



GOGUE
PERFORMING
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The Legendary
Count Basie Orchestra
Directed by Scotty Barnhart
with guest vocalist Carmen Bradford

Thursday, May 13, 2021

THE JAY AND SUSIE GOGUE PERFORMING ARTS CENTER
AT AUBURN UNIVERSITY

presents

The Legendary
Count Basie Orchestra
Directed by **Scotty Barnhart**
with guest vocalist **Carmen Bradford**

Thursday, May 13, 2021
7:30 p.m.

Amphitheatre at the
City of Auburn Lawn and Porch

*Tonight's performance program will be
announced from the stage.*

*Presented as part of our
Concert Series*

ABOUT THE ARTISTS



The Legendary Count Basie Orchestra

Directed by Scotty Barnhart

with guest vocalist Carmen Bradford

In the history of jazz music, there is only one bandleader that has the distinction of having his orchestra still performing sold out concerts all over the world, with members personally chosen by him, for more than 30 years after his passing. Pianist and bandleader William James “Count” Basie was and still is an American institution that personifies the grandeur and excellence of jazz. The Legendary Count Basie Orchestra, today directed by Scotty Barnhart, has won every respected jazz poll in the world at least once, received 18 Grammy Awards, performed for kings, queens and other world royalty, appeared in several movies, television shows and at every major jazz festival and major concert hall in the world. The most recent honors are a 2018 *Downbeat Magazine* Readers Poll Award for the #1 Jazz Orchestra in the World and a Grammy nomination for their 2018 acclaimed recording, *All About That Basie*, which features special guests Stevie Wonder, Jon Faddis, Take 6 and Kurt Elling, among others. It follows their critically acclaimed 2015 release *A Very Swingin’ Basie Christmas!*, the very first holiday album in the 80-year history of the orchestra. Released on Concord Music, it went to number one on the jazz charts and sold out on Amazon. The album’s special guests include vocalists Johnny Mathis, Ledisi, our own Carmen Bradford and pianist Ellis Marsalis. A BBC TV-produced documentary on Mr. Basie and the orchestra entitled *Count Basie: Through His Own Eyes* premiered on PBS in the U.S. and U.K. in 2019, coinciding with the orchestra’s 85th anniversary. It features interviews by Quincy Jones, Scotty Barnhart, Dee Askeu, John Williams and several other important members and associates of Mr. Basie and the orchestra.

Some of the greatest soloists, composers, arrangers and vocalists in jazz history such as Lester Young, Billie Holiday, Frank Foster, Thad Jones, Sonny Payne, Freddie Green, Snooky Young, Frank Wess and Joe Williams became international stars once they began working with the Legendary Count Basie

Orchestra. This great 18-member orchestra is still continuing the excellent history started by Basie of stomping and shouting the blues, as well as refining those musical particulars that allow for the deepest and most moving of swing.

William “Count” Basie was born in Red Bank, New Jersey in 1904. He began his early playing days by working as a silent movie pianist and organist and by eventually working with the Theater Owners Booking Agency circuit. It is also sometimes referred to as the “chitlin’ circuit” that catered primarily to the African American communities in the South, East and Midwest. In 1927, Basie, then touring with Gonzelle White and the Big Jazz Jamboree, found himself stranded in Kansas City, Missouri. It was here that he would begin to explore his deep love of the blues and meet his future bandmates including bassist Walter Page.

In the 1920s and 30s, Kansas City was headquarters for the territory bands that played the Midwest and Southwest. It was also ground zero for the heady mixture of blues, 4/4 swing rhythms and hot instrumentalists that were to become the standard bearers and precursors for the Swing Era and the underlying rhythm of modern jazz. Walter Page’s Blue Devils and Benny Moten’s Kansas City Orchestra caught Basie’s ear and soon he was playing with both and serving as second pianist and arranger for Mr. Moten. In 1935, Bennie Moten died, and it was left to Basie to take some of the musicians from that orchestra and form his own, the Count Basie Orchestra, which is still alive and well today some 78 years later. His orchestra epitomized Kansas City Swing and along with the bands of Fletcher Henderson, Jimmy Lunceford, Duke Ellington and Benny Goodman, Basie’s orchestra would define the Big Band Era.

