

The Baltimore Jazz Alliance is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization.

The Baltimore Jazz Alliance (BJA) is a grass-roots organization of jazz aficionados, musicians and venues dedicated to enhancing and promoting jazz in Baltimore and the surrounding areas. New members sharing this passion are always welcome as the BJA continues its efforts to build a stronger and better networked jazz scene. Together we can help this music thrive in the region and reward listeners and musicians alike.

#### BJA Priorities

- To develop new audiences for jazz
- To strengthen communication within the jazz community
- To improve media relations on behalf of the jazz community
- To bring greater visibility to the entire array of jazz offerings in the Baltimore region
- To provide greater access to performance opportunities for Baltimore-area jazz musicians

Visit [www.baltimorejazz.com](http://www.baltimorejazz.com) for information about our accomplishments and future goals.

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## Jazz History Continues in Charm City

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celebrates Baltimore's underappreciated jazz tradition. It's available at Amazon and other booksellers.

The next time you hear a discussion about the world's great love of jazz music, remember where many of the very best got their start—in Baltimore! In fact, many world-renowned jazz musicians are living in Baltimore today, and many more stop in Charm City to headline at jazz events and series at our city's respected venues, such as the Baltimore Chamber Jazz Society series at the BMA, Jazzway 6004, Caton Castle, the Peabody Jazz Series at Peabody Conservatory and the John Hopkins Club, An die Musik, Eubie Live!, and many others. There are dozens of clubs, bars, bistros and restaurants—venues of every stripe—in the Baltimore area where outstanding musicians play excellent jazz every night (and day) of the week. There are jazz jam sessions galore (where the cats congregate to groove and grow) all around the city. (See our BJA's Jazz Jam Session listing on page 10.) To learn who's playing and where, visit the BJA online jazz calendar at our website: [www.baltimorejazz.com](http://www.baltimorejazz.com). And while you're there, if you're not already a BJA member—JOIN US! There is a membership form on page 15 of this newsletter, or you can sign up at: [www.baltimorejazz.com](http://www.baltimorejazz.com). Please help us preserve and promote live jazz in Baltimore!

Baltimore has been on a remarkable musical journey that continues today. **The beat goes on!**



Pianist Mel Spears with Gail Marten

As a vocalist, I had the very good fortune to work with many of Baltimore's historically notable jazz musicians, including Ellis Larkins, Mel Spears, Charles Covington, Mickey Fields, Lionel Jiggetts, Danny Brown, Arnold Sterling, Whit Williams, James Saunderlin, Vernon Woltz, Morris Dow, Phil Harris, and several other greats whose names I've forgotten. They (and scores of the next generation of jazz musicians from Charm City) taught me so much and helped make me who I am today.

Find today's jazz at our website: [www.baltimorejazz.com](http://www.baltimorejazz.com)

along Pennsylvania Avenue and learn a great deal more at The Maryland Historical Society, located at 201 W. Monument Street in Baltimore.

Long-time Baltimoreans also remember that for almost thirty years The Left Bank Jazz Society (for many years housed at the Famous Ballroom at 1717 North Charles Street) hosted the nation's greatest jazz artists.

A wealth of historical Baltimore jazz memorabilia is on display at the Eubie Blake Jazz Institute and Cultural Center, located at 847 N. Howard Street. Contact Troy Burton, Executive Director, at 410-225-3130 or [eubieblake@rcn.com](mailto:eubieblake@rcn.com) to schedule a tour. Also check out Mark Osteen and Frank J. Graziano's book *Music at the Crossroads: Lives & Legacies of Baltimore Jazz* (Aperio Series: Loyola Humane Texts), which analyzes and



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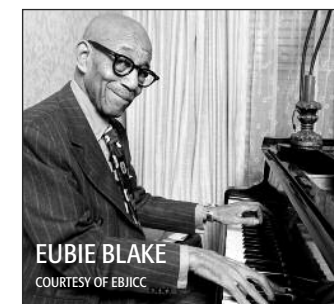
## Jazz History Continues in Charm City

By Gail Marten

Baltimore has an amazing jazz music scene, but its fascinating jazz history has remained largely uncelebrated. To understand jazz's beginnings, we should start at the church. Many jazz greats began their careers in the early 1900s by singing or playing the organ in the church choir, where the musical form known as gospel was born.

