



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

February 18, 2016

**The Kennedy Center
announces
participants selected to the
18th ANNUAL
*BETTY CARTER'S JAZZ AHEAD***

**Career development program for aspiring jazz musicians includes
24 performers from across the world
at the Kennedy Center
February 29 to March 12, 2016**

***Trumpeters:* John Hasselback III, Robin Fassie-Kock, Emily Mikesell**

***Trombonists:* Modibo Keita, Caleb Mason**

***Saxophonists:* David Leon, Fabia Mantwill, Nathan Reising**

***Guitarists:* Expedito de Andrade Neto, Asher Kurtz, Jonah Udall**

***Pianists:* Oskar Lindström, Julius Rodriguez, Jordan Williams**

***Bassists:* Vincent Dupont, Arvid Jullander, Umar Zakaria**

***Drummers:* Nolan Byrd, Michael Ode, Raphael Pannier**

***Vocalists:* Liselotte Östblom, Selma Savolainen, Lauren Scales**

***Vibraphones:* Grady Tesch**

**Young musicians will present free performances
on the Kennedy Center Millennium Stage March 9–11, 2016
and, in partnership with the Apollo Theater in New York City,
a special performance at the Apollo Music Café on March 12, 2016**

(WASHINGTON)—The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts today announced the participants in *Betty Carter's Jazz Ahead* (BCJA)—the international jazz residency that showcases the next generation of jazz greats—to be held February 29–March 12, 2016 at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. Led by Kennedy Center Artistic Director for Jazz, Jason Moran, the *Jazz Ahead* program identifies outstanding, emerging jazz artists in their mid-teens to age 25 and provides them with coaching and counseling from experienced artists/instructors who help polish their performance, composing, and arranging skills.

A total of 24 highly talented young musicians from the United States, Brazil, New Zealand, Sweden, Finland, Germany, South Africa, France, and Canada were selected by a competitive audition process that considered their composition and performance abilities. Joining Moran to lead the residency

are six renowned jazz artists who were mentored by Betty Carter: pianist Cyrus Chestnut, saxophonist J.D. Allen, vocalist Carmen Lundy, trombonist Andre Hayward, bassist Eric Revis, and drummer Eric Harland.

The 2016 BCJA program culminates in three concerts on the Kennedy Center Millennium Stage, March 9–11, 2016 at 6 p.m, in which the graduates will perform original compositions. The free performances are open to the general public, and will be broadcast live on the [Kennedy Center website](#) and archived for subsequent access. For the first time this year, the program’s participants will perform a single closing show, presented in partnership with the Apollo Theater as part of the legendary Theater’s Apollo Music Café, in New York City on March 12, 2016. This program continues the ongoing partnership between Kennedy Center and the Apollo Theater.

Betty Carter founded *Jazz Ahead* as a vehicle to foster the musical talents of future generations of jazz talent. She originally developed the program in 1993 at 651, an arts center in Brooklyn. In 1997, the late Dr. Billy Taylor (Kennedy Center Artistic Director for Jazz, 1994-2010) invited Carter to bring *Jazz Ahead* to Washington, D.C. In April 1998, the inaugural class of Kennedy Center *Jazz Ahead* students presented an unforgettable concert with Carter herself joining them on the Kennedy Center Concert Hall stage. Jason Moran, then a young pianist from Houston, was selected by Carter to be a student in this first year at Kennedy Center. *Betty Carter’s Jazz Ahead* had a new home and Carter was filled with hope for the future of the program. After Carter’s untimely death in September 1998, the Carter family graciously granted the Kennedy Center the opportunity to continue her legacy by making the program an annual Kennedy Center event. Distinguished alumni from *Betty Carter’s Jazz Ahead* include pianists Jason Moran and Aaron Parks; guitarist Lage Lund; trombonist Andre Hayward; bassist Ameen Saleem; violinist Miri Ben-Ari; vocalists Daniela Schaechter, Grace Kelly, and Jazzmeia Horn; saxophonists Marcus Strickland and Jon Irabagon; and drummer Jamison Ross, among others.

