



FOR IMMEDIATE ATTENTION

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**THE 8TH ANNUAL PITTSBURGH INTERNATIONAL JAZZ FESTIVAL
PRESENTED BY CITIZENS BANK HAS A NEW HOME AND MOST
HIGHLY ANTICIPATED LINE UP TO DATE**

June 15-17, 2018



(Pittsburgh, Pa)...The weekend of June 15-17, 2018, marks a pivotal milestone for the 8th annual Pittsburgh International Jazz Festival presented by Citizens Bank. As a signature program of the African American Cultural Center at the newly relaunched August Wilson Center, the Pittsburgh International Jazz Festival will continue to be helmed by **Janis Burley Wilson**, the new president & CEO of the AACC, who created and directed the jazz fest since its founding in 2011. With her new appointment, she plans to make changes to the footprint and to expand the festival format. Burley Wilson says, “The new name, new venue, and expanded program will please our devoted jazz fest attendees and attract even more jazz lovers from around the world. The team at the African American Cultural Center is committed to the continued growth and success of this dynamic festival that is a celebration of joy and unity through jazz.”

The festival moves to Liberty Avenue to take advantage of the wider street and closer proximity to the August Wilson Center. In addition, the festival will feature more educational opportunities that include master classes and artist talks throughout the weekend. On June 15th, the popular free JazzFest Crawl throughout downtown Pittsburgh features regional jazz artists performing from 5:30-9:00pm. An opening night ticketed concert with **mega jazz star Marcus Miller** kicks off the festival with a concert at the August Wilson Center at 7:00pm. After the concert, the **Taste of Jazz** party at the August Wilson Center will feature diverse live music performances; salsa, jazz, classic R & B and solo piano performances throughout the building with over 17 restaurants serving tasty samples for attendees holding tickets for the event. The evening concludes with the legendary jam sessions led by featured festival musicians.

The Pittsburgh Jazz Festival line up includes: Marcus Miller, Gregory Porter, Shemekia Copeland, Kenny Garrett, Polly Gibbons, Terri Lyne Carrington, Cory Henry & the Funk Apostles, Emmet Cohen with special guest, Tootie Heath, Donny McCaslin, Pedrito Martinez, Miguel Zenon, Jose Alberto,

Ambrose Akinmusire, Orrin Evans, Noel Quintana, DJ Selecta, the University of Pittsburgh Jazz Ensemble and more

Saturday and Sunday, June 16-17th feature live performances by the award-winning musicians throughout the day and into the late evening. Concert performances on outdoor stages are free and open to the public, with a VIP seating option available for purchase on the Pittsburgh International Jazz Festival website, pittsburghjazzfest.org. Tickets are available for the Marcus Miller concert, Taste of Jazz and VIP options on the festival website.

Sponsors include Citizens Bank, Highmark, Advanced Auto Parts, North Coast Brewing, Pittsburgh Cultural Trust, Big Y Group, Richard King Mellon Foundation and Flyspace Productions. Partners include Kente Arts Alliance, Courtyard Marriot, Drury Hotel, Acrobatic Creative, Downbeat Magazine, Entertainment Cruise Productions, and Clarke Public Relations.

PITTSBURGH INTERNATIONAL JAZZ FESTIVAL ARTISTS LINE UP

MARCUS MILLER

As a multi-instrumentalist, Marcus is highly proficient as a keyboardist, clarinetist/bass clarinetist and, primarily, as a world-renowned electric bassist, topping critics' and readers' polls for three decades. His résumé as an A-list player brims with over 500 recording credits as a sideman on albums across the spectrum of musical styles: rock (Donald Fagen and Eric Clapton), Jazz (George Benson, Dizzy Gillespie, Joe Sample, Wayne Shorter and Grover Washington, Jr.), pop (Roberta Flack, Paul Simon and Mariah Carey), R&B (Aretha Franklin and Chaka Khan), hip hop (Jay-Z and Snoop Dogg), blues (Z.Z. Hill), new wave (Billy Idol), smooth jazz (Al Jarreau and Dave Koz) and opera (collaborations with tenor Kenn Hicks and soprano Kathleen Battle).

