

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Montavilla Jazz premieres collaborative film with a set of films and a live concert by the Blue Cranes to kick off Montavilla Jazz Festival '21**

*Montavilla Jazz Festival '21 begins Friday, August 20, 2021 outdoors at the Portland Art Museum courtyard with an evening of film premieres featuring the creative collaborations of several local jazz musicians and filmmakers.*

**PORTLAND, OR**—Montavilla Jazz and the Blue Cranes were thinking in parallel with their respective pandemic pivots, turning to the local filmmaking community to forge a path through the shutdowns of 2020 and 2021. Montavilla Jazz.

This year's festival is bolstered by the world-premiere screenings of a new music-meets-film project, *Call + Response*, presented in collaboration with Portland Art Museum, Open Signal and Mobile Projection Unit. Festival information can be found at <https://montavillajazz.org/>.

Events include:

- Friday, August 20, 2021 8:30 PM: Montavilla Jazz Film Night: *Call + Response* plus Blue Cranes film premieres screening outdoors at Portland Art Museum Courtyard
- Saturday, August 21, 2021 4PM: [Ryan Meagher: AftEarth](#)
- Saturday, August 21, 2021 7PM: [Rebecca Sanborn](#)
- Sunday, August 22, 2021 4PM: [George Colligan: Fredson the Jeffy](#)
- Sunday, August 22, 2021 7PM: [Farnell Newton Quintet](#)

Our four musical sets will be live-streamed, with limited in-person tickets available, details TBA.

**Farnell Newton Quintet - Sunday, August 22, 2021 7PM - FREE**

Newton performs music off "Rippin' & Runnin'" his second leader album for Posi-Tone Records.

*Personnel: Farnell Newton, trumpet and compositions; Kyle Molitor, trombone; George Colligan, organ; Ryan Meagher, guitar; Andres Moreno, drums.*

**Rebecca Sanborn - Saturday, August 21, 2021 7PM - FREE**

Sanborn explores new material supported by long time mentor pianist Randy Porter and fellow Blue Cranes drummer Ji Tanzer and bassist Jon Shaw. *Personnel: Rebecca Sanborn, voice and compositions; Randy Porter, piano; Jon Shaw, bass; Ji Tanzer, drums.*

**George Colligan: Fredson the Jeffy - Sunday, August 22, 2021 4PM - FREE**

Colligan presents original works mixing 20th century European classical techniques with jazz and improvisation in a unique collaborative and genre defying set. *Personnel: George Colligan, piano and compositions; Lisa Lipton, clarinet; Micah Hummel, drums.*

**Ryan Meagher: AftEarth - Saturday, August 21, 2021 4PM - FREE**

Meagher writes music inspired by the line-art of visual artist Tina Granzo resulting in a collaborative exploration of the world we live in now and the world we will leave future generations. *Personnel: Ryan Meagher guitar and compositions; Tim Willcox, tenor saxophone;*

*Andrew Jones, bass; Charlie Doggett, drums; Tina Granzo drawings and animation.*

**Montavilla Jazz Film Night: Call + Response plus Blue Cranes film premieres August 20, 2021 9PM - FREE** outdoor screening by Mobile Projection Unit at Portland Art Museum Courtyard

**Montavilla Jazz presents: *Call + Response*** is a collaborative effort pairing three local jazz artists with three local filmmakers. In early 2021, musicians [Micah Hummel](#), [Noah Simpson](#), and [Idit Shner](#), each composed, performed, and recorded seven to ten minutes of original music. Filmmakers [Jeff Oliver](#), [Shilpa Sunthakar](#), and [Deejuliano Scott](#) responded with visual "scores" with access to production facilities and the Independent Filmmaker Kit provided by project partner [Open Signal](#). The result: three entirely original short works of art-music-film.