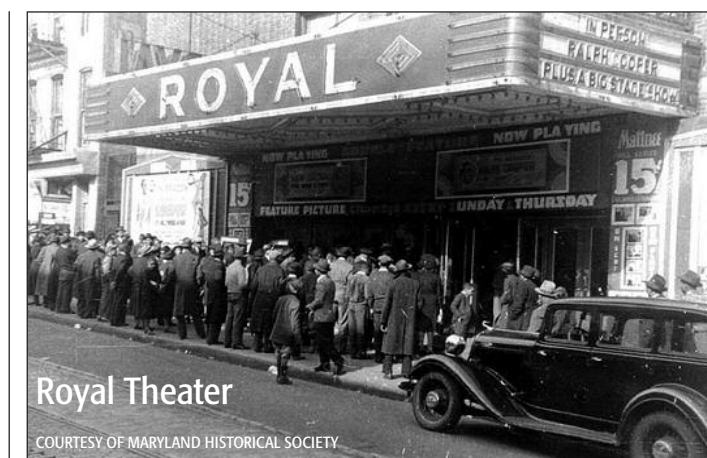
Eubie Blake, one of Baltimore's jazz legends, taught himself to play the family organ in the 1890s. He was captivated by the lively, syncopated sounds of Scott Joplin's ragtime. Joplin, another African American composer, had sent shockwaves through America with his new style of music, which melded the compositional structures of German, Polish and other European immigrants with the rhythms of African song. "Anything that is syncopated is basically ragtime," Blake said, "I don't care whether it's Liszt's 'Hungarian Rhapsody' or Tchaikovsky in his 'Waltz of the Flowers.'" Blake often improvised with the right hand and let the left hand wander all over the keyboard, all while keeping the beat. This style would come to be called ragtime.

Blake would sneak out of his parents' house to a nearby bordello called Miss Aggie's—located at the corner of Gay & Aisquith Streets—and play through the night. When he moved to New York, Blake brought Baltimore's jazz sounds to Broadway. He co-wrote the songs for the 1921 musical *Shuffle Along*, which was a breakthrough for jazz and the theater, in that it featured an all-African American cast. Its remarkable success led to better hiring practices for African American musicians and actors, and served to integrate theater companies across the country. But even Blake wasn't immune from segregation's sting. When *Shuffle Along* came to Baltimore's Ford's Theater,



EUBIE BLAKE  
COURTESY OF EBJICC

he was told he couldn't bring his own mother. (He did anyway, the story goes—by sneaking her in through the back.)



Royal Theater  
COURTESY OF MARYLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

he was told he couldn't bring his own mother. (He did anyway, the story goes—by sneaking her in through the back.)

Baltimore's musical institutions ended their segregation more than a decade before the Supreme Court decision *Brown v. Board of Education* declared it unconstitutional in 1954. In 1938, Baltimore jazz legend Ellis Larkins became the first African American student at the Peabody Conservatory, and fortunately others followed.

In 1930s and '40s segregated Baltimore, most jazz venues were on the west side and Pennsylvania Avenue was the place to be. It was known throughout the city as "The Avenue." At its hub was the Royal Theatre, a beautiful building with a plush interior. The Royal was the Baltimore stop on a musicians' circuit from New York to Washington, DC. In fact, the Royal was known to have a more critical audience than Harlem's Apollo Theater. Cab Calloway, Louis Armstrong, Billie Holiday, Lena Horne and Charlie Parker played there, to name just a few.

Although the venue, both a landmark and a painful reminder of Baltimore's segregated past, was demolished in 1971, you can see images of the thriving shops and businesses

(continued on back page)

## INTERVIEW

# Paula Phillips and Jazz Beyond Borders

Six months ago, jazz impresario and promoter Paula Phillips changed the focus of her lifelong work with arts organizations and artists. She created a new company called Jazz Beyond Borders to serve artists of different cultures and countries. Their work crossing musical genres is exciting to her as a listener. In a matter of months, she put together a roster of world music and jazz artists and began setting up performances and tours and marketing a fairly memorable brand.

### What is Jazz Beyond Borders?

Jazz Beyond Borders is a presenting organization and booking agency. We bring world-class recording, performing and teaching artists to concert halls, clubs and festivals as well as clinics and workshops.

Our primary territory is the Mid-Atlantic area, but we also set up performances, tours and events in other states. For our CD releases, we work with colleagues in Europe, South America and other continents as required.

I am also at the helm of a sister agency, a public relations firm known as The Phillips Agency. It's been around for two decades. That company performs public relations, marketing and digital services for many of the artists on the Jazz Beyond Borders roster. The agency also represents other artists and cultural organizations, record labels and indie artists. We've worked with symphony orchestras, dance companies, galleries, museums, performance venues and festivals. We've been pretty busy!

### Which artists do you represent?

We're working with an L.A.-based guitarist who plays flamenco music with jazz, rock and classical influences. His group is called Juanito Pascual New Flamenco Trio. All members attended New England Conservatory of Music. They'll perform at Montpelier Arts Center in Laurel and at O'Callaghan Annapolis Hotel in October; and at An die Musik Live in Baltimore in November. They received rave reviews for their 2014 self-titled album, but we did not handle that release. We've been working on bringing them into large concert halls. This is a world-traveled band and they are fantastic in a large auditorium.

