

Hopkins Center for the Arts at Dartmouth

presents

Coast Jazz Orchestra at Dartmouth

Taylor Ho Bynum, director

Celebrating the music of James “Jabbo” Ware and Mark Harvey

with special guests

Hear In Now

Mazz Swift, violin

Tomeka Reid, cello

Silvia Bolognesi, bass

Saturday, October 28, 7:30 pm

Collis Common Ground • Dartmouth College • 2023

Generously supported by the Dartmouth Class of 1975, the Bruce Webb Eaken 1926 Memorial Fund and Friends of the Coast Jazz Orchestra.

Program

Approximate duration: 90 minutes

The Coast Jazz Orchestra

Today's Move, James "Jabbo" Ware

Saxophrenia, Mark Harvey

Blood Count, Billy Strayhorn, lyrics by Julia Picker '24

A Force to Be Dealt With, James "Jabbo" Ware, Cecil Bridgewater and Kenny Rogers

Don Cherry's Song of Beauty, Mark Harvey

Bro' Blue, James "Jabbo" Ware

Hear In Now

Mazz Swift, violin, Tomeka Reid, cello and Silvia Bolognesi, bass

Program to be announced from the stage

The Coast Jazz Orchestra + Hear In Now

Three (for Me We & Them), Taylor Ho Bynum

Tonight's concert is dedicated to the memory of James "Jabbo" Ware (1942-2022),
Arni Cheatham (1944-2023) and Carla Bley (1936-2023).

Coast Jazz Orchestra – Fall 2023

Taylor Ho Bynum, director

Trumpets

Amy Norton '23*
Tucker Stone '26

French horn

Raegan Padula '24

Trombones

Sarah Chacko '23
Julia Picker '24 (+voice)
Noah Prescott '26
Jackson Yassin '26

Flute

Jessica Yang '25

Alto sax

Ryan Tabibian '25

Tenor sax

Eliza Gould '27

Baritone sax

Mateo Oyola '24

Violin

Katie McCabe '21
Gracie Kim '25

Viola

Elaine Chi '25

Cello

Daniel Lin '23

Acoustic bass

Henry Poret '26

Piano

Jordan Jones '24

Keyboard

Daniel Amoateng '25

Guitar

Aidan Adams '24
Bo Farnell '26

Drums/Percussion

Jayanth Uppaluri '24^
Damon Dewitt '25
Tushar Aggarwal '26
Witt Lindau '27

* Coast librarian/copyist

^ Coast ensemble manager

Special thanks to

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for their sectional coaching support.

Program Notes

Long after the glory days of the jazz big band in the 1930s and '40s, many intrepid and committed bandleader/composers worked (and continue to work) to keep the traditions of the creative improvising orchestra alive despite the myriad of economic and logistical difficulties. Tonight the Coast celebrates two sterling examples of the dedicated composer-led underground big band: James “Jabbo” Ware and the Me We and Them Orchestra, and Mark Harvey and the Aardvark Jazz Orchestra—both of which were founded 50 years ago. Both were also introduced to me by my formative mentor, bass trombonist Bill Lowe (whose big band bonafides include not only Me We and Them and Aardvark, but time with legends like Frank Foster, Bill Barron, Thad Jones, Clark Terry, Sam Rivers and many others).

Jabbo Ware emerged from the Black Artist Group in St. Louis in the mid-1960s, one of the most important regional interdisciplinary arts collectives of that era. The late baritone saxophonist Hamiet Bluiett, one of the founders of the World Saxophone Quartet, encouraged Jabbo to move to NYC in 1970, where he stayed for the remainder of his life—he died in December 2022 at the age of 80. He made his living as one of the first-call musical copyists on the scene, while founding the Me We and Them Orchestra to exercise his creative vision, which featured countless fantastic players over the years, including multi-wind instrumentalist JD Parran, trumpeter Cecil Bridgewater and percussionist Warren Smith. When I was about 16 years old, Bill Lowe brought the Me We and Them Orchestra to Boston for a concert—probably the first great big band I ever heard play live. Hearing the band and taking a workshop with Jabbo at that age was a life-changing experience, and the start of many musical friendships that have continued for decades.

The Coast will be performing three of Jabbo’s compositions, *Today’s Move*, *A Force to Be Dealt With* (composed in collaboration with Bridgewater and saxophonist Kenny Rogers), and *Bro’ Blue* (dedicated

to Bluiett), each of which demonstrate Ware’s gift of musical storytelling. Along with some special guests, we will also be performing a piece of mine called *Three (for Me We & Them)*. Some years ago Jabbo asked me to write something for the band, which I then dedicated to Jabbo and the orchestra and later recorded with my own PlusTet large ensemble.

Mark Harvey moved to Boston in 1968, and has long been a force in that city as a composer, performer, organizer, educator and minister. He founded the Aardvark Jazz Orchestra in 1973 for a Christmas benefit concert raising funds for social justice causes, an unbroken tradition that has continued each year since. I had the pleasure of playing regularly with Aardvark when I lived in Boston and Connecticut for a decade beginning in 1999, and still rejoin whenever I can. Mark’s compositions embody his philosophy of Flexology, creating large-scale structures that allow for creative reinterpretations and maximal improvisational freedom, and he provided the following notes on the compositions Coast will be exploring.

