

# NEAJAZZ MASTERS 2017





▲ Candido Camero, Joe Wilder, and Paquito D'Rivera jam for the finale of the 2008 NEA Jazz Masters concert. Photo by Tom Pich



## **2017 FELLOWS**

**DEE DEE BRIDGEWATER**

**IRA GITLER**

**DAVE HOLLAND**

**DICK HYMAN**

**DR. LONNIE SMITH**





▲ NEA Chairman Jane Chu introduces the 2016 NEA Jazz Masters concert at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC. Photo by Shannon Finney

When the NEA Jazz Masters awards began in 1982, it was to ensure that the purveyors of this important, uniquely American art form were appropriately recognized for their contributions and achievements. There was a worry at first, as there was with its sister award program also started in 1982, the NEA National Heritage Fellowships, that they might run out of artists who lived up to the high standard of excellence in the art form. It was an unnecessary concern, as over the past 35 years, the 145 awards have been made to stellar musicians and advocates who have lived up to that high standard—and the list continues to grow of those deserving the NEA Jazz Masters Fellowship, the nation's highest recognition of jazz.

The 2017 class demonstrates the diversity of exceptional talent in the jazz field. Dick Hyman is a masterful improviser and arranger who has continued to celebrate the early jazz piano heroes like Jelly Roll Morton and Fats Waller. Ira Gitler, through his position as an editor at *Downbeat* and his books, was one of the foremost advocates for that innovative style of jazz known as bebop. Dr. Lonnie Smith brought a funky soul rhythm to the music with his masterly command of the Hammond B-3 organ. Dave Holland, starting with a stint with the legendary Miles Davis, has performed effortlessly from traditional jazz to avant-garde, leading numerous bands in exemplary improvisation. And Dee Dee Bridgewater who, from the traditional music of Mali to the singers who influenced her style, demonstrates the great range of her singing talent.

We are also celebrating the centennials of two significant NEA Jazz Masters: Ella Fitzgerald, the first woman to receive the award back in 1985, and bebop pioneer Dizzy Gillespie from the first class in 1982. We are proud to be recognizing the influences of both artists during the concert.

For a second year in a row we are holding this prestigious event in the nation's capital, Washington, DC. I would like to thank our partner, the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, for again producing the NEA Jazz Masters tribute concert in their Concert Hall. The concert is webcast live by the Kennedy Center ([kennedy-center.org](http://kennedy-center.org)) and the NEA ([arts.gov](http://arts.gov)), among others, and will be archived for later viewing.

Please join me in honoring the 2017 NEA Jazz Masters for their work in the jazz field and their contribution to the nation's cultural heritage.

Jane Chu  
Chairman  
National Endowment for the Arts

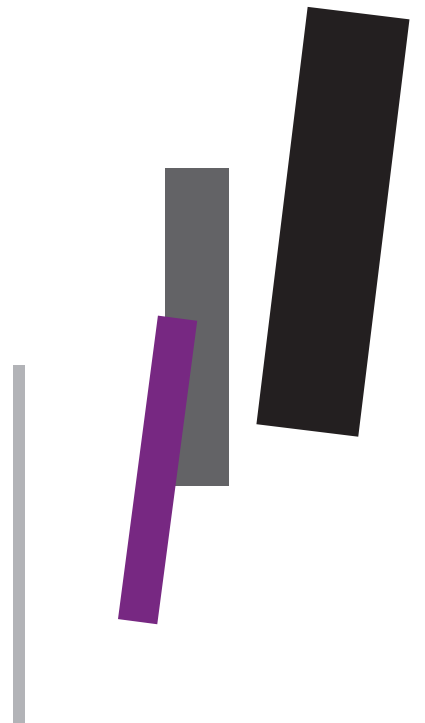


▲ Jason Moran, David Murray, Rudresh Mahanthappa, Linda Oh, and Ambrose Akinmusire (along with Roswell Rudd, Karriem Riggins, and Pedrito Martinez not shown) pay tribute to 2016 NEA Jazz Master Archie Shepp at the concert at the Kennedy Center. Photo by Shannon Finney



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# NEA JAZZ MASTERS

## 2017 FELLOWS

**DEE DEE BRIDGEWATER**

**IRA GITLER**

**DAVE HOLLAND**

**DICK HYMAN**

**DR. LONNIE SMITH**

### NOTES:

Names in **bold** in biographies denote NEA Jazz Masters awardees.

All recordings listed in Selected Discography are under the artist's name unless otherwise noted.

Years listed under recordings in Selected Discography denote the years the recordings were made.

# DEE DEE BRIDGEWATER



## SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

*Love and Peace: A Tribute to Horace Silver*  
(Verve, 1994)

*Dear Ella*  
(Verve, 1997)

*Red Earth: A Malian Journey*  
(DDB Records/  
Universal, 2006)

*Eleanora Fagan: To Billie with Love from Dee Dee*  
(DDB Records/Emarcy, 2009)

*Dee Dee's Feathers*  
(DDB Records/ Sony  
Masterworks, 2014)

Dee Dee Bridgewater is a daring performer of great depth whose singing talents have earned her three Grammy Awards as well as a Tony Award. In addition, her commanding personality made her a natural for hosting the award-winning National Public Radio syndicated radio show *JazzSet with Dee Dee Bridgewater* from 2001 to 2014.

Bridgewater was born Denise Eileen Garrett in Memphis, Tennessee, and raised in Flint, Michigan, in a music-filled home. Her mother introduced her to **Ella Fitzgerald's** music, which became an inspiration to Bridgewater throughout her career, and her father was a jazz trumpeter who taught music at Memphis' famed Manassas High School. While attending the University of Illinois, she joined the University of Illinois jazz band for a U.S. State Department tour of the Soviet Union in 1969. In 1970, she wed her first husband, trumpeter Cecil Bridgewater. They moved to New York City where she found her first professional gig with the Thad Jones-Mel Lewis Jazz Orchestra as lead vocalist. Bridgewater's career then took off and she soon performed and recorded with some of the giants of the music: **Dizzy Gillespie, Dexter Gordon, Max Roach, Sonny Rollins, and Clark Terry.** In 1974, she recorded her first album as a leader, *Afro Blue*.

Bridgewater was also drawn to musical theater. Her portrayal of Glinda the Good Witch in the Broadway musical *The Wiz* garnered her a Tony Award in 1975. When the international touring company of *Sophisticated Ladies* (in which she was the

female lead performer) ended in Paris, France, Bridgewater decided to stay. During her time in Paris from 1986 to 2007, she starred in Stephen Stahl's musical *Lady Day* in Paris and London (for which she earned a Lawrence Olivier Award nomination), and continued to perform in musicals such as *Black Ballad* (with **Archie Shepp**) and *Cabaret* (being the first black actress to star as Sally Bowles) while concurrently performing and recording her jazz material.