As a film music pro, Miller rose from writing the go-go party classic "Da Butt" for Spike Lee's "School Daze" to becoming the go-to composer for 20+ films (from the documentary "1 Love" to the animated children's fable "The Trumpet and The Swan" to the Eddie Murphy/Halle Berry classic "Boomerang").

As a producer, writer and player, he was the last primary collaborator of jazz legend Miles Davis, contributing the composition and album "Tutu" to the canon of contemporary jazz music. The breadth of his collaborative talents were best showcased in his work with the late, great soul man Luther Vandross, contributing to well over half of his albums as a producer, composer and/or player on a string of hits capped by "Power of Love/Love Power" for which Marcus won his first Grammy, 1991's R&B Song of the Year.

GREGORY PORTER

For Gregory Porter, the influence of Nat King Cole on his life and music runs deep, a through-line that reaches back into some of his earliest childhood memories, and culminates in the release of the two-time GRAMMY-winning vocalist's stunning fifth studio album *Nat King Cole & Me*, a heartfelt tribute to the legendary singer, pianist, and Capitol recording artist. "He was one of a kind. He left such great music – such beautiful things to listen to that you can't help but be influenced by that extraordinary timbre, style, and ultimate cool," Porter enthuses.

After his role in the Tony-nominated musical *It Ain't Nothin' But the Blues* – but before rising to international acclaim in his solo career thanks to his mellifluous baritone, poignant originals, and invigorating concerts – Porter dramatized his deep appreciation for Cole in a semi-autobiographical musical, *Nat King Cole & Me*, which premiered in 2004.

KENNY GARRETT

In last year's DownBeat article, Garrett said, "You want to see growth in each album you record." That's certainly the case with *Pushing the World Away*, his 17th album as a leader, which captures the 52-year-old artist at the peak of his creative abilities, both as a saxophonist and as a composer who is committed to clearing the path so that he can delve deeply into his indelible art. For his third Mack Avenue Records release, *Pushing the World Away*, alto/soprano saxophonist, composer/bandleader Kenny Garrett literally had to "push away" a steady flow of distractions to get to the inner core of the album, shifting priorities in his schedule and diving deep into the essence of the music.

On *Pushing the World Away*, Garrett continues to mature as a composer. As the late Mulgrew Miller, his close friend for many years, noted in a DownBeat feature on the saxophonist last year: "Kenny has always had a great sound from the beginning. He had his own unique sound, but [thanks to his compositions] that sound has transformed into a more captivating and lyrical voice."

TERRI LYNE CARRINGTON

Celebrating 40 years in music, three-time Grammy Award winning drummer, composer and educator, Terri Lyne Carrington started her professional career at ten years old, being the youngest person to receive a union card in Boston, MA. She was featured as a "kid wonder" in many publications such as *People*, *EBONY*, and *Modern Drummer* magazines, among others. After studying under a full scholarship at Berklee College of Music, Carrington worked as an in-demand musician in New York City, and later moved to Los Angeles, where she was a late night TV drummer for the Arsenio Hall Show and Quincy Jones' *VIBE* TV show. Throughout her extensive touring and recording career, she has worked with luminary artists such as Herbie Hancock, Wayne Shorter, Al Jarreau, Stan Getz, David Sanborn, Joe Sample, Cassandra Wilson, Dianne Reeves, James Moody, Pharoah Sanders, David Murray, John Scofield, Esperanza Spalding, Yellowjackets, and countless others. In 2005, Carrington returned to her hometown where she was appointed professor at her alma mater, Berklee College of Music. Currently, she holds the position of Zildjian Chair in Performance, Berklee Global Jazz Institute. She is also the Artistic Director for both the Beantown Jazz Festival and the Berklee Summer Jazz Workshop.

To date, Carrington has released eight albums, most recently *The Mosaic Project: LOVE and SOUL*, which features a leading cast of superb female instrumentalists and vocalists including Natalie Cole, Chaka Khan, Nancy Wilson, Ledisi, Lalah Hathaway, Lizz Wright, Ingrid Jensen, Meshell Ndegeocello, Linda Oh, Patrice Rushen, Regina Carter and others. In addition to *The Mosaic Project*, Carrington recently combined forces with David Murray and Geri Allen to form the MAC Power Trio. Their current release is a tribute to Ornette Coleman, entitled *Perfection*.

