



R.R. Jones

Wednesday, April 3, 2019, 8pm
Zellerbach Hall

Monterey Jazz Festival on Tour

featuring

Cécile McLorin Salvant, Bria Skonberg, Melissa Aldana,
Christian Sands, Yasushi Nakamura, and Jamison Ross

Cécile McLorin Salvant, *vocals*
Bria Skonberg, *trumpet*
Melissa Aldana, *tenor saxophone*
Christian Sands, *piano, music director*
Yasushi Nakamura, *bass*
Jamison Ross, *drums*

*Tonight's performance and will last approximately 90 minutes.
There will be no intermission.*

Cal Performances' 2018–19 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.

The **Monterey Jazz Festival**, the longest continuously running jazz festival in the world, presents its fifth national tour from March 15 – April 14, 2019, featuring some of the most critically acclaimed, Grammy Award-winning and Grammy-nominated jazz artists of their generation, including three winners of the Thelonious Monk International Jazz Competition.

The MJF on Tour 60th Anniversary Celebration features a top roster of diverse and international talent and the leaders of jazz's future, including Cécile McLorin Salvant, vocals; Bria Skonberg, trumpet and vocals; Melissa Aldana, tenor saxophone; music director Christian Sands, piano; Yasushi Nakamura, bass; and Jamison Ross, drums and vocals.

In addition to including three unique and talented vocalists, as well as an equal balance of men and women, the tour will feature renditions of classic jazz standards along with originals penned by the members. These musicians are outstanding representatives of the next generation of jazz artists and educators, and each has a close relationship with Monterey that reflects both the festival's musical excellence and its dedication to jazz education activities—core components of the organization's mission statement.

Previous incarnations of the festival's touring activities include a 50th anniversary tour in 2008, and additional national tours in 2010, 2013, and 2016, with a collective 163 performances to over 115,000 fans across the country.

One of the most acclaimed vocalists of her generation, **Cécile McLorin Salvant** is the winner of the 2010 Thelonious Monk International Jazz Competition. Other honors include selection for Jazz Album of the Year by the *DownBeat* International Critics Poll and NPR, as well as Up-and-Coming Jazz Artist of the Year and Top Female Vocalist from the Jazz Journalists Association. Cécile grew up in a bilingual household in Miami and traveled to Aix-en-Provence to pursue a degree in French law while training as a classical and Baroque singer before switching to jazz. “If anyone can extend

the lineage of the Big Three—Billie Holiday, Sarah Vaughan, and Ella Fitzgerald—it is [her],” wrote the *New York Times*. Cécile's three Mack Avenue releases—*For One to Love*, *Dreams and Daggers*, and *The Window*—each won Grammy Awards for Best Jazz Vocal Album. *Rolling Stone* describes Cécile as “...one of the greatest jazz singers of her generation, but that label sells her short.” Cécile made her Monterey Jazz Festival debut in 2014 and appeared again in 2016.

Canadian singer, trumpeter, and songwriter **Bria Skonberg** has been described as one of the “most versatile and imposing musicians of her generation” by the *Wall Street Journal*; recognized as one of “25 For the Future” by *DownBeat* Magazine; and cited as a millennial “shaking up the jazz world” by *Vanity Fair*. Signed to Sony Music Masterworks' OKeh Records, Bria released her eponymous major label debut in 2016, winning a Canadian JUNO award and hitting the Top 5 on the *Billboard* jazz charts. Her many accolades include Best Vocal and Best Trumpet awards from *Hot House Jazz Magazine*, Outstanding Jazz Artist at the New York Bistro Awards, and *DownBeat*'s Rising Star Award. In addition to performing at jazz festivals around the world, Bria is an avid educator and supporter of public school opportunities, giving numerous workshops and concerts for students of all ages. Bria debuted at the Monterey Jazz Festival in 2016.

Tenor saxophonist **Melissa Aldana** was born in Santiago, Chile. In 2013, she became the first female instrumentalist and the first South American ever to win the Thelonious Monk Competition. Melissa attended the Berklee College of Music, studying with George Garzone, Danilo Pérez, and Patricia Zarate, while hitting the clubs with Greg Osby and George Coleman, among others. She is also a recipient of the Martin E. Segal Award from Jazz at Lincoln Center and a double recipient of the Altazor Award, Chile's prestigious national arts prize. She has released four albums as a leader, including her latest, *Back Home*, on Concord. Melissa “...balances technical bravura with mu-

sical depth, a hallmark of her playing,” writes the *Chicago Tribune*. She made her MJF debut in 2014.