The vocalist has created a diverse collection of recordings, including tribute albums to **Horace Silver, Ella Fitzgerald, Billie Holiday, and Kurt Weill;** an album of French love songs, *J'ai Deux Amours*, spurred by a Kennedy Center Valentine's Day concert; and an album born out of Bridgewater's search for her African ancestry, *Red Earth*, recorded in Bamako, Mali, and featuring Malian, U.S., and European musicians. Bridgewater has produced all her recordings since 1993 and has had her own label, DDB Records, since 2006.

Bridgewater serves on the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz's Advisory Board where she has judged several jazz vocals competitions. She also co-leads UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) and U.S. Department of State tours to Russia, India, China, and France, and, since 1999, she has been a United Nations Ambassador for the Food and Agriculture Organization. Bridgewater continues to tour nationally and internationally.

# VOCALIST, PRODUCER, BROADCASTER

Born on May 27, 1950 in Memphis, TN

EXCERPTS FROM THE INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY THE NEA...

## FINDING ELLA EARLY

"My mom loved jazz singers. When I was a baby, she swore that I could scat before I could speak, because she was a huge fan of Ella Fitzgerald. And she said by the time I was ten months, I would stand on the side of my crib and hold the rail and try to scat with Ella Fitzgerald.

"I was always able to scat when I decided I wanted to sing jazz. I thought that scatting was a prerequisite to being a jazz singer."

## THE ADVICE OF THAD JONES

"There are three things that [Thad Jones] told me that I never forgot, and it's like my mantra, and I try to pass that on to young singers. First of all, he said, Don't listen to singers; listen to instrumentalists. If you want to create your own style, that's what you have to do. Number two, always enunciate so that people understand what you are saying. Number three, always sing your melody first—the melody and enunciation went hand-in-hand for him. Otherwise, you do a disservice to the songwriter and the lyricist. People need to know what the song is before you go into improvising."

## COMMUNICATING WITH THE AUDIENCE

"It's very important to create a kind of communication with your audience—the people who have taken time out of their day to come and sit and listen to your music. It's our obligation to give them a good show."

## TRIP TO MALI

"It was born out of my search for my African ancestry. I went to Mali for the first time in 2004 with a gentleman named Cheick-Tidiane Seck. He had done an album with Hank Jones that was just stunning, a combination of West African with Hank Jones' slant on these griot songs.

"There were just all these different-looking black people that I was seeing. I was in heaven. I was like, doggone it, I want to know where I'm from—all I knew was that I was the product of the products of slaves. When we woke up in our hotel and opened the curtains, I saw all of this red, red earth. And I go, 'I know I'm home. I know it.'"

◀ ▼ Dee Dee Bridgewater performing at the Duke Ellington Jazz Festival in Washington, DC, 2008. Photos by Michael Wilderman



# IRA GITLER

A.B. SPELLMAN  
NEA JAZZ MASTERS  
AWARD FOR  
JAZZ ADVOCACY



## SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

*Jazz Masters of the Forties*  
(Macmillan, 1966)

*The Encyclopedia of Jazz in the Seventies*,  
with Leonard Feather  
(Horizon Press, 1976)

*Swing to Bop: An Oral History of the Transition in Jazz in the 1940s*  
(Oxford University Press, 1985)

*The Biographical Encyclopedia of Jazz*,  
with Leonard Feather  
(Oxford University Press, 1999)

▲ Photo by  
Frances  
McLaughlin-Gill

Ira Gitler is an American jazz historian, journalist, educator, and author who has written several books about jazz and hundreds of liner notes for jazz recordings. He has also written for many jazz publications, and served as associate editor of *Downbeat* during the 1960s. In the 1980s and '90s he produced concerts for **George Wein's** New York jazz festivals. Gitler also taught jazz history at several colleges and is considered one of the great historians and champions of the music.

From age seven, Gitler immersed himself in the music of the swing bands of the 1930s and early 1940s. In the mid-1940s, **Dizzy Gillespie** and Charlie Parker's new bebop innovations brought an epiphany. His professional writing career began in 1951, when he was asked to write Prestige Records' first liner notes for a 10-inch LP of *Zoot Sims Swings the Blues*. His duties at Prestige in the early 1950s included producing recording sessions with musicians such as **Miles Davis**, Thelonious Monk, and **Sonny Rollins**. In his 1958 liner notes for *Soultrane*, he coined the term "sheets of sound," likening John Coltrane's emerging style to undulating fabric.

In 1954, Gitler began assisting leading jazz authority Leonard Feather in preparing *The Encyclopedia of Jazz*, one of the first great jazz reference books. He became co-author starting with the 1970s edition, and completed *The Biographical Encyclopedia of Jazz* in 1999 after Feather's death in 1994.

Gitler's own first book was *Jazz Masters of the Forties* (reissued as *The Masters of Bebop* in 2001), which examined the bebop revolution by profiling leading players like Gillespie, Parker, and **Max Roach**, as well as disciples such as **Dexter Gordon** and **J.J. Johnson**. Subsidized by a 1974 Guggenheim Fellowship, he wrote *Swing to Bop*, an oral history weaving ten years of interviews with more than 50 musicians to tell the story of that transition.

Throughout his career Gitler freelanced for U.S. and international jazz publications as well as varied magazines, newspapers, and websites. In addition to jazz, he has a passion for sports and has written several classic books about ice hockey, as well as coaching and playing on an amateur hockey team until age 75.

Gitler's jazz broadcasts were heard on WNCN and WBAI (New York in the 1960s); KADX (Colorado in 1980s); and Sirius Satellite Radio in the 2000s. He has received Lifetime Achievement Awards from the New Jersey Jazz Society (2001) and the Jazz Journalists Association (2002).

# AUTHOR, EDITOR, PRODUCER, EDUCATOR

Born on December 18, 1928 in Brooklyn, NY

## EXCERPTS FROM INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED BY THE NEA...

### FIRST JAZZ BYLINE

"Although he had been going to 52nd Street and other venues around New York to listen to jazz for a little while, it wasn't until 1946, in the springtime, that he heard Dizzy Gillespie at the Spotlight and wrote about it for his high school paper. And that was the first time he was printed writing about jazz."

—Fitz Gitler

### BEBOP

"It is true of criticism, always, to be able to sort out the best of the new. When you break the mold, when you get away from the standards of the academy and get into what is to be the next expression in art, the next form in art, then it takes a really discerning ear to be able to capture what is valuable in that.

"It was radical music, bebop, and it was intended to be, and Ira wrote really quite accurately about what bebop's intentions were in the introduction to his book, *Swing to Bop*."

