

For Immediate Release

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Presents



**Hammer Theatre Center, in Association with San Jose Jazz,
Bring the Best Names in Jazz to Downtown San Jose
For Intimate Cabaret Concert Experience in Autumn 2019 & Winter 2020**

Featuring:

Kendrick Scott – October 20, 2019

Quiana Lynell – November 8, 2019

Matt Wilson – February 21, 2020

Melissa Aldana Trio – March 20, 2020

San Jose, Calif. – Monday, September 23, 2019 – Downtown San Jose will bustle with the sounds of modern jazz in a brand new intimate concert series **Black Cab Jazz**, to be presented from autumn 2019 through winter 2020. The series is named after presenter **Hammer Theatre Center's** intimate black box theatre space, where the concerts will be held in the spirit of classic intimate cabaret shows. Audiences will see today's hottest jazz artists with 4-top seating amongst a maximum capacity of 120 audience members. Curated by Internationally renowned arts organization **San Jose Jazz** in partnership with the Hammer Theatre Center, this riveting set of up-close performances will feature **Blue Note Records** drummer **Kendrick Scott** (Oct. 20), sizzling vocalist **Quiana Lynell** (Nov. 8), one of New York's finest drummers **Matt Wilson and his "Honey & Salt" Quintet** (Feb. 21), and award-winning saxophonist **Melissa Aldana Trio** (Mar. 20).

"The Hammer is excited and indebted to San Jose Jazz and its curators for helping us to introduce this new vibe in downtown San Jose, where you can see and hear emerging Jazz artists in the intimate, cabaret style, of Hammer 4 black box theatre," says **Chris Burrill, Executive Director of the Hammer Theatre Center**.

"Following an incredibly exciting 30th Anniversary of our annual San Jose Jazz Summer Fest, we want to stay connected with the community of South Bay jazz fans with an extra special series where music fans can truly experience their favorite artists only steps away from the stage," says **San Jose Jazz's Executive Director Brendan Rawson**. "For the inaugural Black Cab Series, we've selected what we think are four talents who are making a name for themselves on the national jazz scene. San Jose Jazz is thrilled to work directly with one of the staunch supporters of our festivals, the Hammer Theatre, as well as the prestigious San José State University and the Jazz Studies Program. For fans of modern jazz, whether they are familiar with the performers, they can be rest assured that magnificent sets of original music will be performed right here in downtown San Jose."

For detailed information regarding the artists performing at the Black Cab Jazz series, please see below.

Kendrick Scott

Drummer and composer **Kendrick Scott** kicked off his Blue Note contract four years ago with *We Are the Drum*. Expertly produced by Derrick Hodge, Scott's creative confidant and musical brother, and featuring a stunning guest performance by vocalist Lizz Wright, it earned rave reviews and reiterated how Oracle, Scott's long-running working group, is one of the most thoughtfully powerful jazz bands of its generation.

Scott embarks on a career as a revered artist with deep meaning. "Coming up in church," he says, "You played music for a message; you played music for a purpose. Oracle lives in that space, no matter what we're playing." Like his fellow Houston drum-greats, Harland and Jamire Williams, Scott grew up with a mother who was an acclaimed gospel choir director. On top of that bedrock, he developed his technique through private mentorship and public jazz education, spurred on by an environment of fierce but brotherly competition. He moved to New York in 2003 and raised his profile performing and recording for Blue Note in trumpeter Terence Blanchard's band, alongside future Blue Note artists Hodge, pianist Aaron Parks, and guitarist Lionel Loueke.

Quiana Lynell

The 2017 Sarah Vaughan International Jazz Vocal Competition winner, **Quiana Lynell** infuses her classical training with her gospel upbringing and approaches jazz as a storyteller. Her mesmerizing performances can only come about because Lynell believes every word that journeys from her soul. Lynell is quickly becoming recognized as one of the voices to listen for as she creates an environment where love is paramount, emphasizing the importance of self-worth and respect through her music. With her debut album soon to be released by Concord Records, she is positioned to become one of the most exciting artists of jazz.

"A smile, a sound, a calling with passion and soul. These are the things that come to mind when trying to describe a serious vocal discovery. Quiana Lynell is already a vocal presence. 'Where have you been and why am I just hearing about you' was my thought when I first heard her sing. A unique, but warm, comforting voice that will make you reflect. However, she is not only a voice, but a composer as well with something to say." – **Terence Blanchard, 4-Time GRAMMY Award Winner and Blue Note Recording Artist & Producer**

Matt Wilson

Matt Wilson has released 13 albums as a leader, appeared on more than 400 others as a sideman and has played with an impressive array of some of the most legendary names in jazz, including Wynton Marsalis, Joe Lovano, Pat Metheny, Charlie Haden, John Scofield, and Herbie Hancock, just to name a few.

