please renew by visiting our website.

<https://wmichjazz.org/membership>

If you don't want to become a member of WMJS please consider donating by going to our page. <https://wmichjazz.org/donations-to-west-michigan-jazz-society>

Thank you again for being members of the West Michigan Jazz Society in 2020, and we look forward to seeing you again at events in 2021!

- Kevin Jones, Membership Committee Chair

"Two parts Sinatra, One part Billy Joel"

Tony DeSare is an entertainer, singer, pianist, songwriter and arranger who has been on the jazz and Broadway scene since his first big break at The Carlyle Hotel in 1998, where he played eight nights a week. Guitarist Bucky Pizzarelli saw him frequently there and was instrumental in developing DeSare's career, offering to play (for free!) on his first demo. Tony then went on to star in an off-Broadway musical, *Our Sinatra: A Musical Celebration*, which toured nationally. He's added scoring music for several movies, as well.

DeSare has also been compared to Harry Connick, Jr. with his charming good looks, a voice that can belt it out or melt your heart, and impressive skills as a pianist/arranger. He is making a big splash this year - and gathering fans in waves with his "Song Diaries", a daily recording of standards, pop and originals from his home studio in Atlanta, GA, since the lock-down in March of 2020.



What started as a whim - just something to keep busy with when all of his 2020 performances were abruptly cancelled - quickly became a regular feature on his facebook and youtube pages. Long-time and new fans are flocking to catch his song of the day, hanging on until he says those magic words to close: "See you tomorrow". DeSare is genuine, often responding to requests, compliments

and sharing his knowledge of the music, as well as inviting his wife, Daisy, and their 6 yr old son, Christopher for an occasional appearance.

This busy musician was featured with The Grand Rapids Symphony Orchestra on December 4, 2020 and is part of the virtual performance that was available to view throughout December with a ticket purchase.

You can catch him daily on his youtube or facebook pages, Tony DeSare and Tony DeSare Band or get details for upcoming concerts or purchase his music at www.tonydesare.com.

- Mary Rademacher

WMJS and GRNoir Wine & Jazz presents: Grand Rapids in Black - A Black History Month Celebration

Feb 16 2021 at GRNoir in person and live streamed: • 7-7:45pm set of music by Elgin Vines Trio
• 7:45pm-7:55pm video presentation and remarks • 8:05pm-9:05pm set of music by Tenth World

Tenth World is a group formed by percussionist Kevin Bujo Jones and pianist/composer, Kelvin Sholar through a partnership created back in 1999 in New York City. Together Jones and Sholar formed a collective of young talented master musicians on the cusp of realizing a new and creative sound that combined the harmonic sensibilities of Jazz and Soul with the rhythms of the African Diaspora. Over the years Tenth World has recorded 3 albums along with many other side projects with another release expected within the next 6 weeks.

Bill Milkowski wrote in **“Jazz Times”** in a review of their CD “Tenth World” - “Kevin Jones combines the spirit of Africa with modern jazz on his impressive debut as a leader..... Tenth World incorporates the heightened aesthetic of John Coltrane’s classic quartet.....”

Kevin Bujo Jones started his professional career in 1972, has played with Whitney Houston, The Isley Brothers, Reggie Workman, Winard Harper, Archie Shepp, Talib Kibwe (TK Blue), Boney James and Angela Winbush just to name a few. He has led Tenth World for the past 20 years and the band has played major Jazz Festivals all over the world.

The band on February 16th will include Detroit natives, Pianist Kelvin Sholar, Bassist Damon Warmack, Drummer Nate Winn and Ugandan Guitarist Ivan Akansiima.



Kelvin Sholar is a multi-talented pianist, composer and producer whose performance and recording credits include Stevie Wonder, Carl Craig, Q-Tip, Lenny White, Wallace Roney, Greg Osby, The Fort Apache Band (Jerry and Andy Gonzalez), Winard Harper, Ronnie Cuber and many, many more.

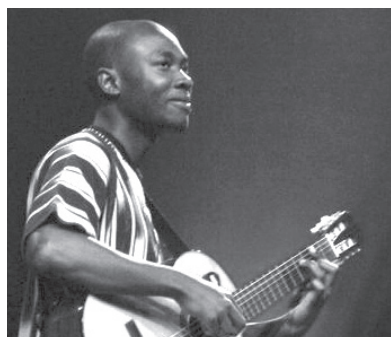
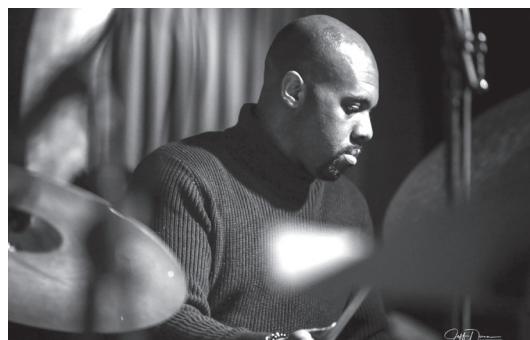


Damon Warmack

is one of the most celebrated and respected bassists to come out of Detroit. Chris Jisi of Bass Player magazine remarked of Damon’s playing, “One of the most remarkable bass players I’ve ever heard.” Warmack has performance and recording credits that include Fransico Mora Catlett, Stephanie Mills, Thornetta Davis, Vincent Herring, Fred Hammond, Gary Thomas, Q-Tip, Ronnie Cuber, Harold McKinney, Gayelynn McKinney and the McKinney Zone, The Whitfield Music Group, The Spinners, Straight Ahead, Lenny White, Johnny O’Neal, KEM and Stevie Wonder just to name a few.