“*Saxophrenia* was commissioned by the MIT Festival Jazz Ensemble and written for the FJE saxes with guest artist Joe Lovano who premiered the work at MIT’s Kresge Auditorium, Cambridge, Massachusetts on May 10, 2002. This piece is based on several invented modes and quirky rhythmic motives that give it an overall exotic flavor. The large ensemble arrangement of the original sax sextet was premiered by the Aardvark Jazz Orchestra at MIT’s Kresge Auditorium on March 8, 2003 and appears on the Aardvark CD *Passages* (Leo Records). *Don Cherry’s Song of Beauty* was written in honor of and inspired by trumpeter Don Cherry. Influenced in my own trumpet stylings by Cherry, I produced a concert featuring him in a trio setting with Ed Blackwell and Anthony Davis at the Emmanuel Church, Boston, Massachusetts in 1979. The piece is through-composed, moves through many moods, and often includes world music elements and instruments, reflective of Cherry’s global musical

explorations. This composition was premiered by the Aardvark Jazz Orchestra at the Harvard-Epworth United Methodist Church, Cambridge, Massachusetts, on November 18, 1995, and appears on the Aardvark CD *Psalms & Elegies* (Leo Records).” –Mark Harvey

It is particularly appropriate for us to honor Don Cherry, who was the first practitioner of black creative music ever hired by Dartmouth as a visiting faculty member for two terms back in 1970. It is also particularly appropriate for the Coast to perform Billy Strayhorn’s *Blood Count* on a program celebrating Harvey and Ware—both are professed Duke Ellington fanatics, who took deep inspiration from Ellington (and his long-time compositional partner Strayhorn) as they developed their own inimitable musical voices. Originally a feature for saxophonist Johnny Hodges, this version will feature original lyrics by Coast’s vocalist Julia Picker, drawing upon Strayhorn’s own words.

Speaking of inimitable voices, it is a profound pleasure to share the program with the incredible musicians of Hear In Now: violinist Mazz Swift, cellist Tomeka Reid and bassist Silvia Bolognesi, who will be performing their original compositions before joining Coast for a closing number. This trio has been redefining the possibilities of improvising string instrumentalists for over a decade now. I’ve been trying to get them up here for years, as our original plan of having them here in Winter 2021 was obviously waylaid by the pandemic, so it is a delight to finally connect them with our students and audience. And perhaps the delay was to all our benefit—not only does the Coast now have a full-time string section, but this performance is also facilitated by the wonderful development of Tomeka Reid being in residence all year as a Roth Visiting Scholar! Be sure to follow Tomeka’s other concerts on campus, including Dartmouth Symphony Orchestra performing her cello

concerto on February 17, 2024, and the premiere of her 16-member Stringtet (also featuring Mazz and Silvia and this conductor) on April 11, 2024—yet another example of a composer bucking the trends to pursue the glorious sound of a large ensemble improvising together!

While I was preparing the program notes for this concert, I got the news of the departures of two great artists, the composer/pianist Carla Bley and the saxophonist Arni Cheatham. Carla Bley’s visit to Dartmouth in 2019 was a true highlight of my time teaching at this institution – the opportunity to perform her extraordinary orchestral music with the Coast (with a special guest, Carla’s daughter Karen Mantler) on a double bill with Bley’s impeccable trio with bassist Steve Swallow and saxophonist Andy Sheppard was a night that none of us involved in the concert will ever forget. Originally from Chicago but a Boston resident since 1969, Arni Cheatham was one of the foundational musicians in that city’s jazz scene for over five decades. Arni was also member of Mark Harvey’s Aardvark Jazz Orchestra for most of that time; he was to Aardvark what Johnny Hodges was to Ellington or John Gilmore to Sun Ra – an inimitable saxophone voice that helped define the sound of the ensemble, and I was lucky to get to make music with him in that group and occasionally with Arni’s own bands. One of the beauties of this music is how it is shared from one generation to the next, and how the spirit lives on when the generations pass – so tonight we celebrate James “Jabbo” Ware, Arni Cheatham, Carla Bley, and so many others who contributed to this artform, and we make a joyful noise in their honor.

Thank you for listening and please enjoy.

Taylor Ho Bynum

About the Artists

Taylor Ho Bynum is a musician, teacher and writer, with a background including work in composition, performance, interdisciplinary collaboration, production, organizing and advocacy. His expressionistic playing on cornet and other brass instruments, his expansive vision as composer, and his idiosyncratic improvisational approach have been documented on over 20 recordings as a bandleader and over 100 as a sideperson. His past endeavors include his Acoustic Bicycle Tours (where he traveled to concerts solely by bike across thousands of miles) and his stewardship of Anthony Braxton's Tri-Centric Foundation (which he served as executive director from 2010-2018, producing and performing on many major Braxton projects, including two operas and multiple festivals). Bynum has worked with other legendary figures such as Bill Dixon, Cecil Taylor, and Wadada Leo Smith, and currently enjoys playing with friends in collective ensembles like his duo with Tomas Fujiwara, *Illegal Crowns* (with Fujiwara, Benoit Delbecq and Mary Halvorson), and *Geometry* (with Kyoko Kitamura, Tomeka Reid and Joe Morris), and as a sideperson in groups led by Fujiwara, Jim Hobbs, Bill Lowe, William Parker and Bill Cole, among others. His writings on music have been published in *The New Yorker*, *The Baffler*, *Point of Departure* and *Sound American*, and he has been leading the Coast Jazz Orchestra at Dartmouth since 2017.