—A.B. Spellman

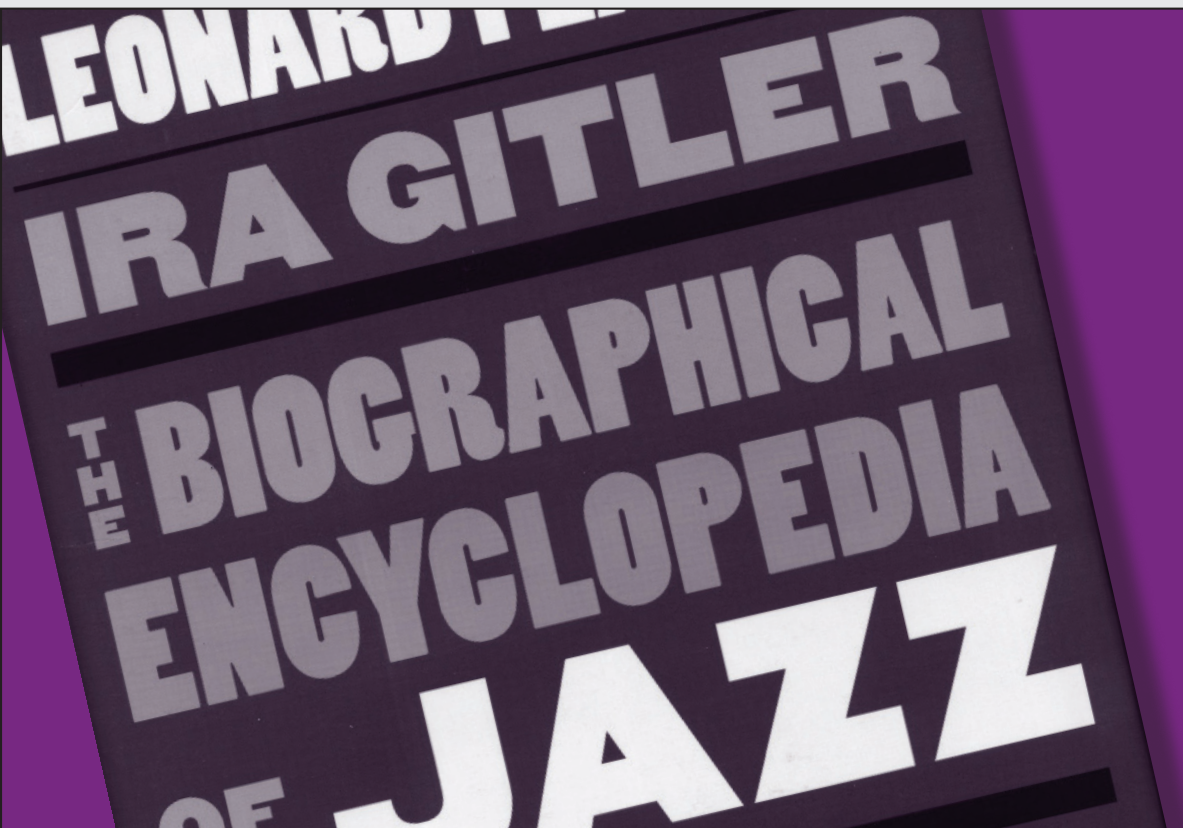
### THE IMPORTANCE OF THE WRITER

"The writer who writes about music for long periods of time, who cares about the history of it, when they review a concert or a record or write liner notes, their job is to really figure out the things that the musician probably didn't put into words yet. It's a job generally meant for people who care about what the musicians do on the

stage, and off the stage, and that they understand that the life is a part of it.

"For Ira Gitler, he writes these wonderful liner notes and really has these relationships with these musicians, just as much as he does with his hockey team. It's this wider part of his life that actually puts everything into context. I'm sure while he's skating around on the ice, he's thinking about John Coltrane making his way through 'Giant Steps.'"

—Jason Moran



# DAVE HOLLAND



## SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

*Conference of the Birds*  
(ECM, 1972)

*Extensions*  
(ECM, 1989)

*Prime Directive*  
(ECM, 1998)

*Overtime*  
(Dare2 Records, 2002)

*Prism*  
(Dare2 Records, 2012)

Dave Holland is one of the most versatile bassists in jazz, working across different styles seamlessly, from traditional to avant-garde jazz to world and folk music. He is also an accomplished composer and bandleader, bringing together musicians of exceptional talent to perform his intricate compositions. In a career spanning five decades, he has continued to evolve musically with each new project while honing his instantly identifiable sound.

Mostly self-taught, Holland picked up the ukulele at the age of four, switched to guitar at ten, and then bass guitar at 13. He left school at age 15 to work as a professional musician and began playing acoustic bass when he was 17. His talent was soon recognized, earning him a place at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama in London, where he studied with James E. Merritt from 1964 to 1968 while also becoming active on the British jazz scene, performing with musicians such as John McLaughlin, Evan Parker, and John Surman. He began playing at Ronnie Scott's Jazz Club in 1966, supporting American acts like Coleman Hawkins and **Joe Henderson**. It was there that trumpeter **Miles Davis** heard him in 1968 and was so impressed that he invited Holland to join his band. Holland relocated to New York and participated in the making of several classic Davis recordings, including the breakthrough albums *In a Silent Way* and *Bitches Brew*, alongside **Jack DeJohnette**, **Herbie Hancock**, and **Wayne Shorter**, musicians with whom he continues to collaborate.

Outside of his work with Davis, some of Holland's more prominent collaborations were his first foray into avant-garde music in 1970 with the group Circle, including pianist **Chick Corea**, saxophonist **Anthony Braxton**, and drummer Barry Altschul; long musical relationships with saxophonist Sam Rivers and trumpeter Kenny Wheeler; recording with rock and folk musicians, such as Bonnie Raitt and bluegrass legends John Hartford and Vassar Clements; and an excursion into flamenco with Spanish guitar legend Pepe Habichuela.

His compositions run the gamut from solo pieces to big band, all wrapped around the bold layered melodies of his exquisite bass playing. His bands over the years have featured some great talent in jazz, including saxophonists Chris Potter and Steve Coleman, drummer Eric Harland, keyboardist Craig Taborn, vibraphonist Steve Nelson, trombonist Robin Eubanks, and guitarist Kevin Eubanks. In 2005, he founded his own label, Dare2 Records, to have greater control over his releases.

From 1983 to 1990, Holland served as artistic director of the summer jazz workshop at the Banff School in Banff, Alberta, Canada. He holds honorary doctorates from the British Birmingham Conservatoire as well as the Berklee College of Music and the New England Conservatory, where he has been a visiting artist-in-residence since 2005. He is also an artist-in-residence at the Royal Academy of Music in London, where he was selected as an Honorary Member. He is a three-time Grammy Award winner.

# BASSIST, CELLIST, COMPOSER, BANDLEADER

Born on October 1, 1946 in Wolverhampton, England

EXCERPTS FROM THE INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY THE NEA...

## FIRST BASS

"There was skiffle music—I think it was particular to England—which is a hybrid of rock-and-roll and sort of folk music. [The bass] was made out of a box they used to ship tea in, a broomstick, and a piece of string. I got my uncle to make me one. This was my first bass."

## OPPORTUNITIES

"At that time, the opportunities in the Midlands for a working-class kid were very limited, unless you went to university. My music activities actually got in the way of my studies at school. Music was a kind of window to the world, and it offered an opportunity to reinvent your life in some ways."

