



For Immediate Release

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**HAZEL MITCHELL-BELL
IS BACK IN THE SPOTLIGHT!**

Saturday, March 27, marks the onstage comeback of quintessential D.C.-based jazz vocalist Hazel Mitchell-Bell. The elegant and engaging artist enjoyed numerous sellout performances in the D.C. jazz scene until the start of the COVID-19 pandemic almost a year ago. She has made good use of the interlude, further honing her craft and recording a new album, set for release this spring. With fans awaiting her return, Mitchell-Bell is more than eager to enthrall audiences once again - this time, virtually.

Mitchell-Bell carries with her the influence of Nancy Wilson, Ella Fitzgerald, Dinah Washington, Sarah Vaughan and Phyllis Hyman. In 2018, she collaborated with pianist/producer Vince Evans on her highly praised debut album *Stronger Than Ever*, featuring beloved jazz classics and R&B hits. The CD has enjoyed 12 weeks on the Roots Music Report Top 50 Jazz Chart, peaking at #12 overall. She has also been well-received at prestigious stages, such as the Kennedy Center, the Alice Jazz and Cultural Society, the Preservation Jazz Festival, Twins Jazz, City Winery and the Sheldon Concert Hall in St. Louis.

Music Director and Pianist Vince Evans has earned enormous respect from peers and fans through his extensive career as a musician, producer, and educator. He has worked with many celebrities such as Prince, Phyllis Hyman, Al Jarreau, George Benson, Eddie Murphy, MC Hammer, Joey McIntyre, Jonathan Butler, Bill Withers, Gerald Albright, Luther Vandross, Lenny White, Lalah Hathaway, Isaac Hayes, Patti LaBelle, Angie Stone, Chuck Brown and Dianne Reeves. Evans Graduated with a bachelor's degree in music production and engineering from Berklee College of Music. He runs a recording studio, rehearsal space and teaching facility, where he teaches vocal technique, music theory, improvisation and music production.

Trumpeter Kenny Rittenhouse is a veteran player, having been a member of The United States Army Band (aka. Pershing's Own), The U.S. Army Blues, the Smithsonian Jazz Masterworks Orchestra, and the Pittsburgh Jazz Orchestra, where he performed alongside Ernie Andrews, Kevin Mahogany, Lou Rawls,

Wycliffe Gordon, Doc Severinsen, Arturo Sandoval, Sean Jones, Hubert Laws, Kurt Elling, Jimmy Heath, Ahmad Jamal and Freddy Cole. He leads The Kenny Rittenhouse Ensemble playing original compositions in the styles of swing, bebop, straight-ahead, modern jazz, funk and R&B.

Bassist Herman Burney studied under legendary bassist Keter Betts and has performed with Marcus Roberts, Freddy Cole, Wynton Marsalis, Harry Pickens, Eric Alexander, Wycliffe Gordon, Milt Hinton, Ellis Marsalis, Branford Marsalis, Terrell Stafford, René Marie, Monty Alexander, Etta Jones, Oscar Brown, Red Holloway, Natalie Cole, Cedar Walton, Herlin Riley, Victor Goines, Steve Davis, Wessell Anderson and Eric Reed. A few of the countless stages Burney has performed on include Blue Note Jazz Club, the Village Vanguard, Birdland, the Kennedy Center, and the Lincoln Center. He also toured around the globe, performing in South America, Australia, Europe, Canada and the Far East.

Drummer JC Jefferson, Jr. works regularly with Vince Evans and Kenny Rittenhouse in various ensembles and has performed with jazz greats Benny Golson, Buck Hill, Barry Harris and Larry Willis. Jefferson currently serves as president of the American Library Association, where he previously worked in several committees and boards for 15 years.

This concert will showcase songs popularized by jazz and R&B icons, such as Nina Simone's compelling 1966 social narrative "Four Women," recorded on Phillips Records, and Bernard Ighner's "Everything Must Change," released in 1976 by Randy Crawford on the Warner Bros. label. The audience will also be treated to a taste of Mitchell-Bell's upcoming album, including the titular track "Sack Full of Dreams," written by Gary McFarland and Louis Savary, and made famous by Grady Tate and Donny Hathaway. The easy-going "Save Your Love for Me," recorded by Etta Jones and Nancy Wilson, will also be featured.

This livestream performance is from 6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. and can be accessed through www.facebook.com/nationalmethodistchurch/ or nationalchurch.org/jazz. This is a free event hosted by National United Methodist Church as part of their Wesley Jazz Series. The show is available to replay for two weeks. Please plan to support the performers and series by donating at www.nationalchurch.org/givejazz.

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