

BIO

CAMILLE THURMAN

Remember the name Camille Thurman. As a composer, multi-instrumentalist, vocalist, and unique interpreter of the jazz tradition, she is quickly becoming one of the standard bearers for the form, making a considerable and dynamic contribution to the legacy of jazz while paying tribute to its heroes.

Fluid and powerful on the tenor saxophone and highly inventive as a vocalist, she also plays bass, clarinet, flute, and piccolo. Her rich sax sound has been compared to Joe Henderson and Dexter Gordon, while her vocal approach—including an impressive scatting ability—has been classified alongside those of Ella Fitzgerald and Betty Carter.

In a few short years, Thurman has shared stages with such jazz and R&B luminaries as George Coleman, Roy Haynes, Dianne Reeves, Wynton Marsalis, The Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra (JALCO) featuring Wynton Marsalis, Kenny Barron, Buster Williams, Charles Tolliver, Jack DeJohnette, Dr. Lonnie Smith, Terri Lyne Carrington, Jon Hendricks, Harry Connick Jr., Jon Batiste, Audra MacDonald, Diana Krall, Patti LaBelle, Gladys Knight, Chaka Khan, Louis Hayes, Russell Malone, Nicholas Payton, Jacky Terrasson, Janelle Monáe, Alicia Keys, Lalah Hathaway, Jill Scott and Erykah Badu, among others.

The New York City native has already amassed several distinctive honors for her musicianship: runner up in the 2013 Sarah Vaughan International Vocal Competition, two-time winner of the ASCAP Herb Alpert Young Jazz Composers Award and a winner of the Fulbright Scholars Cultural Ambassador Grant, The Chamber Music of America Performance Plus Grant (Sponsored by the Dorris Duke Charitable Foundation) and the Jazz Coalition Composers Grant among others. Thurman also has four full-length recordings as a leader to her credit.

Her compositions were featured and performed by her quartet in the ASCAP/The Kennedy Center “Songwriters: The Next Generation” showcase as well as the Greenwich School of Music “Uncharted” Series. Camille has appeared on BET’s “Black Girls Rock” as the saxophonist and flutist in the All-Star Band. Equally adept as a player and a singer, and recognized for her compositional abilities as well, Thurman has also earned accolades from the media, from Jazz Times to Downbeat, All About Jazz to the New York Times, NPR to Sirius XM Satellite Radio, BET to Jazz Night In America.

Thurman tours internationally with the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra; she is the first woman in 30 years to tour and perform full time two seasons as a saxophonist with the world-renowned orchestra (2018-2020). After guesting with the JALCO on several shows, including a tribute to Ella Fitzgerald, and again during the 2017-2018 season as a featured vocalist for the world premiere of the historic work, “The Every Fonky Lowdown,” Thurman was invited to play the tenor saxophone chair for the past two seasons, which covered four continents. When she is not touring with the JALCO, Thurman is on the road leading her band, The Camille Thurman Quartet. She is also a

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featured artist with the Darrell Green Trio, where she has performed at the Kennedy Center, Alice Tully Hall, and numerous respected international jazz festivals and venues.

Thurman was chosen by the State Department under the Fulbright Scholarship grant to perform in Paraguay and Nicaragua with her band. She and Darrell Green were selected by American Music Aboard to travel and perform in various African nations including Cameroon, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, and Mauritania.

The dynamic musician is endorsed by D'Addario Woodwinds & Co. for reeds, Conn-Selmer Inc. for saxophones and Key Leaves saxophone products.

JAZZ EDUCATOR

Thurman's mission is to spread a love for jazz to new audiences, old and young, and to inspire younger artists toward musical excellence. As such, she is also an educator, presenting lectures, teaching ensembles, and conducting masterclasses in various schools, colleges, camps, community centers, and arts organizations. Much of her teaching focuses on performance coaching.

"Often, students don't receive coaching, tips, and instruction on how to work as a performing artist or instrumentalist," she explains. "I conduct workshops that help develop students as players of their instrument but also teach them how to work together in ensembles, how to practice, and how to study."

The artist hosts a bi-monthly mentorship series for young women musicians called "The Haven Hang: Young Lioness Q&A Advice Hour with Camille Thurman". As an educator, Camille offers several focused instrumental and vocal workshops to students ranging from beginner to master level. These include: "Music is All Around Us!", an exciting, interactive introduction to music; "The Origins of the Blues: What is the Blues?," an interactive clinic learning about the blues in today's music that also serves as an historical and geographical analysis of its influence on society and culture; "Rhythms of the World," a 45-minute musical whirlwind experience traveling around the world, exploring rhythms and the connections between geography, history, and music; and "Rhythm and Justice: Music As a Voice of Social Consciousness," an historical analysis of music and its relation to history. Her popular lectures include "Jazz and Pop Culture: An Interdisciplinary Look on The Influence of Jazz in American Culture" that looks at fashion, film, photography, dance, language, art and other aspects of society influenced by the Jazz Age as well as how they influenced the music itself, and "Women In Jazz," an overview of key vocalists, instrumentalists, and female-led bands. Thurman regularly conducts a series of workshops with Jazz at Lincoln Center.

Thurman has also served as an artist in residence for Berklee College of Music in Boston, Northern Illinois University in Chicago, the New York University: Tisch School of Music and Queens College in New York City, Binghamton University in New York, Loyola University in New Orleans, the University of Manitoba in Canada and Millersville University in Pennsylvania.

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Thurman has also performed and taught artistic residencies overseas, including Lima, Peru, with the Doo-Bah Jazz Orchestra (Masterclass/Clinic/Performance), Ekaterinberg, Russia with the Ekaterinberg Conservatory of Music, Brazil with SESC and Mexico City, Mexico with the Centro Cultural Roberto Cantoral. Camille has served a guest artist at the 2019 NEIBA Music Educators Conference, the 2020 MOAJE Music Conference, the 2019 NAFME Music Educators Conference, Jazz House Kids, NJPAC Jazz for Teens (New Jersey Performing Arts Center), Niskayuna High School, Washington Performing Arts Center Capital Bop Jazz Camp, the Vermont Jazz Workshop and Jazz St. Louis Jazz U.

JAZZ AMBASSADOR

Already hailed as one of the most important “triple threat” artists on the scene, Camille Thurman is poised to become one of the leading lights keeping the glorious traditions of jazz alive and well. For her, music is its own reward.

“It’s amazing to see how the music transcends language and connects people from all walks of life,” she notes. “Each place I’ve toured with my band or the orchestra, I’ve had young girls run up to me and say, ‘This is awesome; hearing you and seeing you play.’ They ask questions, and I happily answer them. It’s a joy, honor, and a privilege to do this.”

www.camillethurmanmusic.com.