Betty Carter’s Jazz Ahead 2016 Participants

NAME	INSTRUMENT	CURRENT RESIDENT CITY	HOMETOWN
Vincent Dupont	Bass	Hawthorne, NJ	Hudson, NH
Arvid Jullander	Bass	Stockholm, Sweden	Gothenburg, Sweden
Umar Zakaria	Bass	Boston, MA	Christchurch, New Zealand
Nolan Byrd	Drums	New York, NY	Yorba Linda, CA
Michael Ode	Drums	Oberlin, OH	Durham, NC
Raphael Pannier	Drums	New York, NY	Paris, France
Expedito de Andrade Neto	Guitar	Belo Horizonte, Brazil	Belo Horizonte, Brazil
Asher Kurtz	Guitar	Brooklyn, NY	Dallas, TX
Jonah Udall	Guitar	Miami, FL	Berkeley, CA
Oskar Lindström	Piano	Stockholm, Sweden	Gothenburg, Sweden
Julius Rodriguez	Piano	White Plains, NY	White Plains, NY

Jordan Williams	Piano	Washington, DC	Philadelphia, PA
David Leon	Saxophone	Miami, FL	Miami, FL
Fabia Mantwill	Saxophone	Berlin, Germany	Chemnitz, Germany
Nathan Reising	Saxophone	Towson, MD	College Park, MD
Modibo Keita	Trombone	Toronto, Canada	Montréal, Canada
Caleb Mason	Trombone	New York, NY	Perry, GA
John Hasselback III	Trumpet	Hartford, CT	East Aurora, NY
Robin Fassie-Kock	Trumpet	Bergen, Norway	Cape Town, South Africa
Emily Mikesell	Trumpet	Tallahassee, FL	Orlando, FL
Grady Tesch	Vibraphones	New York, NY	Park City, UT
Liselotte Östblom	Voice	Stockholm, Sweden	Stockholm, Sweden
Selma Savolainen	Voice	Helsinki, Finland	Helsinki, Finland
Lauren Scales	Voice	Detroit, MI	Detroit, MI

ABOUT KENNEDY CENTER JAZZ

Kennedy Center Jazz, under the leadership of Artistic Director Jason Moran, presents legendary artists who have helped shape the art form and artists who are emerging on the jazz scene in hundreds of performances a year. The KC Jazz Club, launched in 2002 and dubbed “the future of the jazz nightclub” by *JazzTimes*, hosts many of these artists in an intimate setting, while the Crossroads Club (launched in 2012) is a nightclub dance venue. Annual Kennedy Center jazz events include the professional development residency program for young artists, *Betty Carter’s Jazz Ahead*; NPR’s *A Jazz Piano Christmas*, the Kennedy Center holiday tradition shared by millions around the country via broadcast on NPR; and the *Mary Lou Williams Jazz Festival*, created in 1996 by the late Dr. Billy Taylor (Kennedy Center Artistic Director for Jazz, 1994-2010). The Center’s jazz concerts are frequently recorded for future broadcast on NPR.

ABOUT APOLLO THEATER

The legendary Apollo Theater—the soul of American culture—plays a vital role in cultivating emerging talents and launching legends. Since its founding, the Apollo has served as a center of innovation and a creative catalyst for Harlem, the city of New York, and the world.

With music at its core, the Apollo’s programming extends to dance, theater, performance art, spoken word initiatives, and more. This includes the October 2014 premiere and 2015 international tour of the dance celebration project *James Brown: Get on the Good Foot*, the annual *Africa Now! Festival*, *Apollo Club Harlem*, and the upcoming New York premiere of the opera *Charlie Parker’s YARDBIRD*. The Apollo is a presenting organization that also produces festivals, large-scale dance and music works organized around a set of core initiatives: Apollo Music Signature Programs—*Amateur Night*, *Salon Series*, *Apollo Music Café*; Legacy Series—work that celebrates and extends the Apollo’s legacy through a contemporary lens; Global Festivals including the *Women of the World (WOW) Festival* and *Breakin’ Convention*, international and U.S.-based artist presentations focused on a specific theme; and Special Projects, multidisciplinary work with partner organizations.

Since introducing the first Amateur Night contests in 1934, the Apollo Theater has served as a testing ground for new artists working across a variety of art forms, and has ushered in the emergence of many new musical genres—including jazz, swing, bebop, R&B, gospel, blues, soul, and hip-hop. Among the countless legendary performers who launched their careers at the Apollo are D’Angelo, Lauryn Hill, Machine Gun Kelly, Miri Ben Ari, D’Angelo, Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, Billie Holiday, James Brown, Michael Jackson, Gladys Knight, Luther Vandross, and Stevie Wonder; and the Apollo’s forward-looking artistic vision continues to build on this legacy.

The Apollo Theater is a not-for-profit organization and currently in the midst of fundraising for its 21st Century Apollo Campaign, created to extend the institution's role in fostering artistic innovation and in building appreciation of American culture around the world.