◀ ▼ Dave Holland performing at the Belleayre Music Festival in Highmount, New York, 2004. Photos by Michael Wilderman



## COMPOSITION

"Sometimes you write a song just because it's there—it's just asking to be written. But most of the time, everything I've written almost exclusively has been for some kind of performance or some kind of group. It varies with different contexts, but I kind of follow Miles' premise that less is more—that the less you put on paper, the more opportunity you have for things to happen. I've always seen the composing and the playing as a symbiotic relationship."

## WORKING TOGETHER

"We work as a community in this music, you know? Ideas are shared, experiences shared, and then it's passed on to other generations. In this music, you have the representation of how people can work together and coexist and come to agreements. People from diverse backgrounds, diverse cultures, can come together and find common ground and create something beautiful and something meaningful and do it spontaneously, a way of supporting each other and creating music together."

# DICK HYMAN



Dick Hyman is a piano virtuoso who—Zelig-like—has been known for playing in any style he wants. A masterful improviser, he is also a composer of concerti and chamber music, and the soundtrack composer/arranger for more than a dozen Woody Allen films (including, appropriately, *Zelig*). In addition, he launched the acclaimed Jazz in July series at the 92nd Street Y in New York City and served as its artistic director for 20 years.

Hyman was classically trained by his uncle, concert pianist Anton Rovinsky, and introduced to classic jazz recordings by his brother Arthur. After completing his freshman year at Columbia University, he enlisted in the Navy in 1945, playing with various groups at Great Lakes Naval Station. Upon returning to Columbia after the war, he won an on-air music competition for 12 free piano lessons with jazz great **Teddy Wilson**. By 1949, he had worked with vibraphonist Red Norvo and Max Kaminsky's Dixielanders, and in 1950 toured Europe with bandleader Benny Goodman.

Back in New York, Hyman established himself in freelance recording and studio work before settling at NBC as a pianist, organist, and musical director for five years. He retained his interest in early jazz piano, including in his performances the music of such luminaries as James P. Johnson, Scott Joplin, Jelly Roll Morton, and Fats Waller, as well as later masters such as Thelonious Monk and Bill Evans. Surprisingly, along with his musical interest in early jazz, Hyman was among the first to record on a Moog

synthesizer. His 1969 release of "The Minotaur," a hit single, clearly influenced other artists (in jazz and other genres) of that era and proved to be a cutting-edge jazz improvisation ahead of its time.

Hyman is a virtuoso on the keyboard instrument, and his ability to play in any style is best illuminated by his 1977 release *Themes and Variations on "A Child Is Born."* On the recording, he duplicates the styles of 11 other pianists on the Thad Jones classic ballad, ranging from Scott Joplin to **Cecil Taylor**. No mere mimic though, Hyman features his own style in one of the variations. He continues to perform—often solo—relying on the basic standards repertoire, such as Irving Berlin and Cole Porter, for lengthy improvisations.

His work on stage and screen (both TV and film) has been rewarding as well. As a prolific studio musician, he won seven Most Valuable Player Awards from the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences and received two Emmy Awards for various television work. Hyman was music director for radio and television broadcaster Arthur Godfrey and orchestrator of the hit musical *Sugar Babies*. He also served as composer, arranger, conductor, and pianist for many films, including *The Purple Rose of Cairo*, *Sweet and Lowdown*, and *Moonstruck*.

## SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

*Moog: The Electric Eclectics of Dick Hyman*  
(Command/Varese Sarabande, 1969)

*Scott Joplin: The Complete Works for Piano*  
(RCA, 1975)

*The Music of Jelly Roll Morton*  
(Columbia, 1978)

*Dick Hyman and Ralph Sutton, Dick Hyman and Ralph Sutton*  
(Concord, 1993)

*House of Pianos*  
(Arbors Records, 2014)



# KEYBOARDIST, COMPOSER, ARRANGER

Born on March 8, 1927 in New York, NY

## EXCERPTS FROM THE INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY THE NEA...

### FIRST IMPRESSIONS

"My big brother, Arthur, was the one who collected all of these 78-RPM records, which were tremendously influential on me. I'd memorize them. I still play them, and I know them all very well, the records from the 1920s by Bix Beiderbecke and Louis Armstrong and Jelly Roll Morton. It got me right into this kind of music at a very impressionable age."

### THE JAZZ COMMUNITY

"There is a distinction between jazz people and the people who are not jazz people, who can be close friends and very proficient and often are more advanced than a jazz person in certain technical capacities. But the jazz community is something else. You all recognize that, among each other, you have certain improvisatory gifts, where not everybody has them. It's a blessing to have them, and it works with this kind of music."

### COMPOSING FOR THE SCREEN

"The idea, first of all, is there a musical scene? If there's a musical scene, we know that a character is going to be singing or playing or performing with an orchestra or something that has to be prepared beforehand. That determines a lot of the other music—what you have leading into it, leading out of it.

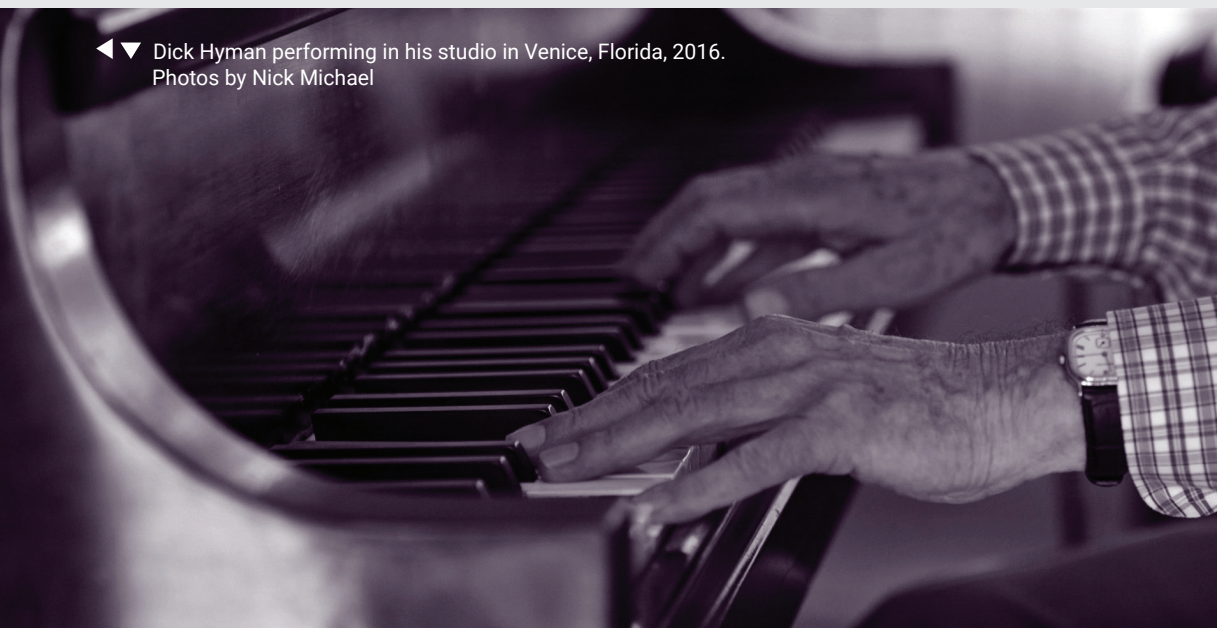
"The other great point of film music is, what is the viewer supposed to be feeling? You are supposed to provide a soundtrack for his emotions—does it require a commentary by the orchestra, or should the orchestra be playing music you're largely unaware of but which is influencing your reception of the drama? These are all questions you work out with the director, who may have some definite ideas. You must come to share the ideas, or else it's not a good relationship."