Pianist **Christian Sands** is a five-time Grammy nominee. He began music classes at age four in New Haven, Connecticut, started playing professionally at the age of 10, and received his bachelor of arts and master’s degrees from the Manhattan School of Music. A protege of Dr. Billy Taylor, Christian began a six-year association with bassist Christian McBride in 2009, touring jazz festivals and clubs worldwide. Christian has followed in Dr. Taylor’s footsteps by encouraging, inspiring, and advocating for the preservation and history of jazz, teaching young people as well as adult audiences. In 2015, he started the Jazz Kids of Montmartre in Copenhagen, Denmark; he also teaches at Jazz in July, where he is an alumnus. Christian’s recent debut for Mack Avenue, *Reach*, “showcases his significant talents as an imaginative composer, a clever arranger and a skillful technician with a fluid style,” wrote *DownBeat*. His new Mack Avenue release, *Facing Dragons*, was released last September and was reviewed by NPR as a “...crisply assured new album...that expresses new ideas without abandoning the old.” Christian has performed several times at the Monterey Jazz Festival with Christian McBride, and was a featured performer in Geri Allen’s Erroll Garner Project at MJF in 2015.

Bassist **Yasushi Nakamura** is one of the most commanding voices on bass today. Born in Tokyo, Yasushi moved to Seattle, Washington, eventually receiving his bachelor’s degree in jazz performance from the Berklee College of Music, and an artist diploma from the Juilliard School. He has recorded or performed around the world with Wynton Marsalis, Wycliffe Gordon, Toshiko Akiyoshi, Hank Jones, Dave Douglas, and many others. As an educator, Yasushi has led master classes and summer intensive courses at Juilliard, The New School, Koyo Conservatory, Osaka Geidai, and Savannah Swing Central. He made his highly-anti-

pated album debut as leader in late 2016 with *A Lifetime Treasure*, followed by *Hometown* in 2017. Yasushi first appeared at MJF in 2004.

Grammy-nominated drummer and vocalist **Jamison Ross** won the Thelonious Monk International Jazz Competition in 2012. A Jacksonville, Florida native, Jamison received his BA in jazz studies from Florida State University and his master’s from the University of New Orleans. He has toured internationally and recorded with a variety of esteemed jazz artists, including Cécile McLorin Salvant, Jonathan Batiste, Dr. John, Jon Cleary, Christian McBride, and Carmen Lundy. His debut album, *Jamison*, was released on Concord Records and was nominated as for a Best Jazz Vocal Album Grammy in 2015. Jamison released his latest album, *All for One*, in January 2018. His “roots in jazz and gospel give him thrilling chops and unflinching feel,” writes NPR. Jamison made his MJF debut in 2016.

About Monterey Jazz Festival’s Education Programs

World-renowned for its artistic excellence, sophisticated informality, and longstanding mission to create and support year-round jazz education and performance programs in local, regional, national, and international venues, the Monterey Jazz Festival has stayed true to its mission of expanding live performances of jazz around the country since 2008 by presenting national tours that have reached over 100,000 fans in 135 concerts across the United States and Canada.

The Monterey Jazz Festival has presented nearly every major jazz star—from Billie Holiday and Louis Armstrong to Esperanza Spalding and Trombone Shorty—since it was founded in 1958. Held every third full weekend in September on the Monterey County Fairgrounds, the festival is a three-day celebration of music, commissioned jazz compositions, in-depth conversations with artists, panel discussions, workshops, exhibitions, clinics, and an international array of food, shopping, and festivities spread over 20 acres.

A nonprofit organization, the Monterey Jazz Festival now budgets more than \$500,000 annually for jazz education programs. Cutting-edge educational components include the Jazz in the Schools program; the festival's Summer Jazz Camp; the Instrument and Sheet Music Library; the Digital Education Music Project; the Monterey County High School All-Star Bands; the national Next Generation Jazz Orchestra; and the Next Generation Jazz Festival, which draws thousands of the most talented young musicians from across the country and around the world to Monterey each spring.

The Artist-In-Residence Program, a key component of the Monterey Jazz Festival's dedication to bringing leading jazz performers to work with students throughout the year, includes the students' appearance at the Next Generation Jazz Festival, Summer Jazz Camp, and the Monterey Jazz Festival, both in performance and instruction.

A leader in jazz education, the festival has also presented the winning bands from its high school competition since 1971, and has showcased talented young musicians in its all-star student big band, the Next Generation Jazz Orchestra. Throughout the years, many legendary and influential artists—including Ray Brown, Ron Carter, Max Roach, Dizzy Gillespie, and Benny Golson—have mentored and performed with the all-star students, often premiering original works written for the band. Past members of the group include Ambrose Akinmusire, Joshua Redman, Patrice Rushen, Donny McCaslin, Ted Nash, Dave Koz, Eric Marienthal, Gordon Goodwin, Larry Grenadier, and Benny Green, to name a few.

The MJF on Tour 60th Anniversary Celebration is produced by Danny Melnick for Absolutely Live Entertainment (ALE), which also produced two previous MJF tours (2013 and 2016).