Nate Winn is a consummate musician, Nathaniel Winn discovered his passion for the drums in church at the age of 4. Since then, the Detroit, Michigan native has never looked back. Nate has had the pleasure to work with many well-known musicians such as Danilo Perez, Robert Hurst, Pat Metheny and Joshua Redman. Nate's versatile, but unique style has earned him the opportunity to appear on numerous albums.



Ivan Akansiima

is a multi-instrumentalist playing guitar, piano, bass and percussion as well as a composer, arranger, producer, instructor, and researcher from Uganda East Africa. He holds a bachelor's degree in music from Hope College and a masters degree in jazz studies from Western Michigan University. His music is rooted in Ugandan folk music traditions, Jazz, Gospel, classical, Caribbean, Afro fusion music etc. He has performed professionally for over 15 years in 40 countries.

- Jake Vanderheyden

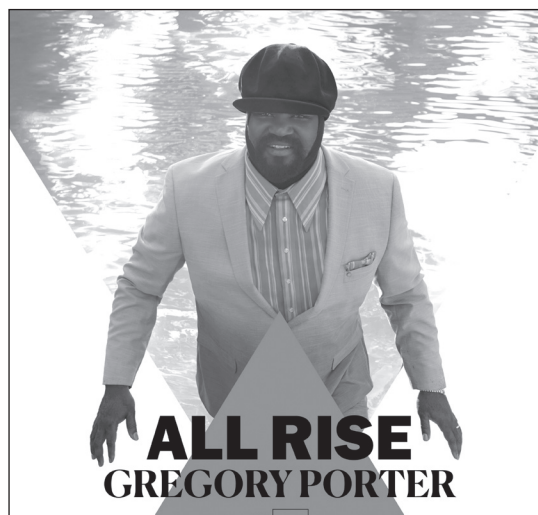
“All Rise!” Gregory Porter - released August 2020

Once in a very infrequent while does a new vocal jazz artist come along to turn the “jazz-i-verse” on it's ear. This is especially true in a mainstream jazz world where instrumental jazz is king, and vocal jazz seems merely an afterthought, or an acquired taste, or not any thought at all. I have often felt that modern vocal jazz has never received its due respect. After the enormous eras of “Lady Day” Billie Holiday, Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, Mel Torme, Johnny Hartman.... you can count on one hand the number of truly original and game changing vocal jazz artists that have emerged. Enter Gregory Porter. He is one of them. His first recording “Water” was released in 2010, followed by the monumental studio recordings “Be Good” (2012), “Liquid Soul” (2013), “Take Me to the Alley” (2016), grammy nominated “Nat King Cole and Me” (2017), and his latest “All Rise!” (2020). “All Rise!” begins where the others leave off, but soon begins a truly magical journey through the genres of 70's soul, Motown, tender pop, and most notably, the spiritual revivalist bent of the deep Southern church. Out of the gate, the soaring “Concorde” promises a glimpse of how this album is truly original and a vast departure from the others. First off, Porter pens every track.... music and lyrics, and lends a deep understanding of, and contribution to, the

horn arrangements and symphonic orchestrations, the vocal choir arrangements. Even the soloing. He is totally in charge and pulls it off brilliantly. The poignant “If Love is Overrated” is proof of his much improved songwriting talent (from earlier works). *“If love is overrated, let me be the one that is naïve. If love is overrated, let me be the one that is deceived.”*

Other notable tracks are his “father” biopic “Dad Gone Thing” and the stirring and raucous “Revival Song”. Everything about this new Gregory Porter opus is refreshing, renewing, natural and unpretentious. Mr. Porter has indeed set a new pace and dramatically raised the bar of modern vocal jazz!

- Mark S. Kahny - January 2021



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*Join us on Wednesday evenings at 8pm
for "Speaking of Jazz with WMJS"
live on Facebook!*

February 3 - "Black Elders of GR"
Mckinney, Edey Evans Hyde and Akua Dixon
February 10 "Black Women in Jazz" - Gayelynn
February 17 "Young Lions of GR" - Evan Hyde,
Quincy Davis, Xavier Davis, Jay Sawyer
February 24 "Current Black Musicians on the
West Michigan Jazz Scene"
March 3 Jordan VanHemert (record release,
Kevin Jones interview)
March 10 Rick Holland
March 17 Peter Lin
March 24 Rev. Willard F. Southern
March 31 Stacy Dillard

Jazznotes

Newsletter for members of the West Michigan Jazz Society

Winter 2021

If you would like your jazz event included
in our media publications please send your
schedules to jlbasham@i2k.com
by the **10th** of the month.

West Michigan Jazz Society Board Members

Board meetings are now held virtually on Zoom. 4th Saturday of each month, 9:30 am

If anyone wants to view them they can ask for the link

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Kevin Jones

**REMINDER: ALL MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS WERE DUE JANUARY 1, 2021. YOUR
PROMPT ATTENTION WOULD HELP US GREATLY AS WE STRUGGLE THROUGH THIS
YEAR OF SHUTDOWNS. THANKS SO MUCH FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**

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- Patron** \$250 ☐
- Featured Jazz Venue** \$250 ☐
(\$250 or equivalent product donation)
- Benefactor** \$500 ☐
- Sponsor** \$500 ☐
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or equivalent product donation)
- Donation Only** \$ ☐

If a dual membership, BOTH names must be listed

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This Winter Issue of Jazz
Notes was produced by:

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LK Creative Design,
Graphic Design and
Production

Printed by Storr Printing

Website Design and
Maintenance by Van Wyk
Technology Consulting
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Winter 2021