### PLAYING SOLO

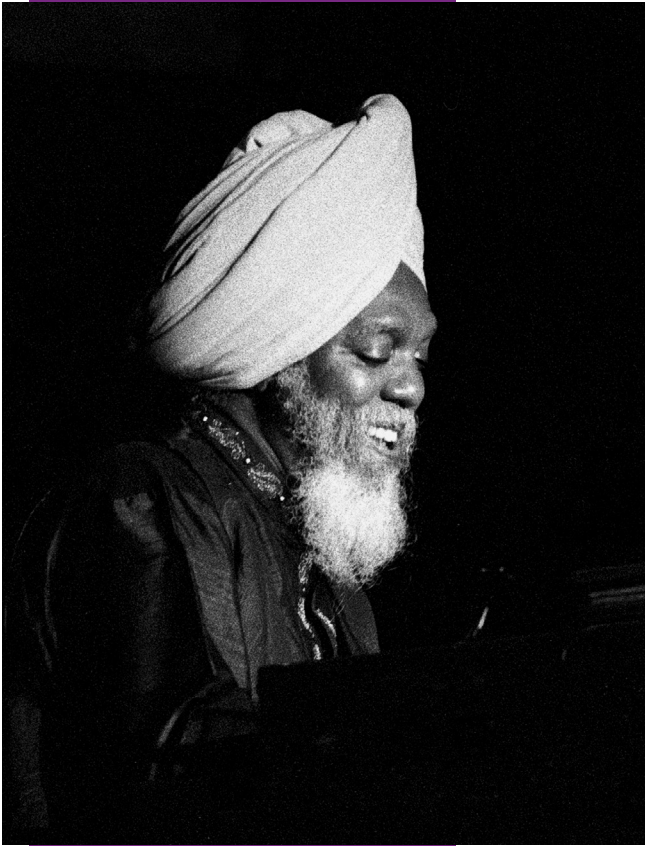
"I think by now my playing has changed a bit. While I will still play, on request, any of the earlier old-time stride or rag pieces that people want, I'm really interested more in playing improvs, because I think that's where I do

my best work on particular songs, in some different ways. I've become more concentrated on my solo playing, and I like that very much."

◀▼ Dick Hyman performing in his studio in Venice, Florida, 2016.  
Photos by Nick Michael



# DR. LONNIE SMITH



Dr. Lonnie Smith is a master Hammond B-3 jazz organist and composer who, in a career spanning more than 50 years, has been featured on more than 70 jazz, blues, and rhythm-and-blues recordings. He is considered one of the premier purveyors of funk/soul jazz.

Smith was introduced to music through the gospel he heard at the church where his mother sang. He was part of several vocal ensembles in the 1950s, and played trumpet and other instruments at school. In the late 1950s, Art Kubera, a Buffalo-area music store owner, gave Smith his first organ on which he learned to play and develop his musical style. In addition to being influenced by the sound of the church organ, he was inspired by organists such as Wild Bill Davis, Bill Doggett, and **Jimmy Smith**.

Smith's first gigs were at Buffalo's Pine Grill Jazz Club, where he garnered the attention of headlining performers including Jack McDuff, **Lou Donaldson**, and **George Benson**. The latter hired Smith as the organist for his quartet to perform in concert and on several of Benson's recordings in the mid-1960s. Smith made his first recording as a leader, *Finger-Lickin' Good*, for Columbia Records during this time. Shortly thereafter, he joined Donaldson's band, appearing on several of his Blue Note albums, including the hit *Alligator Bogaloo* in 1967. Blue Note executives recognized the organist's talent and signed him to the label, which led to the recording of several now-classic soul jazz albums, such as *Think!*, *Move Your Hand*, *Turning Point*, and *Drives*.

Throughout his career, Smith has brought jazz into other genres, such as funk and rock, creating album-long tributes to artists such as Jimi Hendrix and Beck and covering everyone from the Beatles to the Eurythmics. All the while, whether leading a trio or a 15-piece band, he maintained his telltale sound on the organ. His funky organ playing has been in demand by hip-hop groups since the 1990s, with bands such as A Tribe Called Quest, Wu-Tang Clan, O.G.C., Madvillian, and United Future Organization sampling his beats. In 2012, Smith launched his own record label, Pilgrimage Records, before returning to the Blue Note label for his 2016 release, *Evolution*.

Among the honors bestowed upon Smith are *DownBeat's* Best Organist honors (1969) and numerous Organist/Keyboards Player of the Year awards by the Jazz Journalists Association. Both the Buffalo Music Hall of Fame (2009) and Jazz Organ Fellowship (2011) elevated Smith to the ranks of their honorees.

## SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY

*Finger-Lickin' Good*  
(Columbia, 1966-67)

*Think!*  
(Blue Note, 1968)

*Boogaloo to Beck*  
(Scufflin' Records, 2003)

*The Healer*  
(Pilgrimage Records,  
2012)

*Evolution*  
(Blue Note, 2016)

# ORGANIST, COMPOSER

Born on July 3, 1942 in Buffalo, NY

EXCERPTS FROM THE INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY THE NEA...

## PAINTING THE PICTURE

"It's hard for me to play it straight, the way it's supposed to go. So they can count on it—it's going to be changed when I play it. The music becomes mine now. It's mine. That's the way I hear it. That's the way I paint the picture."