**The *Call + Response* shorts include:**

- *Beast of Torpor* with music by Micah Hummel + film by Jeff Oliver
- *A Day in Color* with music by Noah Simpson + film by Shilpa Sunthakar
- *Last Signs of June* with music by Idit Shner + film by Deejuliano Scott

**Blue Cranes film premieres:**

The event will also include a sneak preview of Portland post-jazz quintet [Blue Cranes'](#) music-films from their upcoming *VOICES* album directed by filmmakers [Jim Blashfield](#), [Sarah Whelden](#), [Rachel Blumberg](#), and Reed Wallsmith. *VOICES*, which began in 2016 as a collaboration between the quintet and nine vocalists, will be released later this Fall.

**Blue Cranes' *VOICES* films include:**

- *Tatehuari*, featuring vocalists Edna Vazquez & Luz Elena Mendoza, film by Sarah Whelden
- *Handbook of the Dead*, featuring vocalist Rebecca Sanborn, film by Jim Blashfield
- *The Back Steps*, featuring vocalists Peter Broderick, Holland Andrews, Reed Wallsmith, film by Rachel Blumberg
- *Brave Little Girl*, featuring vocalist Holland Andrews, film by Reed Wallsmith.

All films will premiere at an outdoor screening produced by [Mobile Projection Unit](#) at Montavilla Jazz Film Night at the Portland Art Museum's courtyard (1219 SW Park Ave, Portland, OR) on Friday, August 20 at 9PM.

*Call + Response* will also be available for viewing following the live-streamed Festival performances Saturday and Sunday.

**Contact:**

- For media inquiries, sponsorship opportunities and general questions, please contact [neil@montavillajazz.org](mailto:neil@montavillajazz.org).
- For more information, please visit [montavillajazz.org](http://montavillajazz.org) and

[www.facebook.com/montavillajazz](http://www.facebook.com/montavillajazz).

**About Montavilla Jazz:** The mission of Montavilla Jazz is to support and strengthen local music culture and enrich our community by showcasing the best of Portland jazz. Montavilla Jazz is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

**About the Artists:**

Montavilla Jazz Festival '21 Headliner **Farnell Newton** is one of the most versatile musicians & educators in the Northwest, playing straight ahead jazz, smooth jazz, Latin music, soul, hip hop, funk and more. When he is not working as marketing coordinator at Marmoset, trumpeter for Portland Cello Project, creator of Funklandia, producer and trumpeter #LofiJazzSoul (Lo-fi Hip-Hip), and jazz trumpeter at Posi-tone Records, he is touring, recording, and sharing the stage with Skerik, Lettuce, Slightly Stoopid, Karl Denson, Galactic, Nigel Hall, sax man Mike Phillips, the Doo Doo Funk All-Stars, and many more. In the last few years, Farnell has been touring with three-time Grammy winning singer/songwriter Jill Scott and with the Legendary rhinestone rock-star bassist Bootsy Collins. In previous years, Farnell has performed with musical artists including Lalah Hathaway, Ron Isley, R. Kelly, Cee Lo Green, Fantasia, Gladys Knight, Charlie Wilson, Chaka Khan, Najee, Will Downing, Stevie Wonder, Earth, Wind and Fire and many more.

**Rebecca Sanborn** began writing songs at six, starting an early pattern of creative straying from sheet music. The love affair with stories and music continued and at eighteen, she left her native Portland to study at the Contemporary Music Program at The College of Santa Fe, in New Mexico. Upon returning to the Northwest, Rebecca met her husband and musical partner, drummer Ji Tanzer. They are both members of the adventurous jazz quintet, Blue Cranes, the art pop trio Swansea, and Portland's veteran indie group Loch Lomond. Rebecca also plays in the all-female, cape-wearing, fog-machine-loving synth trio, EccoH EccoH EccoH with Kyleen King and Jenny Conlee-Drizos. When she is not playing music or teaching, she can be found chasing after her disco-obsessed three-year-old daughter or trying to get some sleep.

