

Saturday, March 15, 2008, 8pm
Zellerbach Hall

SFJAZZ Collective



John Abbott

Joe Lovano	<i>tenor saxophone</i>
Dave Douglas	<i>trumpet</i>
Stefon Harris	<i>vibraphone</i>
Miguel Zenón	<i>alto saxophone</i>
Robin Eubanks	<i>trombone</i>
Renee Rosnes	<i>piano</i>
Matt Penman	<i>bass</i>
Eric Harland	<i>drums</i>

The SFJAZZ Collective is supported in part by The James Irvine Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, Herb Alpert Foundation and the Members of SFJAZZ.

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Cal Performances' 2007–2008 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo Bank.

SFJAZZ Collective Repertoire †

Music of Wayne Shorter

<i>Armageddon</i> (1964)	<i>arr.</i> Miguel Zenón
<i>Aung San Suu Kyi</i> (1997)	<i>arr.</i> Dave Douglas
<i>Black Nile</i> (1964)	<i>arr.</i> Robin Eubanks
<i>Diana</i> (1974)	<i>arr.</i> Renee Rosnes
<i>Footprints</i> (1966)	<i>arr.</i> Renee Rosnes
<i>El Gaucho</i> (1966)	<i>arr.</i> Matt Penman
<i>Go</i> (1967)	<i>arr.</i> Stefon Harris
<i>Infant Eyes</i> (1964)	<i>arr.</i> Joe Lovano
<i>Yes or No</i> (1964)	<i>arr.</i> Eric Harland

Original Compositions

<i>The Angel's Share</i>	Matt Penman
<i>Aurora Borealis</i>	Renee Rosnes
<i>Frontline</i>	Miguel Zenón
<i>Road to Dharma</i>	Stefon Harris
<i>Secrets of the Code</i>	Dave Douglas
<i>This, That and the Other</i>	Joe Lovano
<i>Untitled</i>	Robin Eubanks
<i>The Year 2008</i>	Eric Harland

† *The Collective's 2008 repertoire spans the length of multiple concerts. The ensemble's set list changes nightly, and the evening's selections will be announced from the stage.*

The Concept

Given the extraordinary talent assembled in the SFJAZZ Collective—eight of the most accomplished and acclaimed performer/composers in jazz today—it is tempting, on first glance, to think of this ensemble as an “all-star band,” pure and simple. But as the “Collective” portion of the group’s name suggests, these exceptional artists have come together in pursuit of a larger purpose—namely, the celebration of jazz not only as a great art form, but as a constantly evolving, ever-relevant, quintessentially modern art form. In *The New York Times*’s emphatic words: “Modernity is the mantra of the SFJAZZ Collective.”

This conception of the music is shared by SFJAZZ, the San Francisco-based non-profit institution that is the group’s namesake and producer. The idea for the Collective arose from turn-of-the-millennium discussions between SFJAZZ’s founder and executive director, Randall Kline, and saxophonist and founding Collective member Joshua Redman. While deeply respectful of jazz’s origins and early traditions, SFJAZZ, as a concert presenter (of the internationally renowned San Francisco Jazz Festival, among other year-round programs), was concerned that the modern side of jazz, from roughly the mid-20th century to the present day, was often overlooked in the public eye in comparison with the music of jazz’s so-called “Golden Age.” Both Kline and Redman were eager to showcase, in a manner that would resonate with jazz aficionados and newcomers alike, the artistic continuum from modern masters like John Coltrane, Ornette Coleman and Herbie Hancock to today’s new generation of touring and recording artists.

And so, with an inaugural line-up of modern jazz luminaries and the institutional support of SFJAZZ, the SFJAZZ Collective was unveiled in 2004, with an approach that was (and is) unique in the jazz world. For multiple weeks each year, eight of the most in-demand artists in jazz would set aside their numerous other high-profile projects and devote all their time and energy to the Collective. The group would annually divide its repertoire between new works written by and for the Collective’s members (and commissioned by SFJAZZ) and new octet arrangements of composi-

tions by a modern jazz master—to date, Ornette Coleman (2004), John Coltrane (2005), Herbie Hancock (2006), Thelonious Monk (2007) and Wayne Shorter (2008). The ensemble would be an octet, enjoying both the flexibility of a small group and some of the expanded palette of a big band. In keeping with the “Collective” name, the group’s members would take turns sharing the spotlight as “leader” from song to song. And crucially, in order to give this work its full artistic due, the group would rehearse its annual repertoire in a multiweek San Francisco residency before going on tour—a rare opportunity in today’s jazz world, and one that would arguably be impossible without institutional backing. During the residency, in the interest of jazz’s ongoing development, the Collective members would also mentor promising young musicians, including the 20-strong SFJAZZ High School All-Stars ensemble.