## PERFORMING

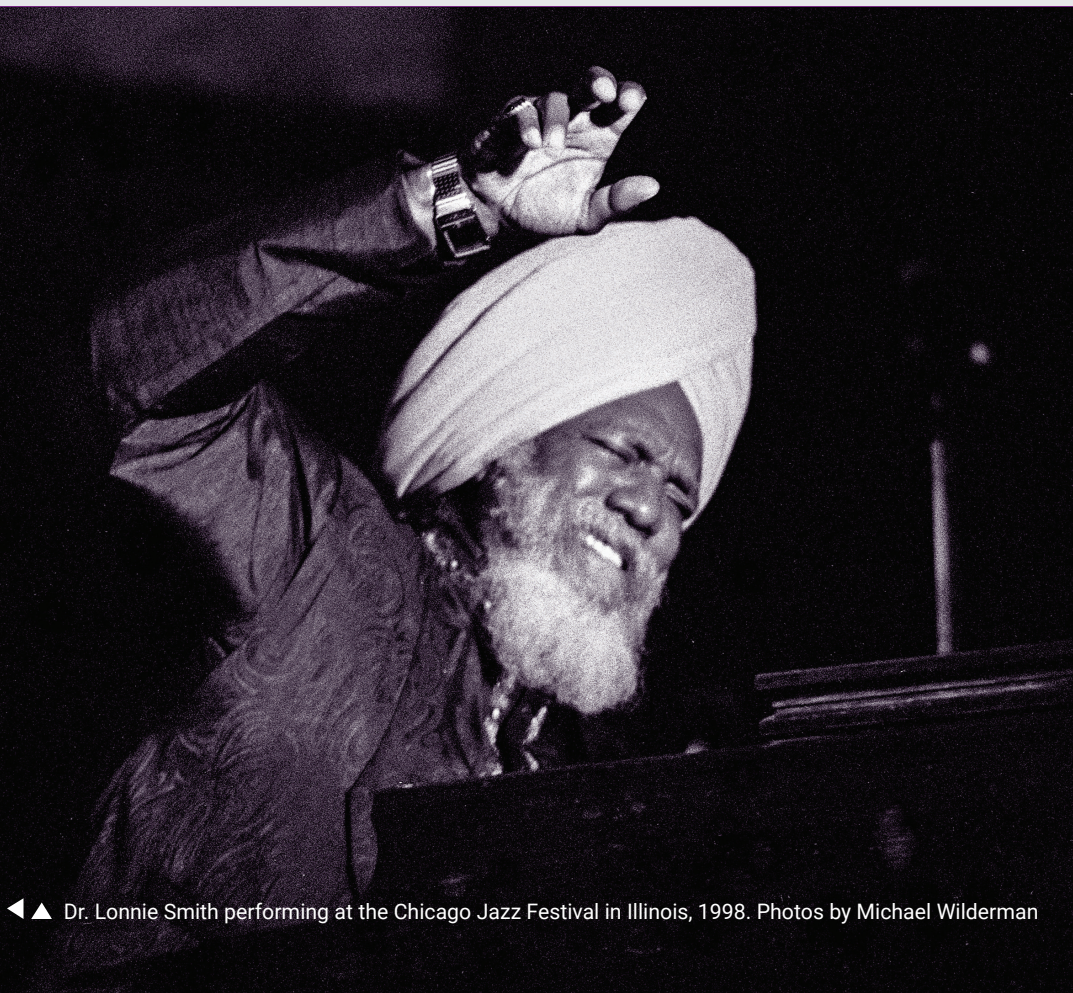
"You play because you love it. I didn't get into music because I wanted to be a star or I wanted to be rich—because you're already rich. That's the greatest feeling, to go out and play and make people happy all around the world. When we get there and play, it's like a flame that goes through my body, and I get so much enjoyment out of that. You can't get paid better than that."

## THE POWER OF THE HAMMOND B-3

"The organ is an extension of me. It's everything. It fulfills me in my journey. It's all the elements in the one. The whole heavens just open up on you. You could feel the vibration of it—just goes all through your body."

## THE HEALING POWER

"When you play music, even if you're hurting or sick, you don't even know it's happening. Isn't that beautiful? You have no idea. You're feeling really bad, but once you start playing, it heals you, really makes you feel good. That's why the whole world needs to be playing music, instead of all this hate and guns and fighting. Music heals the soul."



◀▲ Dr. Lonnie Smith performing at the Chicago Jazz Festival in Illinois, 1998. Photos by Michael Wilderman

# A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE PROGRAM



▲ In this 1947 photo, a smitten Dizzy Gillespie admires Ella Fitzgerald's singing—Gillespie would be honored as an NEA Jazz Master in the first class of 1982 and Fitzgerald would be the first woman awarded in 1985. Photo by William P. Gottlieb, Ira and Leonore S. Gershwin Fund Collection, Music Division, Library of Congress

A melding of African and European music and cultures, jazz was born in the United States, a new musical form that used rhythm, improvisation, and instruments in unique and exciting ways. Jazz came to prominence in the early 20th century on the dance floors of major cultural centers such as Kansas City and New York. With the advent of sound recording capabilities, the increased availability of affordable gramophones, and the rise of radio as popular entertainment, jazz quickly conquered the country. By the 1930s and 1940s, jazz had become America's dance music, selling albums and performance tickets at dizzying rates and sweeping millions of fans in foreign countries off their feet.

By the 1950s, however, with the advent of rock and roll and the tilt in jazz toward bebop rather than the more popular swing, jazz began a decline in its popularity. It continued to be seen as an important and exciting art form, but by an increasingly smaller audience. Jazz was still being exported overseas, though, especially by Voice of America radio broadcasts and U.S. Department of State goodwill tours that featured such musicians as Dizzy Gillespie, Louis Armstrong, and Dave Brubeck.

By the 1960s, when the National Endowment for the Arts was created by Congress, jazz album sales were down and live performances were becoming more difficult to find. Large dance orchestras disbanded for lack of work, and musicians found themselves in stiff competition for fewer and fewer gigs. The music, starting with bebop and into hard bop and free jazz, became more cerebral and

less dance-oriented, focusing on improvisation and freeing up rhythm. It was moving in a new artistic direction and, if this high quality were to be maintained, it would need some assistance.

NEA support for the jazz field began in 1969 with a grant to jazz composer, musician, and theoretician George Russell (named an NEA Jazz Master in 1990). Activities supported by the NEA include jazz festivals and concert seasons, special projects such as Dr. Billy Taylor's Jazzmobile in New York and the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz's Jazz Sports program, educational jazz programming on National Public Radio, artists-in-schools programs, and research.

While the NEA recognized and acted on the need for public funding for jazz, the pioneers of the field were rapidly aging, and many died without the appropriate recognition of their contributions to this great American art form. Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington, two of the giants of jazz in terms of both musicianship and composition, both died in the early 1970s without the importance of their contributions being fully acknowledged and appreciated.

In an effort to nationally recognize outstanding jazz musicians for their lifelong achievements and mastery of jazz, the Arts Endowment in 1982 created the American Jazz Masters Fellowships (renamed the NEA Jazz Masters Fellowships in 2004). These awards are given to musicians who have reached an exceptionally high standard of achievement in this very specialized art form.

In addition to the recognition, the NEA included a monetary award of \$20,000 for each fellowship. The rigors of making a living in the jazz

field are well documented. Jazz is an art form to which the free market has not been kind. Despite their unparalleled contributions to American art, many jazz greats worked for years just barely scraping by. The monetary award often has provided a much-needed infusion of income.

The three individuals who were chosen as the inaugural class certainly lived up to the criteria of artistic excellence and significance to the art form: Roy Eldridge, Dizzy Gillespie, and Sun Ra. The advisory panel in that first year included stellar jazz musicians themselves, such as some future NEA Jazz Masters: trumpeter Donald Byrd and saxophonists Frank Foster, Jackie McLean, and Archie Shepp. In addition, legendary Riverside record company co-owner and producer



▲ Toots Thielemans plays during the 2009 NEA Jazz Masters concert. Photo by Tom Pich

Orrin Keepnews (also an NEA Jazz Master) was on the panel.