**George Colligan** is one of the great jazz pianists of his generation, earning an international reputation as multi-instrumentalist (drums, trumpet, organ, keyboards), composer, accompanist, teacher, bandleader, and blogger ([jazztruth.blogspot.com](http://jazztruth.blogspot.com)). Winner of the 2015 DownBeat magazine Critics Poll (Keyboard), Colligan has had a long association with living jazz legend Jack DeJohnette; his recent tour took Colligan around the U.S. with *An Evening with Jack DeJohnette and Savion Glover*. He also toured the US and Canada as a leader with his trio featuring legends Buster Williams and Lenny White. With over 130 albums to date as an accompanist, Colligan has worked with a long list of jazz greats, including John Scofield, Buster Williams, Cassandra Wilson, Don Byron, Ravi Coltrane, and many others. Colligan, a New York resident for 15 years, now lives in Portland, Oregon where he is an associate professor at Portland State University. He recently won the PSU College of The Arts Dean's Council Award for Research, Scholarship and Creativity in 2020, and also won the Researcher of the Year Award from the PSU College Of The Arts in 2021. His latest album, *Theoretical Planets: Long Term Goals* (PJCE Records), is his 34th as a bandleader and features PSU faculty and alumni.

**Ryan Meagher** (pronounced Marr) is a jazz guitarist and composer who grew up in San Jose, California. Perhaps best-known for his compositional acumen, he is also well-known for his flexibility and range as guitarist. He is truly in his own space when exploring thought-provoking original material with exciting and sensitive collaborators. While living in New York, Meagher launched his debut album, *Sun Resounding*, which announced his arrival on the modern jazz scene. After the release of his second album, *Atroefy*, on Fresh Sound New Talent Records, Meagher relocated to Reno, Nevada in pursuit of his master of music degree from the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR). His third album, *Tone*, recorded in NYC in between semesters at UNR, received international critical acclaim. After completing his masters degree, Meagher relocated to Portland, Oregon where he quickly became a recognizable force in the creative music community. Meagher's fourth album, *Tango In the City of Roses*, was released shortly after his move to Portland, and ever since he has been instrumental in expanding the local jazz scene. Meagher is a co-founder and the programming director of the Montavilla Jazz Festival. He is the director of operations for the Portland Jazz Composers Ensemble (PJCE), the director of PJCE Records, was previously the editor of the Jazzscene Magazine, and teaches at a number of institutions in the Portland metropolitan area. His fifth album, *Mist. Moss. Home.*, was released in 2016 on PJCE Records. His two most recent albums, *Lost Days*, and *Evil Twin* were both released in 2018.

#### **Call + Response featured artists:**

Portland, Oregon-based drummer, composer, and educator **Micah Hummel** has established himself as an essential player in the creative music scene in the Pacific Northwest. After moving to Portland in 2013, he has become a first-call collaborator with artists including George Colligan, Portland Jazz Composers Ensemble, Barra Brown, Machado Mijiga, Moorea Masa, Coco Columbia and others. Honing his craft throughout the last decade, he is known for his specialty in cross-genre sounds and contemporary jazz. He has performed in venues from Toronto and Beijing to Amsterdam, Berlin, and Vienna. He regularly performs with local projects including Sama Dams, Integer, and the Micah Hummel/Alex Mltzer Duo. Hummel is endorsed by Canopus Drums and Sunhouse Technologies.

**Jeff Oliver** is a media educator, filmmaker, writer, and former stand-up comedian. He has appeared at the Bridgetown Comedy Festival, on NPR's *Tell Me More*, and once as a question on *Wait, Wait...Don't Tell Me*. Since 2012, he has been a teaching artist using PBL (Project Based Learning) to create short films with youth. In the Portland area, he has worked with: Open Signal, The Hollywood Theatre, Portland Center Stage, OMSI, Open School North, The Emerson School, Art4Life, and at MacLaren Youth Correctional Facility in Woodburn. He spent seven summers teaching at Buck's Rock Performing & Creative Arts Camp in New Milford, Connecticut. His documentary about the camp, *A Summer To Discover*, premiered in 2017. He is currently in pre-production for *Redline*, a Black horror film about gentrification.