CORY HENRY & THE FUNK APOSTLES

On his debut album with The Funk Apostles, 'Chapter 1: The Art of Love,' organ virtuoso Cory Henry demonstrates that's he more than up more than up for the challenge, moving from sideman to frontman with seemingly effortless grace and cool. Praised by AllMusic as "one of the finest Hammond B-3 organ players of his generation," Henry also proves himself to be a remarkable singer and songwriter here, one of extraordinary depth and vision. He and the band whip up an intoxicating blend of blues, soul, R&B, Afrobeat, gospel, and jazz on the record, blurring genres and upending expectations at every turn. Simultaneously futuristic and retro, experimental and classic, it's the sound of one of modern music's most inventive minds coming fully into his own as a bandleader and storyteller.

A Brooklyn native, Henry may be best known for his role in Snarky Puppy, the instrumental jazz-pop orchestra hailed by Rolling Stone as “one of the more versatile groups on the planet right now.” He’s won a pair of GRAMMY Awards for his work with the band since 2012, but Henry’s deft keyboard skills have been blowing minds around the world for more than two decades now.

PEDRITO MARTINEZ

Pedro Pablo “Pedrito” Martinez was born in Havana, Cuba, Sept 12, 1973. Having settled in New York City in the fall of 1998, by 2000, he had been awarded the Thelonius Monk Award for Afro-Latin Hand Percussion and was featured in the documentary film, Calle 54.

Pedrito has recorded or performed with Wynton Marsalis, Paul Simon, Paquito D’Rivera, Bruce Springsteen, and Sting and has contributed, as a percussionist and vocalist, to over 50 albums. Mr. Martinez was also a founding member of the highly successful, Afro-Cuban/Afro-Beat band, Yerba Buena, with which he recorded two albums and toured the world.

Pedrito’s career as a leader began in 2005 with the formation in NYC of The Pedrito Martinez Group. The group’s Grammy-nominated first album was released October, 2013 and was chosen among NPR’s Favorite Albums of 2013 and The Boston Globe Critics Top Ten Albums of 2013.

Habana Dreams, PMG’s second album, was released in June 2016. Guests include, Ruben Blades, Isaac Delgado, Wynton Marsalis, Descemer Bueno, Roman Diaz, Angelique Kidjo, and Telmary Diaz. Accolades for Habana Dreams include #1 Latin Jazz Album in NPR’s Jazz Critics Top Jazz Albums for 2016 and being named among B Multiple Grammy Nominee and Guggenheim and MacArthur Fellow Miguel Zenón represents a select group of musicians who have masterfully balanced and blended the often contradictory poles of innovation and tradition. Widely considered as one of the most groundbreaking and influential saxophonists of his generation, he has also developed a unique voice as a composer and as a conceptualist, concentrating his efforts on perfecting a fine mix between Latin American Folkloric Music and Jazz.

MIGUEL ZENON

Born and raised in San Juan, Puerto Rico, Zenón has released ten recordings as a leader, including Típico (2017) and the Grammy Nominated Identitites Are Changeable (2014). As a sideman he has worked with jazz luminaries such as The SFJAZZ Collective, Charlie Haden, Fred Hersch, Kenny Werner, David Sánchez, Danilo Perez, The Village Vanguard Orchestra, Guillermo Klein & Los Guachos, The Jeff Ballard Trio, Antonio Sanchez, David Gilmore, Paoli Mejias, Brian Lynch, Jason Lindner, Miles Okazaki, Ray Barreto, Andy Montañez, Jerry Gonzalez & The Fort Apache Band, The Mingus Big Band, Bobby Hutcherson and Steve Coleman.

Zenón has been featured in articles on publications such as The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, The Los Angeles Times, as well as gracing the cover of Downbeat Magazine on two occasions (2010 and 2014). In addition, he topped both the Jazz Artist of the Year and Alto Saxophonist categories on the 2104 Jazz Times Critics Poll and was selected as 2015 Alto Saxophonist of the Year by the Jazz Journalist Association.