While the media of the period crowned Benny Goodman the “King of Swing,” the real king was undoubtedly Count Basie. As the great Basie trumpeter Sweets Edison once said, “we used to tear all of the other bands up when it came to swing.” The basic fundamentals of Basie’s orchestra were and still are foot stomping 4/4 swing, an unparalleled use of dynamic contrasts, shouting the blues at any tempo, and just making one want to dance. The Count Basie Orchestra evolved into one of the most venerable and viable enterprises in American music with the highest levels of continued productivity rivaling any musical organization in history.

The Count Basie Orchestra can be viewed between 1935 and 1955 as the “Old Testament” and “New Testament” bands. The “Old Testament” band’s style was a combination of spontaneously developed riff-driven, or “head” arrangements, full of the blues and relaxed, but intense swing that showcased some of the greatest names in jazz history as Lester Young, Hershel Evans, Harry Edison, Buck Clayton, Dicky Wells, Jo Jones, Freddie Green and Jimmy Rushing, among others.

The “New Testament” Count Basie Orchestra was formed circa 1952 after Basie’s brief hiatus from the full orchestra as he was working with a small group of six to seven pieces during the industry-imposed recording ban that began in 1948. With the *April In Paris* recording in 1955, the orchestra began to set standards of musical achievement that have been emulated by every jazz orchestra since that time. The sound of the orchestra was constantly deepening and getting more precise as each series of non-stop tours was completed. One of the things that set Mr. Basie’s orchestra apart from all others and is one of the secrets to its longevity is the fact that Basie allowed and actually encouraged his musicians to compose and arrange, especially for the orchestra and its distinctive soloists such as Snooky Young, Thad Jones, Frank Foster, and Frank Wess on flute, who recorded the very first jazz flute solo in

history. Eddie Durham, Thad Jones, Ernie Wilkins, Quincy Jones, Neal Hefti, Sammy Nestico and Frank Foster, to name a few of the more prominent Basie arrangers, have added volumes to the Basie library. Through them, the Basie repertoire continued to broaden harmonically and rhythmically, making it more than hospitable to the talents of the successive generations of musicians. The orchestra also began to become the first choice for the top jazz vocalists of the day including Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald, Tony Bennett and of course, Basie's "Number One Son," the great Joe Williams.

As Basie allowed for a certain measure of change and for a variety of voices to emerge on the platform he created, his orchestra's repertoire always remained accessible, endlessly interesting, and ultimately perfect for dancing. This can be witnessed even in the 1960 motion picture *Cinderfella*, starring Jerry Lewis. For the biggest scene in the movie, which required the perfect orchestra to dance to at the ball, Lewis chose none other than the Count Basie Orchestra. This movie was seen by millions and placed the orchestra at the top of everyone's list not only for full concerts, but also presidential inaugural balls and private parties of the world's elite from New York to Bangkok to St. Tropez.

During the 1960s and throughout the 70s and 80s, the orchestra's sound, swing feel, general articulation and style began to become more laid back and even more relaxed. As 30-year veteran trumpeter Sonny Cohn once stated, "this is a laid . . . back . . . orchestra . . . a . . . laid . . . back . . . orchestra." With very few personnel changes, the orchestra members were able to blend into one sound and one way of phrasing that is now known as the "Basie Way." Jazz orchestras all over the world began to emulate this way of playing. It's unmistakable with its deceptive suspension of time and rhythm, but it's one that is infectious and never loses that all-important dance element. In simple terms, the Count Basie Orchestra continued to set a precedent in 4/4 swing at any tempo that is still unsurpassed today. Swing is that intangible that makes you pat your foot.

Since Basie's passing in 1984, Thad Jones, Frank Foster, Grover Mitchell, Bill Hughes, Dennis Mackrel and now Scotty Barnhart have led the Legendary Count Basie Orchestra and maintained it as one of the elite performing organizations in jazz. Its next recording, *Live at Birdland*, was recorded at the historic New York Club in January 2020 and celebrates the first 85 years of the orchestra as well as the 60th anniversary of the original *Live at Birdland* recording. It will be released on Candid Records in 2021 and is produced by Scotty Barnhart.