Pacific Northwest performer, composer, and forward-thinking improviser **Noah Simpson's** approach to the trumpet is modern, energetic, dynamic, and attentive. Early in his career, he performed in The Young Sounds of Arizona, The Paradise Valley Community College Monday Night Big Band, and many Scottsdale Community College combos. Later he attended Portland State University, studying with his mentors George Colligan and Darrell Grant. Simpson has

worked with George Benson, Lewis Nash, Bernard Purdie, Alex Acuna, Ralph Peterson III, Jaleel Shaw, Sean Jones, and Dennis Rowland. He has toured the US with Ron Artis II, Climbing Poetree, The Polyphonic Spree, and Dirty Revival and has performed at The Nash, The 1905, Montavilla Jazz Festival, PDX Jazz Festival, Jack London Review, and the Creative Music Guild Outset Series. His recent work includes a feature on Barra Brown's new single release, *NOAH*, and arranger credit on the PDX Jazz educational presentation, *The American Refrain: Jazz and Modern Music*.

**Shilpa Sunthakar** is a screenwriter, director, and producer with an affinity for stories about different cultures in coexistence, thanks to her background as an Indian-American woman raised in the "cowboy country" of Colorado. She graduated from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts after interning for BBC London and attending the 35mm Filmmaking Master Class at FAMU in Prague. Her recent short film, *Working Lunch* (2018), inspired by the proliferation of hate graffiti after the 2016 US presidential election, premiered at the Toronto South Asian Film Festival and received a Regional Arts & Culture Council project grant. Her other short films, *The Company of Thieves* (2011) and *Biography of an American Hostess* (2004), have won awards including "Best Director" at the Los Angeles FirstGlance Film Festival, and have been licensed by the ShortsHD Channel, IndieFlix, and the CBC. Her feature script *Seeta's Demon* (in production) was showcased at the C3 Conference at the Los Angeles Asian Pacific American Film Festival. She was awarded the SAGindie Fellowship to attend the 2019 Stowe Story Lab for developing her first feature film, *Continental Divide*, an outdoor thriller taking place on the US-Mexico border.

An active performer of both jazz and classical music, **Idit Shner** has performed at The Kennedy Center and Lincoln Center as well as The Diet Coke Woman in Jazz Festival (New York), the Belleayre Festival (New York), and the New Trier Jazz Festival (Illinois). Currently she performs and records with her quartet in Eugene and Portland, Oregon. Her debut jazz release, *Tuesday's Blues* featuring nursery melodies from Jewish liturgy received critical acclaim from *JazzTimes*, *All Music Guide*, and *Jazz Review*. Her latest jazz release, *9 Short Stories*, earned a 4-star review in *Downbeat Magazine*. As a classical saxophonist, she has commissioned and recorded new music and performed solo recitals in the US and Israel. Her third release, *Le Merle Noir*, featuring music by Messiaen, Bozza, Partos, and Glass, was released on Origin Classics in August 2013. Her recording, *FISSURES: 20th Century Music for saxophone and Harp* with renowned harpist Yumiko Schlaffer, was played on NPR's *All Things Considered*. Her latest classical release is entitled *MINERVA*.

**Deejuliano Scott** is a self-taught filmmaker, editor, and producer based in Portland, Oregon. He manages Desert Island Studios, a film and photo studio that supports underserved members of the Portland arts community. His film credits include production work on *Love, Cheryl* (2018), film editor of the short film *L'Ortolan* (2020)—winner of "Most Original Concept" at the 2020 Portland Short Fest, film editor of the documentary *Staying Connected* (2021), and uncredited assistant editor on *The Speed Cubers* (2020) which made the Oscar Shortlist in 2021. Scott won "Best Editor" for the short film *Vent* (2020) at the Asian American Film Lab 72-Hour Shootout.

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