We are involved in three album releases and related concerts right now. Brazilian composer saxophonist Michel Nirenberg released *Retrato/Portrait* in June. His compatriot Cissa Paz just put out a self-titled album featuring music of the Lusophone (Portuguese-speaking) diaspora. It's a fantastic project. Cesar Orozco & Kamarata Jazz just released *No Limits for Tumbao*. A lot of Baltimoreans know Orozco because he earned a graduate degree at Peabody. Before that, he won a Cubadisco Award in his native Cuba and wrote music for successful theatrical productions in Venezuela. He was recently picked up by the new international label, Alfi Records. That label is headed by Albert Dadon, who is based in Aus-



PHOTO COURTESY OF PAULA PHILLIPS

Bassists Jimmy Haslip and Bobby Beall  
with Paula Phillips

tralia and has performed in Baltimore and Washington under the name Albare.

We also have the privilege of working with Baltimore area artists Todd Marcus and Marianne Matheny-Katz. Marianne is very collaborative. She and Todd are all about building community and we are honored to work with both of them.

### How did the organization come to be?

Well, I think we can blame it on Jimmy Haslip and on my work as administrator of inDepth Jazz Clinics & Concerts and Maryland Summer Jazz, a festival of workshops, jams, and concerts that I co-founded 11 years ago. While there, I brought in a lot of Latin jazz artists, Brazilian artists (the styles are quite different, in my opinion) and some fabulous women artists, such as Ingrid Jensen, Sherrie Maricle and Helen Sung.

Most folks know Jimmy from his career with the Yellowjackets and tours with Jeff Lorber and Alan Holdsworth, but he is a fine producer and very busy in that capacity. He's an-

other of those great artists who tries to make a difference in the world by helping others. Seeing what we had accomplished with the agency, Jimmy called me from L.A. to interest me in working with artists he was producing and mentoring.

I was not interested in booking. Regional booking is not particularly lucrative for the artists, promoters or agents. So we did only a limited amount of booking through The Phillips Agency, filling in tour dates here and there. I never saw that as a career choice. But Jimmy is a very persistent guy, so even though I wasn't ready to take that direction, he had planted the idea in my mind.

With inDepth Jazz Clinics and Maryland Summer Jazz, I was hiring artists that I really respected, whose music was very compelling. Ingrid, Sherrie, Helen, Canadian guitarist Matthew Stevens and Jimmy were in that category. They exhibited a level of artistry and commitment that are important to me and lead to making great music. I wanted to work with more people of that caliber and with folks headed in that direction. When I parted ways with Maryland Summer Jazz and inDepth Jazz this spring, I was finally free to work with more artists who write and play the kind of music that really moves me, makes me smile and even dance—sometimes in the office when no one is looking!

### Who works with you at Jazz Beyond Borders?

A lot of people will know Sean Johnson from An die Musik Live, where he worked for nearly 10 years. Having a physi-

cist father influenced him to study audio engineering, and he earned a B.S. in music and sound recording from the University of New Haven. He works at Jazz Beyond Borders as an artist representative. Our amazing web designer, Carol Wetovich, is also a fine artist, retired from a career as a camerawoman for television and film. She has been indispensable to me and many of our artists. We've had some great designers on board, including Stacey Saadeh Smith and Sarah Conway, who have worked on albums and concerts. We have a great crew. Like me, most of them have discovered that they have more than one calling. In this digital age, we work in our respective offices and get together by email and telephone, with periodic personal meetings.

### What lies on the road ahead?

I'm not sure what lies ahead, but I have begun studying Russian and, after being pressured by many Brazilian clients, I will begin conversational Portuguese next week. To date, all of our translations have been done by professionals and that will likely continue! Language study seems to sharpen the mind and I enjoy absorbing the history and culture of other lands. That's valuable in this business.

— Gail Marten

“There are still so many beautiful things  
to be said in C major.” — SERGEI PROKOFIEV

## Marianne Matheny-Katz Live At Montpelier!

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 2nd 8 pm

Marianne Matheny-Katz performs  
songs from *Somewhere in Paradise!*

Baltimore's beloved singer, two-time award winner of the Billie Holiday Competition, released her CD *Somewhere in Paradise* to rave reviews, national airplay, and sold out concerts. Music critic John Murph says, “She possesses a quintessential jazz voice, which she enlivens with lissome, conversational phrasing. Her Baltimore band features some of the biggest names in jazz today. She has built a substantial set list for the sophisticated ear, dressing beloved jazz tunes in new and noteworthy arrangements.”

### MONTPELIER ARTS CENTER

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Tickets: \$25/person; 10% discount for Montpelier members & seniors

Tickets available at the door, by phone at 301-377-7800 or 410-792-0664 or through Instant Seats  
<http://www.instantseats.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=buy.event&eventID=D1C99C82-C80E-9C28-22E2F84C9A466DC3>