Wilson was named "2018 Musician of the Year" by the Jazz Journalists Association and his album, *Honey And Salt (Music Inspired by the Poetry of Carl Sandburg)*, won the JJA's "Album of the Year Award." That recording and his previous, *Beginning of a Memory*, accomplished the rare feat of an artist receiving consecutive 5-star (masterpiece) reviews from *DownBeat* magazine.

Wilson's commitment to jazz goes far beyond his estimable skills as a drummer and bandleader. Also a renowned educator, he is on a tireless mission to foster a lively and deep connection between music and people, whether they be playing or listening to it. To that end, he is extremely passionate about bringing jazz to new audiences and inspiring students to be as individualistic and imaginative as possible.

Melissa Aldana

On her first jazz quartet album *Visions* (2019), award-winning saxophonist **Melissa Aldana** connects her work to the legacy of Latina artists who have come before her. Inspired by the life and works of Frida Kahlo, Aldana creates a parallel between her experiences as a female saxophone player in a male-dominated community, and Kahlo's experiences as a female visual artist working to assert herself in a landscape dominated by men. On *Visions*, Aldana adds a new dimension to her sound, resulting in a transformative movement of expression and self-identity.

Born in Santiago, Chile, Aldana began playing the saxophone under the influence and tuition of her father Marcos Aldana, also a professional saxophonist. Aldana began with alto, and upon first hearing the music of Sonny Rollins, she switched to tenor. In 2005, after meeting him while he was on tour in Chile, she was invited by pianist Danilo Pérez to play at the Panama Jazz Festival, as well as a number of auditions at music schools in the U.S.. As a result, Aldana attended Berklee College of Music where her tutors included Joe Lovano, Greg Osby, Bill Pierce, Ralph Peterson, and others.

Following graduation from Berklee in 2009, Aldana moved to New York City to study under George Coleman. She recorded her first album, *Free Fall*, which was released on Greg Osby's Inner Circle Music imprint in 2010. Aldana went on to perform at the Blue Note jazz club, the Monterey Jazz Festival, and in 2016, she debuted at San Jose Jazz Summer Fest. In 2012, her second album, *Second Cycle*, was released and in 2013, she became the first female musician and first South American artist to win the Thelonious Monk International Jazz Saxophone Competition (her father had been a semi-finalist in 1991). Aldana was awarded a recording contract

with Concord Jazz. Reporting on her win, the *Washington Post* described Aldana as representing "a new sense of possibility and direction in jazz."

Black Cab Jazz

When: October 20, 2019 – March 20, 2020

Where: Hammer 4 at the Hammer Theatre Center, 101 Paseo de San Antonio, San Jose, CA 95113

Time: 7pm

Tickets: \$20: Bleachers/\$25: Rounds; sold in pairs or fours only (includes a fruit/cheese/nut plate). Sectional seating is assigned with the choice of specific seats available upon entry to Hammer 4.

More Info & Purchase Tickets: <https://sanjosejazz.org/>, <https://hammertheatre.com>

About Hammer Theatre Center

The Hammer Theatre Center is a distinctive, state-of-the-art performance venue in the heart of downtown San José. Owned by the City of San José and operated by San José State University (SJSU), the Hammer Theatre's mission is to serve the community through artistically and educationally excellent programming that is expressive of the unique characteristics and diverse cultures that comprise Silicon Valley. The broader vision of the Hammer includes arts, innovation, and technology programming on the Paseo de San Antonio, creating a vibrant pathway between SJSU and the Tech Museum and bridging the urban spaces from Saint James Park down to the South of First Avenue cultural district. The Hammer also aims to connect SJSU's more than 37,000 faculty, students, and staff with the downtown cultural and economic corridors.

About San Jose Jazz

Founded in 1986, San Jose Jazz is a public benefit corporation celebrating jazz as a dynamic, evolving art form and is producer of the annual San Jose Jazz Summer Fest and Winter Fest. With its singular music programming and innovative educational offerings, San Jose Jazz preserves the jazz tradition while actively supporting the next generation of performers within the genre and beyond. For more information, please visit sanjosejazz.org.

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