

Joey Alexander Trio




**BERMUDA
FESTIVAL**
OF THE PERFORMING ARTS

JANUARY

Saturday 21, 8:30 pm

Mid-Ocean Amphitheatre,
Fairmont Southampton

Joey Alexander **Piano**
Alexander Claffy **Bass**
Ulysses Owens **Drums**
By arrangement with **International Music Network**

Joey Alexander

Born on June 25, 2003 on the island of Bali, pianist Joey Alexander originally learned about jazz from his dad, who exposed his son to a variety of classic albums from his extensive collection. At the age of six, Joey began teaching himself to play piano using a mini electronic keyboard given to him by his father. He was immediately able to pick out the melody of Monk's "Well, You Needn't," but he didn't stop there. Joey's dad nurtured his gift of swing and improvisation by taking him to jam sessions with veteran musicians in Bali and Jakarta.

Joey's musicianship and grasp of jazz fundamentals developed at a remarkable pace, and at age eight UNESCO invited him to play solo piano for an elated Herbie Hancock during the piano great's visit to Indonesia. Joey later remarked to Hancock, "You told me that you

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The performance will proceed
without intermission.

believed in me, and that was the day I decided to dedicate my childhood to jazz."

At nine, Joey won the grand prize at the first Master-Jam Fest, an all-ages competition in Ukraine which included 200 competitors from 17 countries. By 10, he was performing at jazz festivals in both Jakarta and Copenhagen. An invitation from Wynton Marsalis led to his U.S. debut appearance at Jazz at Lincoln Center's Rose Hall in 2014 where he amazed the audience with his musicality, followed by appearances before the Jazz Foundation of America at the Apollo and the Arthur Ashe Learning Center at Gotham Hall. Wishing to encourage the continued development of Joey's prodigious playing, his parents sold the family business in Jakarta and relocated to the United States.



The taking of photographs and the use of recording equipment of any kind during performances is strictly prohibited.

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Alexander Caffey

24 year old Alexander Claffy was raised in a musical household (his father is a pianist, his mother, a vocalist), and had many of his earliest lessons on bandstands in the heart of Philadelphia. As a teenager, Claffy was fortunate enough to find a mentor in many Philly natives, and has continued his study of the double bass with some of the world's finest musicians, including Ron Carter, Dwayne Burno

and Orin O'Brien. Since moving to New York City in 2011, he has had the honour of working with many of his living heroes, including Jimmy Cobb, Louis Hayes, Johnny O'Neal, Sean Jones, Russell Malone, Christian Scott, Wallace Roney and many more.

Ulysses Owens

Ulysses Owens Jr. is an artist "who takes a backseat to no one" – The New York Times seems to describe his remarkable ascent as one of today's premier drummers, or perhaps his evolution as a producer, composer, educator, and entrepreneur.

Owens has established himself as a leader in his generation of jazz artists, admired for his sensitive, fiery, and complex playing, vivid display of textural nuance, and gift for propelling a band with charisma and integrity. Both humble in person and imposing behind a kit, he is a graduate of the inaugural Jazz Studies Program at the Juilliard School, a two-time Grammy Award winner, and he earned his stripes as a member of bassist Christian McBride's acclaimed trio and the driving force of McBride's big band.

Ulysses received his first Grammy in 2010 for his performance on Kurt Elling's "Dedicated to You", and his second Grammy for the Christian McBride Big Band album "The Good Feeling"

In addition to the two Grammy Awards, he has also received four nominations for his work with McBride and Joey Alexander.

Owens is incredibly versatile and has toured and recorded with artists including Christian McBride, Wynton Marsalis, Kurt Elling, Diane Schur, Renee Fleming, Monty Alexander, Russell Malone, and Mulgrew Miller.

In the summer of 2015, he was recommended by Wynton Marsalis and Jazz at Lincoln Center to compose a work for the Museum of Modern Art Summergarden Series, and he premiered "Stages Of Us", a seven-movement suite, at their sculpture garden. Ulysses has been honored with a 2015 Jazz At Lincoln Center Swing Award, 2014 Global Music Award, 2013 ASCAP Plus Award, was designated a 2014 Downbeat Rising Star, and appeared as a TED X Jacksonville performer. He continues touring extensively and remains in demand for new projects.





His 2015 debut album for Motema Music, *My Favorite Things*, garnered two Grammy Award nominations for "Best Jazz Instrumental Album" and "Best Improvised Solo" for his performance of John Coltrane's "Giant Steps", making him the youngest jazz artist ever nominated for a Grammy. His performances on the 58th Annual Grammy Awards broadcast – far more magical than what was expected - received standing ovations from the star-studded audience, bringing his talent to the attention of music lovers everywhere, mesmerizing long-time industry professionals, and inspiring other young musicians to pursue their own dreams.

His highly-anticipated sophomore album *Countdown* showcases Joey's remarkable development as a contemporary jazz bandleader and promise as a composer. He develops fresh takes on well-known tunes, combining them seamlessly with his own original compositions in a way which invites both new and seasoned listeners in, and reflects the true emotional heart and soul of his musical personality. "Sometimes, when I'm just practicing or playing something, new melodic and rhythmic ideas come to me, and I realize that I'm actually starting to compose a song,"

he says. "I think that writing memorable tunes comes from listening to so much music from composers and artists I like. I actually find it harder to interpret other people's songs than to write my own, because I have to figure out and feel what the song is about and find a way to make it my own."

Wynton Marsalis says of Joey, "There has never been anyone that you can think of who could play like that at his age. I love everything about his playing – his rhythm, his confidence, his understanding of the music." Now, as he enters his teen years, Joey takes another step in charting his artistic direction with the release of *Countdown*.

"You know, I love both creating music in the studio and performing for people onstage," he says, "but I have to admit there's something special about getting a crowd excited by playing jazz live. In most situations I try to be calm, but I love the intense energy that happens between me and the audience. When they express their appreciation in this way, I am inspired to go deeper as a person and musician, improve my craft and create exciting new sounds."



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