From that auspicious beginning, the program has continued to grow and provide increased awareness of America's rich jazz heritage. In 2004, a new award was created for those individuals who helped to advance the appreciation of jazz. In 2005, the award was designated the A.B. Spellman NEA Jazz Masters Award for Jazz Advocacy in honor of A.B. Spellman, a jazz writer, accomplished poet, innovative arts administrator, and former NEA deputy chairman who has dedicated much of his life to bringing the joy and artistry of jazz to all Americans. Additionally, the amount of the fellowship was increased to \$25,000.

During the same year, the NEA Jazz Masters initiative included several new programs in addition to the fellowships. A two-CD anthology of NEA Jazz Masters' music was produced by Verve Music Group. NEA Jazz Masters

on Tour, sponsored by Verizon, brought jazz musicians to all 50 states throughout 2005-07 for performances, community events, and educational programs. That program was followed by NEA Jazz Masters Live, which from 2008 to 2014 brought 51 NEA Jazz Masters to 33 venues nationwide, with performances and educational activities reaching more than 200,000 people, including 13,000 youth.

New programming for broadcast was developed, such as *Jazz Moments* radio shorts and podcast interviews with NEA Jazz Masters. Both *Jazz Moments* and podcasts can be found at [arts.gov](http://arts.gov) and can be downloaded for free on iTunes U.

The NEA has also supported the Smithsonian Jazz Oral History Program to document the lives and careers of nearly 100 NEA Jazz Masters (go to [smithsonianjazz.org](http://smithsonianjazz.org) and click on "Oral Histories"). In addition to transcriptions of the

hours-long interviews, the website also includes audio clips that provide unique views on everything from their early years to their first introduction to music to the working life of a jazz musician in the artists' voices.

The NEA's support of jazz in general has continued to grow over the years. Between 2005 and 2016, the NEA awarded more than \$33.5 million in jazz-related grants and additional support to the field.

Each passing year brings increased international recognition of the NEA Jazz Masters awards as the nation's highest honor for outstanding musicianship in the field of jazz. The recipients of the NEA Jazz Masters award cover all aspects of the music: from boogie-woogie (Cleo Brown) to swing (Count Basie, Andy Kirk, Jay McShann); from bebop (Dizzy Gillespie, Kenny Clarke) to Dixieland (Danny Barker); from free jazz (Ornette Coleman, Cecil Taylor) to cool jazz (Miles Davis, Gil Evans, Ahmad Jamal); and everywhere in between. What ties all these styles together is a foundation in the blues, a reliance on group interplay, and unpredictable improvisation. Throughout the years, and in all the different styles, these musicians have demonstrated the talent, creativity, and dedication that make them NEA Jazz Masters.

The award offers a solid platform for raising worldwide awareness of America's rich jazz heritage by not only honoring those who have dedicated their lives to the music, but also by leading the way in efforts encouraging the preservation and nourishment of jazz as an important musical form for generations to come.



▲ NEA Jazz Masters Kenny Barron and Bobby Hutcherson perform during the 2012 concert. Photo by Michael G. Stewart



▲ Saxophonist Charles Lloyd, 2015 NEA Jazz Master, performing during the concert at Jazz at Lincoln Center in New York City with his band: Gerald Clayton, Eric Harland, Miklós Lukács, Joe Sanders, and Sokratis Sinopoulos. Photo by Michael G. Stewart

## NOMINATION OVERVIEW

The National Endowment for the Arts recognizes the importance of jazz as one of the great American art forms of the 20th and 21st centuries. As part of its efforts to honor those distinguished artists whose excellence, impact, and significant contributions in jazz have helped keep this important art form alive, the NEA annually awards NEA Jazz Masters Fellowships, the highest honor that our nation bestows upon jazz musicians. Each fellowship award is \$25,000.

The NEA Jazz Masters Fellowship is a lifetime achievement award. The criteria for the fellowships are musical excellence and significance of the nominees' contributions to the art of jazz. The NEA honors a wide range of styles while making the awards. There is

also a special award, the A.B. Spellman NEA Jazz Masters Award for Jazz Advocacy, which is given to an individual who has made major contributions to the appreciation, knowledge, and advancement of jazz.

Fellowships are awarded to living artists on the basis of nominations from the general public and the jazz community. Nominees must be citizens or permanent residents of the United States. An individual may submit one or more nominations each year. Nominations are made by submitting a one-page letter detailing the reasons that the nominated artist should receive an NEA Jazz Masters Fellowship and a resume or biography (maximum two pages) that outlines the career of the nominee. Nominations

submitted to the NEA by the deadline are reviewed by an advisory panel of jazz experts and at least one knowledgeable layperson. Panel recommendations are forwarded to the National Council on the Arts, which then makes recommendations to the chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts. Nominations remain active for five years, being reconsidered annually during this period.

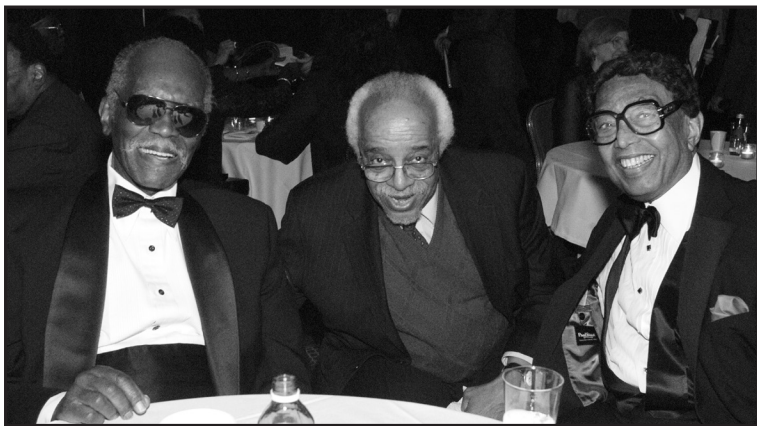
Posthumous nominations will not be considered. Individuals who have previously received an NEA lifetime honor award (National Heritage Fellowship, Jazz Masters Fellowship, or an Opera Honor) are not eligible.

Information on the NEA Jazz Masters award is available on the NEA website: [arts.gov](http://arts.gov).

