

jazz composers **Collective**



Jazz Composers Collective

Michael Blake, Ben Allison, Frank Kimbrough, Ted Nash

Since its inception in 1992, the Jazz Composers Collective has worked to construct an environment where participating artists can exercise their ideals of creating and risking through the development and exploration of new music. The Collective's primary goal is to act as a forum for the development and presentation of original works by composers who are pushing the boundaries of their self-expression. In addition, the Collective is committed to building new audiences for this music by organizing and supporting the recording and touring activities of its artists.

The Collective's annual concert series is comprised of five events, each devoted to the works of two composers (a Composer-in-Residence and a Guest Composer). As of this writing, the Collective has presented over 100 concerts featuring the works of 49 composers, the performances of over 175 musicians, and, perhaps most notably, the premiere of more than 300 compositions. Each event is followed by an informal discussion, giving audience members the opportunity to meet and talk with composers and musicians. In September 1996, the Collective formed a partnership with the New School University's Contemporary Music Program. Since that time, the Collective's annual concert series has been presented at the New School's Jazz Performance Space, which is located at 55 West 13th Street in Manhattan. Through this partnership, members of the Collective also serve as guest lectures at the New School.

Approximately two weeks before each concert the Collective publishes a new edition of its newsletter and distributes it free-of-charge to over 4,000 people worldwide. The newsletter contains articles, poetry, and letters covering a broad range of subjects, including descriptions "in the composers' words" about the music to be performed in the upcoming concert. The newsletter gives composers the rare opportunity to verbalize their thoughts concerning their music, philosophy, and approach to art, while offering members of the audience, especially those unfamiliar with some of the currents running through contemporary jazz, a chance to feel more connected to and informed about the music and the musicians.

The Collective has been working to extend its new music message and organizes many other events at museums, concert halls, schools and universities, jazz clubs, and festivals across the United States and abroad. A recent highlight was a collaboration with the Department of Cultural Affairs in Providence, Rhode Island, which brought together Collective artists with musicians from Mali as part of the Convergence International Arts Festival. An important part of the Collective's future mission is to continue to develop similar creative partnerships with like-minded organizations that share its approach to adventurous programming.

Another important element of the Collective's objectives is to act as an organizational force for the conception and development of long-term, special projects, such as: The Herbie Nichols Project (a performing and researching entity devoted to the music of the brilliant but tragically under-recognized composer/pianist), Ben Allison & Medicine Wheel, Ben Allison's Kush Trio, the Ted Nash Double Quartet, Ted Nash & Odeon, the Frank Kimbrough Trio, Frank Kimbrough & Noumena, Michael Blake's Free Association, and Ron Horton's Genius Envy. The Collective's special projects have received funding from a wide variety of sources, including the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), the Mary Flagler Cary Charitable Trust, Chamber Music America, the Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation, the Aaron Copland Fund, the American Composers Forum, Meet the Composer, American Express, Salomon Smith Barney, the Time Warner Foundation, the Fannie Mae Foundation, John Wiley & Sons, and donations from individuals.

Over the past decade, the Collective has produced or helped to produce the following critically acclaimed CDs: *Peace Pipe*, *Riding the Nuclear Tiger*, *Third Eye*, and *Medicine Wheel* (all on Palmetto Records) and *Seven Arrows* (Koch Jazz) by Ben Allison; *Strange City* (Palmetto Records), and *Dr. Cyclops' Dream* and *Love Is Proximity* (both on Soul Note Records) by the Herbie Nichols Project; *Chant* (IGMOD) and *Noumena* (Soul Note) by Frank Kimbrough; *Sidewalk Meeting* and *Rhyme and Reason* (both on Arabesque Records) by Ted Nash; *Genius Envy* (Omnitone Records) by the Ron Horton Sextet; *Drift* (Intuition Records) and *Elevated* (Knitting Factory) by Michael Blake.