The Ensemble

The Collective is distinguished not just by the degree, but by the diversity of its talent: each member is not only a celebrated instrumentalist, but also an outstanding composer and arranger, and many are among today’s most lauded bandleaders. The Collective’s current line-up also strikes a perfect balance among founding members, other multi-year veterans and exciting newcomers. The front line of horns includes two past *Down Beat* “Artist of the Year” honorees, saxophonist Joe Lovano and trumpeter Dave Douglas, both members since 2007; three-time *Down Beat* “#1 Rising Star Alto Saxophonist” and founding member Miguel Zenón; and 2008 newcomer trombonist Robin Eubanks, a two-time *Down Beat* “Trombonist of the Year.” On vibraphone since 2007, Stefon Harris has earned top *Down Beat* “Rising Star” honors on his instrument and is widely considered the finest vibist of his generation. The incendiary Collective rhythm section boasts founding member and acclaimed Blue Note recording artist Renee Rosnes on piano plus two four-year Collective veterans: bassist Matt Penman, one of the most in-demand sidemen on the international scene; and drummer

Eric Harland, famed for his work with Charles Lloyd, McCoy Tyner and other jazz legends.

Now in its fifth season, the Collective has become one of the leading ensembles on today’s international jazz scene, appearing in prestigious concert halls and festivals throughout the United States and in Europe and Asia, earning “#1 Rising Star Jazz Group” honors in *Down Beat*’s 2006 Critics’ Poll, and placing high in 2007’s year-end “best albums” lists from the likes of National Public Radio (#3 album) and *JazzTimes* (#14). To date, the group has released four limited-edition CD sets documenting its complete annual repertoire in concert plus a newly released concert DVD recorded at 2007’s Jazz à Vienne festival in France (all available exclusively from sfjazz.org), plus two concert highlights discs in wide distribution on the Nonesuch label.

The Repertoire

As *Variety* aptly wrote: “We know they can play—that’s a given. What’s special is the progressive repertoire they have chosen to champion.” Divided roughly in half between original compositions and new arrangements of works by a modern jazz master—with each Collective member contributing one of each—this repertoire, entirely new each season, offers a unique window on jazz’s recent history and on its wealth of present-day expressions.

As in past seasons, the Collective’s original compositions for 2008 highlight the state of the art in jazz composition, exploring new, often extended approaches to song form and reveling in the rhythmic, harmonic and textural possibilities of the octet. The song titles themselves suggest the variety of inspiration at work, from the hints of mystery in Stefon Harris’s “Road to Dharma” and Dave Douglas’s “Secrets of the Code” to the more forthright “This, That and the Other” by Joe Lovano and “The Year 2008” by Eric Harland.

Artistic breadth also infuses the balance of the 2008 repertoire—the music of saxophonist and composer extraordinaire Wayne Shorter. In the words of fellow jazz icon Herbie Hancock: “Wayne Shorter has evolved as a human being to a

point where he can synthesize all the history of jazz into a very special, very alive musical expression.”† Shorter has made a profound impact on that history over the past half-century, from his late-1950s days with Horace Silver and Art Blakey and his classic 1960s roles as a bandleader and a pivotal member of Miles Davis’s second great quintet, through his 1970s excursions with fusion pioneers Weather Report, and up to his present-day work with his celebrated new acoustic quartet. The Collective covers an expansive range of Shorter’s *oeuvre*, from such signature 1960s pieces as “Footprints” and “Infant Eyes” to 1974’s “Diana” and 1997’s “Aung San Suu Kyi,” Shorter’s tribute to the Burmese Nobel Peace Prize-winner.

“I consider Shorter one of my most important musical influences,” says Renee Rosnes. “In 1988, I was a member of his band, and that experience changed me forever. Through his music, he taught me about courage, passion, vulnerability and freedom. Virtually all of Wayne’s compositions are inherently full of these qualities.”

“As has been the case with all the composers we’ve worked on with the band,” Miguel Zenón notes, “the biggest challenge is to try keep the spirit of the original versions of the compositions, while at the same time reflecting the personality of the Collective. I really feel we get better and better at doing this every time we get together.”

Notes by Rob Tocalino and Matthew Campbell

† Quoted in *Footprints: The Life and Work of Wayne Shorter* by Michelle Mercer.

SFJAZZ Collective

Grammy Award-winning saxophonist and composer **Joe Lovano** stands alone at the vanguard of large and small group jazz. From his recent work with Gunther Schuller, *Streams of Expression*, to his role as Gary Burton Chair of Jazz Performance at Berklee College of Music, the Cleveland native fearlessly challenges and pushes the conceptual and thematic choices he makes in a quest for new modes of artistic expression and new takes on what defines the jazz idiom. He has released 18 celebrated albums on the Blue Note label, including 2007's Grammy-nominated *Kids*, a duet disc with pianist Hank Jones.