James "Jabbo" Ware (1942-2022) was a jazz saxophonist, composer, arranger, music copyist and band leader. He was born in Rome, Georgia, and grew up there before moving to Chattanooga, and, when he was 17 years old, to Saint Louis, where he found his true calling and passion in music. He moved into a Central West End neighborhood rife with jazz fans and jazz musicians, one of whom became his saxophone teacher and life guide, Harry Wynn. Mr. Wynn inspired young Ware to join a student band where he met two life-long friends, J D Parran and Alfred Netterville. Wynn taught him to copy his music exercises from the printed books by hand. Jabbo

was extremely fulfilled by this exercise performing it daily and was later inspired to compose music for the St. Louis Black Artists Group (BAG) Big Band along with Parran, Oliver Lake, Julius Hemphill and others. By the late 1960s he was lured to New York City by his close friend and renowned baritone saxophonist, Hamiet Bluiett, with the promise of living at the center of the music world where he continued to learn from masters such as George Coleman. He plied his trade as a music copyist, arranger and baritone saxophonist in large jazz ensembles, working with Archie Shepp, Charlie Mingus, Slide Hampton, Frank Foster, Jaki Byard, Gil Evans, Muhal Richard Abrams, Hilton Ruiz, Jimmy Heath, Ron Carter, Jimmy Owens, Tito Puente, Eddie Palmieri and many others. Jabbo's signature contribution and dream fulfilled was performing and recording his own compositions from the 1970s onward. His big band, the Me We and Them Orchestra, was conceived on Duke Ellington's model of individual voices focused through a performing family of musicians.

Mark Harvey is a composer, trumpeter, educator, minister and founder/music director of the Aardvark Jazz Orchestra, now celebrating its 51st season. As a composer, he has received numerous commissions and created over 200 works, most of them premiered by his Aardvark Jazz Orchestra (aardvarkjazz.com). As a trumpeter he has recorded with George Russell's Living Time Orchestra (Blue Note) and Baird Hersey & The Year of the Ear (Arista/Novus), may be heard on more than 30 other recordings, and has appeared with jazz luminaries such as Gil Evans, Sheila Jordan, Howard McGhee and Claudio Roditi. As an educator, he taught jazz studies for 40 years at MIT, gave lectures and papers throughout the United States and in Germany, and published essays on jazz and on music, religion and culture in leading journals and anthologies. As a minister, he worked as a community builder on the Boston jazz scene for many years producing scores of concerts and festivals featuring resident artists as well as jazz legends such as Lester

Bowie, Anthony Braxton, Abdullah Ibrahim (Dollar Brand) and Mary Lou Williams among many others. With Aardvark, he has concertized throughout the Northeast and invited outstanding guest artists such as Geri Allen, Jaki Byard, Jimmy Giuffre and Vinny Golia to appear with the band. In recognition of these activities, Dr. Harvey was presented with the Roy Haynes Award by JazzBoston for exceptional contributions to jazz and the jazz community.

Hear In Now:

Mazz Swift, Tomeka Reid, Silvia Bolognesi

A conjunction is an action or an instance of two or more events occurring at the same point in time or space. By way of a commission from the Italian WomaJazz Festival in 2009, the three musicians who comprise Hear In Now surrendered to a gravitational attraction resulting in a remarkable conjunction of ideas and sound. Violinist Mazz Swift, bassist Silvia Bolognesi and cellist Tomeka Reid hail respectively from New York, Sienna, Italy and Chicago, each of them expanding the vocabulary on their instruments in unusual configurations and looking for people with whom they could continue the quest.

As individuals, all three are active performers in the international music scene, having performed and/or recorded with William Parker, Roscoe Mitchell, Enrico Rava, George Lewis, Matana Roberts, Nicole Mitchell, Butch Morris, Vernon Reid, Dee Alexander, Burnt Sugar, Anthony Braxton and the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians. But the ethos of the trio is shaped more by the three artists' collective fearlessness and boundary-defying openness. Embracing expanded and invented techniques has resulted in compositions that touch on the exploratory nature of improvised music, while remaining rooted in the melodicism of more "traditional" or popular forms.

Hear in Now has performed at festivals including Vision Fest in New York, Made in Chicago Festival in Poznan, Poland, the Chicago Jazz Festival and the Hyde Park Jazz Festival among others, and museums, clubs and concert halls across Europe and the United States. They have released two albums: the eponymous *Hear In Now* on Rudi Records in 2012 and the critically acclaimed *Not Living in Fear* on International Anthem in 2017. They are currently working on their third studio recording.

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