As a composer he has been commissioned by SFJAZZ, The New York State Council for the Arts, Chamber Music America, Logan Center for The Arts, The Hyde Park Jazz Festival, The John Simon Guggenheim Foundation, Jazz Reach, Peak Performances, PRISM Quartet and many of his peers. Zenón has given hundreds of lectures and master classes at institutions all over the world, and is a permanent

faculty member at New England Conservatory of Music. In 2011 he founded Caravana Cultural, a program which presents free-of-charge Jazz concerts in rural areas of Puerto Rico. In April 2008 Zenón received a fellowship from the prestigious John Simon Guggenheim Foundation. Later that year he was one of 25 distinguished individuals chosen to receive the coveted MacArthur Fellowship, also known as the “Genius Grant”.

DONNY MCCASLIN

Three-time GRAMMY® nominee Donny McCaslin is the leading saxophonist, composer, and musical pioneer of his generation, receiving wide commercial and critical acclaim in jazz, rock and electronica circles alike.

With 12 albums to his name, McCaslin is best known for his collaboration and friendship with the late David Bowie, who tasked McCaslin to work hand-in-hand on his final album, *Blackstar*.

“It was like a dream except it was something I never could have dreamed of,” reflects Donny. “David Bowie was a visionary artist whose generosity, creative spirit, and fearlessness will stay with me the rest of my days.” The result was *Beyond Now*, McCaslin’s latest album dedicated to Bowie. Since its release on Motéma Music in 2016, *Beyond Now* has garnered praise from Rolling Stone, Entertainment Weekly, NPR, The New York Times, Associated Press and more.

Raised in Santa Cruz, California, McCaslin attended Berklee College of Music, where he would go on to join the iconic NEA Jazz Master Gary Burton’s Quintet as a senior. Moving to New York in 1991, he quickly made a name for himself as a first-call soloist and touring musician, working with Maria Schneider, Dave Douglas, Danilo Perez, Brian Blade, Gil Evans project, Steps Ahead, and many others. During this time frame he also began releasing several albums with his own groups as well as receiving critical awards such as a Chamber Music of America New Works Grant in 2006 and winner of DownBeat Critics Poll ‘Rising Star’ category in 2008 & 2009, among others.

AMBROSE AKINMUSIRE

During his 15-year career, Ambrose Akinmusire has paradoxically situated himself in both the center and the periphery of jazz, most recently emerging in classical and hip hop circles. He’s on a perpetual quest for new paradigms, masterfully weaving inspiration from other genres, arts, and life in general into compositions that are as poetic and graceful as they are bold and unflinching.

His unorthodox approach to sound and composition make him a regular on critics polls and have earned him grants and commissions from the Doris Duke Foundation, the MAP Fund, the Kennedy Center and the Monterey Jazz Festival. While Akinmusire continues to garner accolades, his reach is always beyond—himself, his instrument, genre, form, preconceived notions, and anything else imposing limitations. Motivated primarily by the spiritual and practical value of art, Akinmusire wants to remove the wall of erudition surrounding his music. He aspires to create richly textured emotional landscapes that tell the stories of the community, record the time, and change the standard. While committed to continuing the lineage of black invention and innovation, he manages to honor tradition without being stifled by it. Akinmusire is a rigorous practitioner with an uncompromising dedication to creation. “I’ve learned to accept the consequences of believing in invention and creativity. You’re gonna be misunderstood. But my horse blinders have gotten a lot longer and lot thicker over the years.

His last recording, *A Rift in Decorum: Live at the Village Vanguard* was released on Blue Note last year and his upcoming project, *Origami Harvest* will be released in 2018.

SHEMEKIA COPELAND

Whether she's belting out a raucous blues-rocker, firing up a blistering soulshouter, bringing the spirit to a gospel-fueled R&B rave-up or digging deep down into a subtle, country-tinged ballad, Shemekia Copeland sounds like no one else. With a voice that is alternately sultry, assertive and roaring, Shemekia's wide-open vision of contemporary blues, roots and soul showcases the evolution of a passionate artist with a modern musical and lyrical approach. The Chicago Tribune says Copeland delivers "gale force singing and power" with a "unique, gutsy style, vibrant emotional palette and intuitive grasp of the music." NPR Music calls her "fiercely expressive."