For more information, visit www.apollotheater.org.

KENNEDY CENTER FUNDING CREDITS

Betty Carter's Jazz Ahead is made possible through the generous support of The King-White Family Foundation and Dr. J. Douglas White and The William N. Cafritz Jazz Initiative.

Additional support is provided by The Argus Fund and the U.S. Department of Education.

Major support for educational programs at the Kennedy Center is provided by **David and Alice Rubenstein** through the Rubenstein Arts Access Program.

Kennedy Center education and related artistic programming is made possible through the generosity of the National Committee for the Performing Arts and the President's Advisory Committee on the Arts.

The *Millennium Stage* is brought to you by Target and The J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation.

The *Millennium Stage* was created and underwritten by James A. Johnson and Maxine Isaacs to make the performing arts accessible to everyone in fulfillment of the Kennedy Center's mission to its community and the nation.

Additional funding for the *Millennium Stage* is provided by Bernstein Family Foundation, The Isadore and Bertha Gudelsky Family Foundation, Inc., The Meredith Foundation, The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, Dr. Deborah Rose and Dr. Jan A.J. Stolwijk, U.S. Department of Education, and the *Millennium Stage* Endowment Fund.

The *Millennium Stage* Endowment Fund was made possible by James A. Johnson and Maxine Isaacs, Fannie Mae Foundation, James V. Kimsey, Gilbert and Jaylee Mead, Mortgage Bankers Association of America and other anonymous gifts to secure the future of the *Millennium Stage*.

Educational programs at the Kennedy Center are provided by Sandra K. & Clement C. Alpert; AnBryce Foundation; The Argus Fund; Bank of America; The Honorable Stuart Bernstein and Wilma E. Bernstein; Carter and Melissa Cafritz Charitable Trust; Centene Charitable Foundation; The Charles Engelhard Foundation; The Clark Charitable Foundation; Mike and Julie Connors; DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities; Dr. Gerald and Paula McNichols Foundation; David Gregory and Beth Wilkinson; Harman Family Foundation; The Harold and Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust; The Hearst Foundations; Hilton Worldwide; The Isadore and Bertha Gudelsky Family Foundation, Inc.; The J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation; James A. Johnson and Maxine Isaacs; Mr. James V. Kimsey; The King-White Family Foundation and Dr. J. Douglas White; The Kiplinger Foundation; Natalie and Herb Kohler and Kohler Co.; Laird Norton Family Foundation; Legg Mason Charitable Foundation; Macy's; The Markow Totevy Foundation; Linda and Tobia Mercurio; The Meredith Foundation; The Millennium Stage Endowment Fund; The Morningstar Philanthropic Fund; The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation; Myra and Leura Younker Endowment Fund; National Endowment for the Arts; Newman's Own Foundation; the Embassy of the State of Qatar; Park Foundation, Inc.; Paul M. Angell Family Foundation; Mrs. Irene Pollin; Prince Charitable Trusts; Rosemary Kennedy Education Fund; Dr. Deborah Rose and Dr. Jan A. J. Stolwijk; Ryna and Melvin Cohen Family Foundation; Share Fund; Mr. and Mrs. Albert H. Small; Target;

The Volgenau Foundation; Volkswagen Group of America; Washington Gas; Wells Fargo; Beatrice and Anthony Welters; William R. Kenan, Jr. Charitable Trust; and generous contributors to the Abe Fortas Memorial Fund and by a major gift to the fund from the late Carolyn E. Agger, widow of Abe Fortas.

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APOLLO THEATER FUNDING CREDITS

The Apollo's 2015-2016 season is made possible by leadership support from Citi, Coca-Cola, Troy and Keisha Dixon, Ford Foundation, The Howard Gilman Foundation, Robert K. Kraft, The Reginald F. Lewis Foundation, Merrill Lynch, The Parsons Family Foundation, the Ronald O. Perelman Family Foundation, JoAnn Price, Earl W. and Amanda Stafford, Time Warner Inc., the Reginald Van Lee Fund for New Works, the Apollo Board of Directors, and many other generous donors.

**For more information about *Betty Carter's Jazz Ahead*,
please visit www.kennedy-center.org/programs/jazz/jazzahead/.**

For more information about the Kennedy Center, visit www.kennedy-center.org.

Discover the [Kennedy Center](http://www.kennedy-center.org) on social media:



#BCJazzAhead

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