On February 25, a breakout young jazz vocalist who "has it all"

Photo: Cécile McLorin Salvant. Photo by Pierre Dodel.

HANOVER, NH, November 17, 2014—Grammy-nominated vocalist Cécile McLorin Salvant, one of jazz’ brightest rising stars, comes with her trio to the Hop’s Spaulding Auditorium on Wednesday, February 25, 7 pm. The concert is part of a two-day Dartmouth residency during which McLorin Salvant will give a vocal master class on Tuesday, which the public may observe for free.

A jazz-world sensation since winning the prestigious 2010 Thelonious Monk International Vocal Jazz Competition, McLorin Salvant holds audiences in thrall with a great musicianship, inventive ideas and the ability to sing from the deep center of a song. With a voice as pliant as Sarah Vaughan's coupled to a musical intelligence as playful as Betty Carter's, she and her sensitive, versatile band, make well-worn standards seem startlingly new and enlarge the jazz repertoire with gems from now and way back—singing in French and Spanish as well as English.

She's performed in prominent jazz venues in Europe and the US, including Jazz à Vienne, Ascona, Whitley Bay, Montauban, Foix, with Wynton Marsalis and the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra in New York’s Lincoln Center and Chicago’s Symphony Center and with her own band at the Kennedy Center, the Spoleto Jazz Festival and Detroit Jazz Festival. Releasing her US debut album WomanChild in 2014, she was nominated for a Grammy and won four awards in the 62nd Annual DownBeat International Critics Poll: best jazz album, top Female Vocalist, Rising Star–Jazz Artist and Rising Star–Female Vocalist.

Though only 24, McLorin Salvant is already being compared with jazz legends. "Can one astoundingly gifted singer revive a beloved but dormant jazz vocal tradition?" wrote The New York Times. "As Cécile McLorin Salvant spun songs into a brilliant silk tapestry ..., I thought, 'Here she is.' If anyone can extend the lineage of the Big Three — Billie Holiday, Sarah Vaughan, and Ella Fitzgerald — it is this 23-year-old virtuoso...Ms. Salvant has it all." Wrote London Jazz News, she "matches playfulness with superb technique; devil-may-care performance with dedicated love of jazz."

Born and raised in Miami to a French mother and a Haitian father, McLorin Salvant started classical piano studies at age 5, and began singing in the Miami Choral Society at age 8. Early on, she developed an interest in
classical voice, began studying with private instructors, and later with Edward Walker, vocal teacher at the University of Miami.

In 2007, she moved to Aix-en-Provence, France, to study law as well as classical and baroque voice at the Darius Milhaud Conservatory. It was in Aix-en-Provence, with reedist and teacher Jean-François Bonnel, that she started learning about improvisation, instrumental and vocal repertoire ranging from the 1910s on, and sang with her first band. "In France I used to be told, well since you're black and you're American, that's why you can sing this music," she told PRI's The World. "And I was, like, that's not why. I was not at all raised in an African-American family culture. My dad is Haitian, mom is French-Guadeloupean, and in Miami, on top of that, we had more of a Caribbean vibe. It was a lot of different things." Far from being a handicap, this "outsider" status allowed her to take a fresh look at jazz singing and the repertoire, enlarging it with songs in French—her mother tongue—including her own setting of a poem by the Haitian writer Ida Faubert.

In 2009, after a series of concerts in Paris, she recorded her first album, Cécile, with Jean-François Bonnel's Paris Quintet. A year later, she won the Thelonious Monk competition—and the international jazz world took notice. With WomanChild, she has fully arrived. Allmusic called it "a bewitching, exuberant introduction to this immensely talented young singer...Salvant reveals herself to be a genuinely original vocalist with a distinctive timbre, a singer steeped in tradition but with a style and phrasing all her own...it's clear she has the talent to go very far indeed."

McLorin Salvant performs with a trio led by pianist Aaron Diehl, the 2011 Cole Porter Fellow of the American Pianists Association. Hailed by The New York Times as "a smart young pianist with a fastidious grasp of jazz traditions," he is committed to unearthing the treasures of a rich musical language through collaborative efforts with artists across generations.

Born in 1985, Diehl grew up in a nurturing musical environment and began studying classically at age 7. Discovering a passion for jazz while attending Interlochen Summer Camp, he was introduced to the playing of Oscar Peterson and Art Tatum, who remain powerful influences. In 2002, Diehl was awarded "Outstanding Soloist." in Jazz at Lincoln Center's Essentially Ellington competition. The following year, he was invited to tour with the Wynton Marsalis Septet on their European tour. A 2007 graduate of the Juilliard School, he studied with Kenny Barron, Oxana Yablonskaya and Eric Reed. He is a Martin E. Segal Award recipient.

Diehl released his first live album in 2008. His latest release, The Bespoke Man's Narrative (Mack Avenue) was influenced partly by John Lewis and the Modern Jazz Quartet. He is the 2013 Jazz Journalist Association’s Up-And-Coming Musician of the Year Award recipient.

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**CALENDAR LISTINGS:**

Cécile McLorin Salvant, jazz singer

Since winning the prestigious Thelonious Monk competition in 2010, McLorin Salvant has quickly become one of the most celebrated young vocalists in jazz, extolled for her lush, versatile voice, immaculate musicianship and fresh interpretations of jazz classics, blues standards and little known gems. Already a Grammy nominee, she draws in the audience through her deep connection to the lyrics and playful sense of humor.

Wednesday, February 25, 7 pm
Spaulding Auditorium, Hopkins Center for the Arts, Hanover NH  
$20/25/30, $10 Dartmouth students, 18 & under $17/19  
Information: hop.dartmouth.edu or 603.646.2422

Vocal Master Class with Cécile McLorin Salvant
McLorin Salvant coaches student vocalists from the Barbary Coast Jazz Ensemble. All are invited to observe.  
Tuesday, February 24, 4-5:30 pm  
Faulkner Recital Hall, Hopkins Center for the Arts, Hanover NH  
Free  
Information: Hop Outreach at 603.646.2010

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Founded in 1962, the Hopkins Center for the Arts is a multi-disciplinary academic, visual and performing arts center dedicated to uncovering insights, igniting passions, and nurturing talents to help Dartmouth and the surrounding Upper Valley community engage imaginatively and contribute creatively to our world. Each year the Hop presents more than 300 live events and films by visiting artists as well as Dartmouth students and the Dartmouth community, and reaches more than 22,000 Upper Valley residents and students with outreach and arts education programs. After a celebratory 50th-anniversary season in 2012-13, the Hop enters its second half-century with renewed passion for mentoring young artists, supporting the development of new work, and providing a laboratory for participation and experimentation in the arts.