# PREVIOUS EVENTS

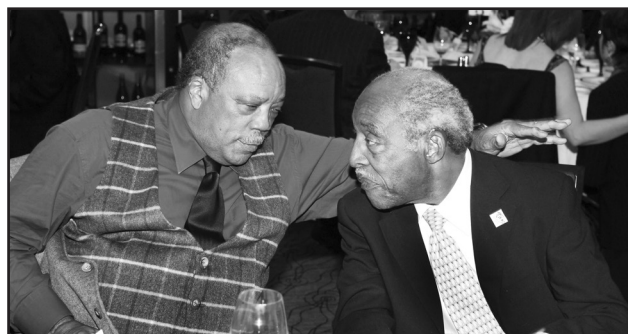
## ▼ Hank Jones, Barry Harris, Billy Taylor (2004)

Photo by Tom Pich



## ▲ Nancy Wilson, John Levy, Ahmad Jamal, Ramsey Lewis (2007)

Photo by Tom Pich



## ▲ Quincy Jones, Joe Wilder (2008)

Photo by Tom Pich

## ▼ Louis Bellson, Chico Hamilton (2005)

Photo by Vance Jacobs



## ▲ Abbey Lincoln, Wynton Marsalis (2009)

Photo by Tom Pich



## ▲ Chick Corea, Roy Haynes, Ron Carter (2006)

Photo by Tom Pich



## ▲ Annie Ross, George Avakian (2010)

Photo by Tom Pich



▼ **George Wein, Toshiko Akiyoshi (2011)**

Photo by Frank Stewart



▼ **David Liebman, Anthony Braxton (2014)**

Photo by Michael G. Stewart



▼ **Randy Weston, Sheila Jordan (2012)**

Photo by Michael G. Stewart



▼ **Lou Donaldson, Jimmy Cobb (2015)**

Photo by Michael G. Stewart



▼ **Eddie Palmieri, Mose Allison (2013)**

Photo by Michael G. Stewart



▼ **Jimmy Owens, Archie Shepp, Jimmy Heath (2016)**

Photo by Shannon Finney



# ... and some performances.

▼ **Dave Brubeck (2004)**

Photo by Tom Pich



▲ **Nancy Wilson (2007)**

Photo by Tom Pich



▲ **Adam Rudolph, Yusef Lateef (2010)**

Photo by Tom Pich

▼ **Gerald Wilson (2005)**

Photo by Vance Jacobs



▼ **David Baker (2008)**

Photo by Tom Pich



▲ **Barry Harris (2006)**

Photo by Tom Pich



▲ **George Benson (2009)**

Photo by Tom Pich



▲ **The Marsalis Family (2011)**

Photo by Frank Stewart



▲ **Jack DeJohnette, Sheila Jordan, Ron Carter, Jimmy Owens (2012)**

Photo by Michael G. Stewart



▲ **Lou Donaldson (2013)**

Photo by Michael G. Stewart

▼ **Richard Davis (2014)**

Photo by Michael G. Stewart



▲ **Carla Bley (2015)**

Photo by Michael G. Stewart



▲ **Randy Weston (2016)**

Photo by Shannon Finney

# NEA JAZZ MASTERS, 1982-2017

**1982**

Roy Eldridge\*  
Dizzy Gillespie\*  
Sun Ra\*

**1983**

Count Basie\*  
Kenny Clarke\*  
Sonny Rollins

**1984**

Ornette Coleman\*  
Miles Davis\*  
Max Roach\*

**1985**

Gil Evans\*  
Ella Fitzgerald\*  
Jo Jones\*

**1986**

Benny Carter\*  
Dexter Gordon\*  
Teddy Wilson\*

**1987**

Cleo Brown\*  
Melba Liston\*  
Jay McShann\*

**1988**

Art Blakey\*  
Lionel Hampton\*  
Billy Taylor\*

**1989**

Barry Harris  
Hank Jones\*  
Sarah Vaughan\*

**1990**

George Russell\*  
Cecil Taylor  
Gerald Wilson\*

**1991**

Danny Barker\*  
Buck Clayton\*  
Andy Kirk\*  
Clark Terry\*

**1992**

Betty Carter\*  
Dorothy Donegan\*  
Sweets Edison\*

**1993**

Jon Hendricks  
Milt Hinton\*  
Joe Williams\*

**1994**

Louie Bellson\*  
Ahmad Jamal  
Carmen McRae\*

**1995**

Ray Brown\*  
Roy Haynes  
Horace Silver\*

**1996**

Tommy Flanagan\*  
Benny Golson  
J.J. Johnson\*

**1997**

Billy Higgins\*  
Milt Jackson\*  
Anita O'Day\*

**1998**

Ron Carter  
James Moody\*  
Wayne Shorter

**1999**

Dave Brubeck\*  
Art Farmer\*  
Joe Henderson\*

**2000**

David Baker\*  
Donald Byrd\*  
Marian McPartland\*

**2001**

John Lewis\*  
Jackie McLean\*  
Randy Weston

**2002**

Frank Foster\*  
Percy Heath\*  
McCoy Tyner

**2003**

Jimmy Heath  
Elvin Jones\*  
Abbey Lincoln\*

**2004**

Jim Hall\*  
Chico Hamilton\*  
Herbie Hancock  
Luther Henderson\*  
Nat Hentoff\*  
Nancy Wilson

**2005**

Kenny Burrell  
Paquito D'Rivera  
Slide Hampton  
Shirley Horn\*  
Jimmy Smith\*  
Artie Shaw\*  
George Wein

**2006**

Ray Barretto\*  
Tony Bennett  
Bob Brookmeyer\*  
Chick Corea  
Buddy DeFranco\*  
Freddie Hubbard\*  
John Levy\*

**2007**

Toshiko Akiyoshi  
Curtis Fuller  
Ramsey Lewis  
Dan Morgenstern  
Jimmy Scott\*  
Frank Wess\*  
Phil Woods\*

**2008**

Candido Camero  
Andrew Hill\*  
Quincy Jones  
Tom McIntosh  
Gunther Schuller\*  
Joe Wilder\*

**2009**

George Benson  
Jimmy Cobb  
Lee Konitz  
Toots Thielemans\*  
Rudy Van Gelder\*  
Snooky Young\*

\* deceased

## 2010

Muhal Richard Abrams  
George Avakian  
Kenny Barron  
Bill Holman  
Bobby Hutcherson\*  
Yusef Lateef\*  
Annie Ross  
Cedar Walton\*

## 2011

Orrin Keepnews\*  
Hubert Laws  
David Liebman  
Johnny Mandel  
The Marsalis Family

## 2012

Jack DeJohnette  
Von Freeman\*  
Charlie Haden\*  
Sheila Jordan  
Jimmy Owens

## 2013

Mose Allison\*  
Lou Donaldson  
Lorraine Gordon  
Eddie Palmieri

## 2014

Jamey Aebersold  
Anthony Braxton  
Richard Davis  
Keith Jarrett

## 2015

Carla Bley  
George Coleman  
Charles Lloyd  
Joe Segal

## 2016

Gary Burton  
Wendy Oxenhorn  
Pharoah Sanders  
Archie Shepp

## 2017

Dee Dee Bridgewater  
Ira Gitler  
Dave Holland  
Dick Hyman  
Dr. Lonnie Smith



▲ Ornette Coleman at 2007 NEA Jazz Masters event. Photo by Katja von Schuttenbach

# CREDITS

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▲ 2016 NEA Jazz Masters Gary Burton, Wendy Oxenhorn, Pharoah Sanders, and Archie Shepp during the concert finale. Photo by Shannon Finney





**THE HIGHEST HONOR IN JAZZ**

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**35TH ANNIVERSARY**



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