Copeland's return to Alligator Records with *Outskirts Of Love* (she recorded four albums for the label from 1998 through 2006) finds her at her most charismatic, performing roots rock, Americana, and blues with power and authority, nuance and shading. Produced by The Wood Brothers' Oliver Wood, *Outskirts Of Love* is a musical tour-de-force, with Copeland rocking out on the title track, taking charge in *Crossbone Beach*, honoring her father, the late Johnny Clyde Copeland with her Afrobeat-infused take on his *Devil's Hand*, tackling homelessness on *Cardboard Box* and showing off her country swagger on *Drivin' Out Of Nashville*. She puts her stamp on songs made famous by Solomon Burke (*I Feel A Sin Coming On*), Jesse Winchester (*Isn't That So*),

Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee (*The Battle Is Over*), Creedence Clearwater Revival (*Long As I Can See The Light*), ZZ Top (*Jesus Just Left Chicago*), Albert King (*Wrapped Up In Love Again*) and Jessie Mae Hemphill (*Lord, Help The Poor And Needy*). Friends including Billy F Gibbons, Robert Randolph, Alvin Youngblood Hart, Will Kimbrough and Pete Finney all add their talent with unbridled enthusiasm. The result is the most decidedly contemporary and musically adventurous album of Copeland's still-evolving career.

JOSE ALBERTO

José Alberto Justiniano born December 22, 1958 in Villa Consuelo, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, better known by his stage name José Alberto "El Canario" is a Dominican salsa singer. José Alberto moved to Puerto Rico with his family at the age of 7, and inspired by Latin music went on to polish his singing at Las Antillas Military Academy. He relocated to New York in the early 1970s and sang with several orchestras. He received international attention as the singer of *Tipica 73* in October 1977.

José Alberto started his own band in 1983, and became a major Latin star after the release of his 1984 debut *Noches Calientes*. His 1991 album *Dance With Me*, which established a new style of salsa called *salsa romántica*. He has sung hit songs such as "Sueño Contigo" His voice was widely adored by his fans, and his exceptional whistling abilities (being able to improvise as if he was playing a traverse flute) led them to give him the nickname *El Canario* (The Canary).

El Canario has enjoyed success in the United States and Europe, but especially throughout Latin America, including in his native Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Peru, Venezuela, Panama, and Ecuador. *El Canario* in 1999 also was part of the biggest Latin American festival in Australian history at The Bacardi Darling Harbor Latin American Festival in Sydney, as supporting act for salsa performer Celia Cruz with over 22,000 people in attendance.

On 24 May 2008, José Alberto celebrated 30 years in the music industry at the United Palace Theater in New York City. Among the several special guests were Oscar D'León, Ismael Miranda, Raulín Rosendo, Joe Arroyo, and Latin music mogul Ralph Mercado.

POLLY GIBBONS

Fully embracing the inspiring, expansive array of American jazz, soul and blues influences that have infused her dynamic career as an artist and live performer, Polly Gibbons fashions a frolicsome, freewheeling musical history lesson on *Is It Me... ?*, her second release on the indie jazz label Resonance Records.

Capturing the joyful essence of the 12-track collection, the multi-talented British singer, a staple of the UK Jazz Scene since the mid-2000s and recently nominated Vocalist of the Year by Jazz FM says: “It’s a massive melting pot, varied but beautifully linked because I love every style I’m singing. Jazz would never have happened without the blues, which came out of the gospel tradition – and blues is the foundation of contemporary Western culture and pop/soul music, and so on.”

Polly has cultivated her craft and eclecticism over the past decade, performing at all the leading UK jazz clubs, international festivals and as a regular at the legendary venue Ronnie Scott’s Jazz Club, where she has sung with the All-Stars, led by pianist and house musical director James Pearson.

ABOUT THE AFRICAN AMERICAN CULTURAL CENTER

The August Wilson Center is venue dedicated to the presentation of art and culture reflective of African-Americans and the African Diaspora. Janis Burley Wilson was named President & CEO in September 2017. It is owned and operated by the African American Cultural Center. The building is located in Pittsburgh’s Cultural District at 980 Liberty Avenue, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15222. The “Center” offers multiple exhibition galleries, a 472-seat theater for performances, and spaces for classes, lectures and community events. It was designed by African-American architect, Allison Williams. For more information and a calendar of upcoming events taking place at the August Wilson Center, visit aacc-awc.org.

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