The Jazz Composers Collective follows a line of similar musician-run organizations, such as Arnold Schoenberg's Society for Private Musical Performances (which helped form the original inspiration for the Collective), Charles Mingus' Jazz Composers Workshop, as well as the Jazz Composers Guild and Free Life Communication, both vital proponents of the avant-garde movement in New York City during the 1960s and 1970s. It is in this same spirit that the Jazz Composers Collective encourages artists to bring their music to the public.

The need for the Collective stems from a pervasive feeling among its constituents that without such an organization much of the music it fosters and presents would never be written or heard. In an industry that is highly profit-driven and competitive, the artistic integrity of contemporary composers and musicians must sometimes be compromised in order to fill the demand for "sellable" material. The Collective is attempting to address this problem by providing artists with the opportunity to organize and present their music on their own terms. This form of self-empowerment encourages a creative process that is especially appealing to independent-minded composers, musicians, and audiences.

jazz composers **Collective**

Composers-in-Residence

Ben Allison	Frank Kimbrough
Michael Blake	Ted Nash
Ron Horton	

Guest Composers

Ralph Alessi	Mike Lee
Franck Amsallem	Dave Liebman
Peter Apfelbaum	Joe Locke
Steven Bernstein	Pete Malinverni
Dave Binney	Rick Margitza
Andy Biskin	Phil Markowitz
Jane Ira Bloom	Bill Mays
Chris Dahlgren	Ed Neumeister
Ellery Eskelin	Tim Otto
Eddie Gale	Tim Ries
Jon Gordon	Scott Robinson
Wycliffe Gordon	John Schroeder
Kevin Hays	Judi Silvano
Mark Helias	Peggy Stern
Ethan Iverson	Aaron Stewart
Vijay Iyer	David Tronzo
Elliot Kavee	Tom Varner
Adam Kolker	Jeff Williams
Steve LaSpina	Matt Wilson
Andy Laster	Pat Zimmerli

Board of Directors

Ben Allison	Suzanne DiMaggio
Frank Kimbrough	Ron Horton
Ted Nash	Steve Holt
Michael Blake	Rolando Cohen

Advisory Board

Andrew Hill	Joe Lovano
Lee Konitz	Scott Stone, Esq.
David Liebman	Ira Blumberg, CPA

Participating Musicians (1992-2003)