Two-time Grammy-nominated trumpeter **Dave Douglas** has earned national and international acclaim, including trumpeter, composer and "artist of the year" by such organizations as the New York Jazz Awards, *Down Beat*, *JazzTimes* and *JAZZIZ*. His solo recording career began in 1993 with *Parallel Worlds*, and he has since released 22 CDs. In 2005, he launched his own label, Greenleaf Music, and received a Guggenheim Fellowship. His current release, *Moonshine*, showcases his group Keystone taking a new step in the synthesis of electronic music and jazz.

Stefon Harris is committed to exploring the rich potential of jazz composition and blazing new trails on the vibraphone. A graduate of the Manhattan School of Music, Mr. Harris has received numerous accolades including the Jazz Journalists Association's "Best Mallet Player" for four years running (2000–2003) and "#1 Rising Star Vibraphonist" in the 2006 *Down Beat* Critics' Poll. His string of Grammy-nominated albums for Blue Note includes *Kindred*, *Black Action Figure* and *The Grand Unification Theory*. His latest album is 2006's *African Tarantella: Dances with Duke*.

A Native of San Juan, Puerto Rico, saxophonist **Miguel Zenón** got his start at the famed Escuela Libre de Musica and later studied at Boston's Berklee College of Music. Since his move to New York, he has worked with Charlie Haden, David Sanchez, Guillermo Klein, the Vanguard Jazz

Orchestra and Steve Coleman, among others. Zenón has released three CDs as a leader: *Looking Forward*, on the Fresh Sound New Talent label, and two discs on Marsalis Music, *Ceremonial* and *Jibaro*. His fourth CD, *Awake* (also on Marsalis Music), will be released in April 2008.

A five-time "Trombonist of the Year" in the *Down Beat* Critics' Poll, **Robin Eubanks** is one of the foremost trombonists at work today. In addition to leading his own groups, EB3 and Mental Images, Mr. Eubanks has done Grammy-winning work with Dave Holland and Michael Brecker, and has collaborated with music legends Art Blakey, Sun Ra and the Rolling Stones. The native Philadelphian is also an acclaimed composer and recipient of prestigious grants from Chamber Music America and ASCAP, as well as numerous commissions from fellow musicians. He has taught jazz trombone for 10 years at Oberlin College in Ohio.

Canadian pianist and composer **Renee Rosnes** has had a remarkable career that has earned her significant international recognition. Shortly after relocating from Vancouver to New York in 1986, she quickly established her reputation as one of the major pianists of her generation. She toured and recorded as a member of the bands of Joe Henderson, J. J. Johnson, Wayne Shorter, Bobby Hutcherson, Buster Williams and James Moody, among others. As a leader, Ms. Rosnes has released 11 critically acclaimed recordings, which have garnered four Juno Awards, six Canadian National Jazz Awards and a 2003 SOCAN Composer of the Year award.

Originally from New Zealand, bassist **Matt Penman** studied at Boston's Berklee College of Music before relocating to New York in 1995. In addition to releasing his own critically acclaimed CDs as a leader, *Catch of the Day* (2007) and *The Unquiet* (2002), he has recorded as a sideman on some 70 additional discs and has performed with Joshua Redman, Nicholas Payton, Kurt Rosenwinkel, Gary Bartz, Kenny Werner, Nnenna Freelon, Madeleine Peyroux, Brian Blade, Mark Turner and Guillermo Klein, among others.

A leading drummer on the national scene, Texas-born **Eric Harland** has performed with such jazz luminaries as Betty Carter, Joe Henderson and McCoy Tyner, and has played on more than 35 recordings with such artists as Terence Blanchard, Greg Osby, Charles Lloyd and Stefon Harris. In *Down Beat's* 65th Annual Readers' Poll, he was included in the short list of top drummers, in the company of such masters as Roy Haynes and the late Elvin Jones.

SFJAZZ

Celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2007–2008, SFJAZZ is the West Coast's largest non-profit jazz presenting and educational institution, serving more than 100,000 patrons each year. Major SFJAZZ programs include: the San Francisco Jazz Festival, hailed as "the #1 jazz festival in the world" (*London Observer*), held each October and November; the SFJAZZ Spring Season, more than 40 world-class events from March through June; the SFJAZZ Collective; and SFJAZZ Education, featuring year-round education and outreach programs for youth and adults. For more information about any SFJAZZ concerts or educational events, please visit sfjazz.org or call (415) 398-5655.

SFJAZZ Collective Production

Randall Kline, *producer*

Bill Winn, *tour manager and sound engineer*

Laura Evans, *artistic administrator*