Current members include musicians hired by Basie himself: frequent guest vocalist Carmen Bradford (who joined in 1983) and trombonist Clarence Banks (who joined in 1984). Longtime members include Doug Miller (1989, formerly with Lionel Hampton), and members who have joined in the last 15-25 years: trombonists David Keim (formerly with Stan Kenton); Alvin Walker and Mark Williams; guitarist Will Matthews; trumpeters Shawn Edmonds and Endre Rice, saxophonists Doug Lawrence (formerly with Benny Goodman and Buck Clayton); and returning on lead alto, David Glasser. Newer members include bassist Trevor Ware, lead trumpeter Frank Greene III and trumpeter Brandon Lee, pianist Glen Pearson and the youngest members still in their twenties, drummer Robert Boone, baritone saxophonist Josh Lee and Markus Howell on alto sax and flute.



Scotty Barnhart

Scotty Barnhart is an internationally acclaimed jazz trumpeter, composer, arranger, educator, author, two-time Grammy Award winner and director of the Legendary Count Basie Orchestra. Prior to being selected as director in 2013, he was its featured trumpet soloist for 20 years, and in 2015 was executive producer of *A Very Swingin' Basie Christmas!* The very first Christmas recording in the history of the Legendary Count Basie Orchestra, it went to number one on the charts. Under Scotty's leadership, the orchestra won the 2018 *Downbeat Magazine* Readers Poll as the #1 Jazz Orchestra in the World, and their 2018 recording, *All About That Basie*, featuring special guest Stevie Wonder, was nominated for a Grammy Award for Best Large Jazz Ensemble.

Scotty appears on three critically acclaimed recordings with pianist Marcus Roberts and more than 20 others with artists as diverse as Tony Bennett, Diana Krall and Ray Charles. He has performed with Frank Sinatra, Wynton Marsalis, Herbie Hancock, Quincy Jones, the Duke Ellington Orchestra, Nat Adderley, Aretha Franklin, Barbara Streisand, George Benson and many others, has been featured in the *Wall Street Journal Asia*, performed at The Academy Awards, and is in demand as a soloist and lecturer on jazz history all over the world. In 2009, Unity Music released his solo CD, *Say It Plain*, that reached No. 3 on the jazz charts.

Scotty is the co-founder and artistic director of the Florida Jazz and Blues Festival and is a tenured professor of jazz trumpet at Florida State University, where two of his former students have won first place in the National Jazz Trumpet Competition. His groundbreaking book, *The World of Jazz Trumpet: A Comprehensive History and Practical Philosophy*, was published in December 2005 to rave reviews. He is a graduate of Florida A&M University with a degree in music education, and in 2017 he was honored as a distinguished alumnus with a permanent plaque and photo being placed within the Gallery of Distinction in the FAMU Department of Music. He has appeared as guest conductor and lecturer at such prestigious institutions as The Juilliard School of Music and is profiled in the book *Trumpet Kings*, which places him among the greatest jazz trumpeters in history. In 2019, he formed the Scotty Barnhart Orchestra, with its debut performance being the Governor's Inaugural Ball. He resides in Tallahassee, Florida.



Carmen Bradford

Guest vocalist Carmen Bradford was hired by William “Count” Basie himself and was the featured vocalist in the Legendary Count Basie Orchestra for nine years.

She has since performed and/or recorded with Wynton Marsalis and the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra, George Benson, Benny Carter, Clayton-Hamilton Orchestra, Frank Sinatra, the National Symphony, Rochester Philharmonic, Detroit Symphony, Dori Caymmi, Nancy Wilson, James Brown, Doc Severinsen, Lena Horne, Sherrie Maricle and the DIVA Jazz Orchestra, Tony Bennett, and many, many, more.

On occasion, Carmen has loaned her talented voice to stage productions-*/ and the music of Hollywood films.

Carmen’s body of work reflects a vast depth of musical genres, along with experience and technical brilliance. She is also recognized for the overwhelming passion she brings to the lyrics.

Carmen has truly contributed to the perpetuation and preservation of this great American art form called jazz and continues to do so to this day.

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