Ralph Alessi	Peter Epstein	Rick Kriska	Eric Reed
Carl Allen	Ellery Eskelin	Jen Krupa	Mauro Reforsco
Ben Allison	Mike Fahn	Vic Juris	Tim Ries
Peck Allmond	Joe Fiedler	Sam Kephart	Scott Robinson
David Amado	Melissa Fogarty	Steve LaSpina	Adam Rogers
Franck Amsallem	Curtis Fowlkes	Andy Laster	Marcus Rojas
Reid Anderson	Joel Frahm	Erik Lawrence	Josh Roseman
Peter Apfelbaum	Daniel Freedman	Dave Liebman	Ted Rosenthal
Jeff Ballard	Eric Friedlander	Joe Locke	Rich Rosenzweig
Dave Ballou	Laurie Frink	Joe Lovano	Randy Sandke
Andy Barbera	Ian Froman	Dennis Mackrel	Michael Sarin
Miri Ben Ari	Eddie Gale	Tony Malaby	Tony Scherr
Steven Bernstein	Clark Gayton	Pete Malinverni	Bill Schimmel
Dave Binney	Gerry Gibbs	Rick Margitza	John Schroeder
Andy Biskin	Dave Gibson	Phil Markowitz	Matt Shulman
Jim Black	Karen Goldfedder	Wynton Marsalis	Judi Silvano
Brian Blade	Wayne Goodman	Bill Mays	Kathy Sinsabaugh
Michael Blake	Charles Gordon	Mike Mazor	Bruce Staelens
Patrice Blanchard	Jon Gordon	Pete McCann	Marvin Stamm
Dan Block	Wycliffe Gordon	Donny McCaslin	Lisa Steinberg
Jane Ira Bloom	Jackie Grasso	John McKenna	Andrew Sterman
Luis Bonilla	Drew Gress	Bill Mobley	Peggy Stern
Jay Brandford	Joyce Hamman	Ben Monder	Aaron Stewart
Cameron Brown	Billy Hart	Tony Moreno	Bill Stewart
Charles Burnham	John Hart	Matt Munisteri	Scoby Stroman
Mike Cain	Kevin Hays	Ted Nash	Satoshi Takeishi
Uri Caine	Mark Helias	Scott Neumann	Stomu Takeishi
Erik Charlston	Carlos Henriquez	Ed Neumeister	Ron Tooley
Jay Clayton	Jeff Hirshfield	Sam Newsome	David Tronzo
Rich Cohen	John Hollenbeck	Oscar Noriega	Mark Turner
Michelle Coletta	Tim Horner	Kevin Norton	Tomas Ulrich
Scott Colley	Ron Horton	John O'Gallagher	Tom Varner
Ravi Coltrane	Yosuke Inoue	Tim Otto	Mark Vinci
Marc Copeland	Dennis Irwin	Dave Panichi	Cuong Vu
Chris Dahlgren	Ethan Iverson	Andrea Parkins	Doug Wamble
Joseph Daley	Vijay Iyer	Louis Perdomo	Doug Weiss
Anne DeMarinis	Ingrid Jensen	Roberta Picket	Kenny Werner
Mamadou Diabate	John Kass	Dave Phelps	Ron Westray
Ara Dinkjian	Elliot Humberto Kavee	Bobby Previte	Jeff Williams
Billy Drewes	Julie Kay	Dafnis Prieto	Felicia Wilson
Billy Drummond	Frank Kimbrough	Doug Purviance	Matt Wilson
Jon Dryden	Adam Kolker	Tom Rainey	Pat Zimmerli
Nathan Durham	Lee Konitz	Matt Ray	
Bruce Eidam	Briggan Krauss	Mark Reboul	

WHAT THE CRITICS ARE SAYING ABOUT THE JAZZ COMPOSERS COLLECTIVE

"For the past decade, some of the most original and intriguing sounds to be heard in New York jazz circles have emanated from the Jazz Composers Collective."

— Bob Blumenthal, *Atlantic Monthly*

"Members of the Jazz Composers Collective [have] affirmed their place among the very best musicians writing their own music in the New York jazz scene."

— Phil Connors, *Wall Street Journal*

"These guys are among the most open-minded individuals on the jazz scene, so don't be surprised if postbop that seems inside suddenly turns 'out,' downtown moves up and you find yourself cheering the whole way through."

— K. Leander Williams, *Time Out*

"In its decade-long existence, the Jazz Composers Collective has morphed from being a scrappy fringe unit into a mainstay of the city's musical life. Through original compositions, uncommon instrumentations, and a broad range of influences [the bands] in the Collective focus on where jazz can go rather than where it's already been."

— *The New Yorker*

"The Jazz Composers Collective is robust proof that there is life outside the industry snarl — and within it, too, on the right terms."

— Michelle Mercer, *Jazziz*

"[The Collective] has become an imprimatur of indie credibility — a musician-run organization whose band leaders are all putting high intelligence into their craft."

— Ben Ratliff, *The New York Times*

"Arguably the best new jazz — in terms of compositions and ensemble concepts — coming out of New York in this decade is from the Jazz Composers Collective."

— George Kanzler, *Newark Star Ledger*

"The Collective...is responsible for the year's most consistently realized original music... Such consistent quality deserves acknowledgment, not to mention some kind of Organization of the Year award."

— Bob Blumenthal, *The Boston Globe*

"The work of the Collective makes timeworn debates between innovators and preservationists, radicals and reactionaries, seem a million miles away... Their camaraderie, enthusiasm, and unjaded aura speaks volumes about the continued vitality of jazz."

— David Adler, *All About Jazz*

"[The Collective is] a cooperative remedy to retro shortsightedness and cookie-cutter jazz."

— Art Lange, *Pulse!*