



Thursday, February 5, 2026, 7:30pm
Zellerbach Hall

Cécile McLorin Salvant

with

Sullivan Fortner, *piano*

Yasushi Nakamura, *bass*

Kyle Poole, *drums*

This evening's performance will last approximately 90 minutes.

*The program will be announced from the stage
and performed without intermission.*

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one that honors our venues as places of respite, openness, and respect.
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Cécile McLorin Salvant, is a composer, singer, and visual artist. The late Jessye Norman described her as “a unique voice supported by an intelligence and full-fledged musicality, which light up every note she sings.”

Salvant has developed a passion for storytelling and discovering connections between vaudeville, blues, theater, jazz, Baroque, and folkloric music. She is an eclectic curator, unearthing rarely recorded, forgotten songs with strong narratives, interesting power dynamics, unexpected twists, and humor.

Salvant won the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz International Jazz Vocal Competition in 2010. She received three consecutive Grammy Awards for Best Jazz Vocal Album for *The Window, Dreams and Daggers*, and *For One To Love*, and was nominated for the award in 2014 for her album *WomanChild*.

In 2020, Salvant received the MacArthur fellowship and the Doris Duke Artist Award. Nonesuch Records released the twice Grammy-nominated *Ghost Song* in 2022, and in 2023 (again twice Grammy-nominated) the follow up, *Mélusine*, an album sung mostly in French, along with Occitan, English and Haitian Creole.

On September 19, 2025, Nonesuch released *Oh Snap*, comprised of 12 very personal songs composed and produced by Salvant. The album features longtime collaborators Sullivan Fortner, Yasushi Nakamura, and Kyle Poole, as well as cameos from singers Jim McDoom and Kate Davis. Salvant wrote these short, intimate songs as part of a creative quest: To place spontaneity and joy at the center of her writing process. She originally recorded them alone, at home, never intending for them to be released and using digital tools and effects—including GarageBand, Logic, AutoTune, Midi plugins, drum loops, vocal effects, reverb, and filters—that she had never played with before. The songs reflect Salvant’s wide-ranging musical influences from her 1990s childhood in Miami—from boy

bands to grunge to classical to folk—and include party tracks with beats, samba grooves, and quiet folk songs.

Born and raised in Miami by her French mother and Haitian father, she started classical piano studies at age five, sang in a children’s choir at age eight, and took classical voice lessons as a teenager.

She received a bachelor’s degree in French law from the Université Pierre-Mendes France in Grenoble while also studying Baroque music and jazz in France at the Darius Milhaud Music Conservatory in Aix-en-Provence.

Salvant’s latest work, *Ogresse*—for which she wrote the story, lyrics, and music—is a musical fable in the form of a cantata that blends genres (folk, Baroque, jazz, country). It is arranged by Darcy James Argue for a 13-piece orchestra of multi-instrumentalists. Both a biomythography and an homage to the Erzulie (a powerful family of female *loa* [spirits/goddesses] in Haitian Vodou), as painted by Gerard Fortune and Sara Baartman, *Ogresse* explores fetishism, hunger, diaspora, cycles of appropriation, lies, othering, and ecology. The work is in development to become an animated feature-length film, which Salvant will direct.

Salvant also makes large-scale textile drawings. Her visual art can now be found at Picture Room in Brooklyn, New York.



Grammy Award-winning pianist **Sullivan Fortner** released *Aria* (2015), *Moments Preserved* (2018), and *Solo Game* (2024) to critical acclaim, the latter receiving rave reviews in *DownBeat* and *Telerama Magazine*. His 2025 release *Southern Nights* features Peter Washington and Marcus Gilmore. Winner of the 2024 *DownBeat* Critics Poll for Rising Star Jazz Group (Sullivan Fortner Trio), the New

Orleans native has worked with Wynton Marsalis, Paul Simon, Diane Reeves, Etienne Charles and John Scofield, Ambrose Akinmusire, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Stefon Harris, Kassa Overall, Tivon Pennicott, Peter Bernstein, Nicholas Payton, Billy Hart, Gary Bartz, Chief Adjuah, and Roy Hargrove. His works and insights have been featured and celebrated in culture drivers from the *New York Times* to *The Root*. Further accolades include the American Pianists Association's Cole Porter Fellowship, the Leonore Annenberg Arts Fellowship, the Lincoln Center Award for Emerging Artists, the Shifting Foundation Grant, and the Western Jazz Presenters Grant.



Yasushi Nakamura is a Japanese jazz bassist renowned for his lyrical tone, deep sense of swing, and refined musical sensitivity. Based in New York City, he has built an international

reputation as a versatile and thoughtful musician, equally at home in straight-ahead jazz, modern post-bop, and contemporary settings. Nakamura is widely respected for his strong sense of timing, melodic bass lines, and ability to support and inspire improvisers with subtlety and precision. He has performed and recorded with a wide range of leading jazz artists and ensembles,

appearing at major clubs, festivals, and concert halls around the world. As a sideman, he is known for his reliability, musical maturity, and collaborative spirit, making him a first-call bassist for many bandleaders. In addition to performing, Nakamura is active as an educator and mentor, sharing his experience and musical approach with the next generation of jazz musicians.



Hailed by *Jazz Speaks* as a “young prodigious drummer,” Los Angeles native **Kyle Poole** has lived in New York City since 2011 and continues to impress wherever his drums take him

next. Along with his band of fellow NYC jazz upstarts aptly titled Poole & the Gang, he has performed in New York's most esteemed jazz clubs, notably Dizzy's Club Coca-Cola and Smoke Jazz, culminating in a weekly residency at Small's Jazz Club that lasted nearly three years. One of Poole's chief missions, is to expand the audience for jazz by incorporating all dance styles of music, reaching back to ragtime and bebop, while forging ahead to funk and hip-hop and beyond. With its constant fluctuation of genre, rhythm, and harmony, Poole & the Gang connects these musical dots in a uniquely improvised fashion, while audiences worldwide are delighted to simply “go with the flow.”