



Contact: Jessica Emonds  
Communications & Marketing Director  
[jemonds@hplct.org](mailto:jemonds@hplct.org) | (c) 860-559-4873

## HARTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY'S BABY GRAND JAZZ CONTINUES THROUGH APRIL

*Baby Grand Jazz returns with support from The Kaman Foundation*

**(Hartford, CT)** – Hartford Public Library's (HPL) popular Baby Grand Jazz Series celebrates its 20th season with the support of a generous three-year sponsorship from The Kaman Foundation. The free series features accomplished jazz musicians and bands from around the region. HPL will continue to host the Baby Grand Jazz series Sunday afternoons through April in the Center for Contemporary Culture (CCC) at the Downtown Library. The Kaman Foundation has been funding Baby Grand Jazz since 2015, and their sponsorship will support the successful concert series and provide for continued growth, fostering a love and appreciation for modern America's original art form, Jazz. Baby Grand Jazz is celebrating its 20th season in 2024 at the same time that the HPL is celebrating our 250th anniversary year.



Concerts are held Sundays at 3:00 p.m. (doors open at 2:00 p.m.). The 2024 seasonal lineup pay homage to the past 20 years while celebrating the future of jazz.

**February 4** – Pianist Trevor Watkis, is a London born multi-talented internationally-known pianist, arranger and composer, who studied at Berklee College of Music, in Boston. Now based in New York City and establishing his name on the east coast scene. Trevor has performed sold out shows at venues such as Dizzy Club (NYC) and Scullers (Boston), his list of performing credits includes appearances with UK-based greats Courtney Pine, Jean Toussaint, and world renown icons such as the late Billy Higgins, Stanley Turrentine and Betty Carter, also, Gary Bartz, Eddie Henderson, James Spaulding and recently toured with Kenny Garrett and recorded with Steve Turre.

*Trevor Watkis, piano | Dezron Douglas, bass | Donald Edwards, drums*

**February 11** – **Double Header Concert starts at 2:00 p.m. (doors open at 1:00 p.m.)**

For more than 40 years, Nat Reeves has been one of the top bassists in jazz. His supportive and stimulating playing has uplifted a countless number of sessions and recording dates (most notably with the great altoists Jackie McLean and Kenny Garrett), and he has led his own recordings "State of Emergency" and "Blue Ridge." In 2001 Nat began a full-time teaching career at The Hartt School, Jackie McLean Institute. Although Nat retired from the University in 2021, he continues to perform and teach. Learn more at <https://natreeves.com/>

*Nat Reeves, bass | Sarah Hanahan, alto saxophone | Caelan Cardello, piano | Hank Allen-Barfield, drums*



Jordan Young Artist Statement: “In my artistic practice, I aim to communicate constructions of illustrations of sonic allusions that challenge literal or figurative archetypes. Through music composition, settings are reimagined, characters are reconstructed, stories are deconstructed and stereotypes are disarmed. Inspirations towards this compositional philosophy include Duke Ellington's Concert of Sacred Music, Second Sacred Concert, Ornette Coleman's Law Years, All My Life, Wayne Shorter's Unknown Soldier, Aung San Suu Kyi, Prometheus Unbound and many more. With this research, I composed the score for the 2022 production of Broken Box Mime Company's “Asks Why”—a play presenting Critical Race Theory to families.”

*Jordan Young, saxophone | Paul Cuffari, bass | Ele Howell, drums | Michael Carabello, piano*

**February 18** – Gianni Gardner is a New York based jazz guitarist originally from West Hartford, Connecticut. Gardner studied with the local legendary guitarist Doug Maher, vocalist Dianne Mower, and saxophonist Dan O'Brien. In 2021 he graduated from Western Connecticut State University where he studied with Christopher Morrison, Jimmy Greene, Jamie Begian, and more. Gardner is pursuing graduate studies at the Manhattan School of Music, learning from guitarist Chris Rosenberg and Mike Moreno, trumpeter Ingrid Jensen, percussionist Rogerio Boccato, and others. His band brings a unique energy to every performance. They tell stories through their original compositions and strive for a performance of authenticity and inclusiveness. Learn more at <https://giannigardnerguitar.com/>  
*Gianni Gardner, guitar | McKenzie McCarthy, tenor sax | Francesco Pollon, piano | Conway Campbell Jr., bass | Peru Eizagirre, drums*

**February 25** – The Erez Aviram Ensemble consists of eight versatile musicians from New York City, including Meg Okura, Nicholas Biello, Justin Mullens and more, who play Aviram's compositions. The ensemble, combining traditional orchestral instruments with a powerful rhythm and horn sections, creates a bridge between the written and the improvised, skipping flawlessly between genres and modes to produce intellectual and emotive music. Learn more at <https://www.erezaviram.com/>  
*Erez Aviram, piano | Skyler Hagner, baritone saxophone | Justin Mullens, french horn | Meg Okura, violin | Nicholas Biello, soprano saxophone, alto saxophone, flute | Zachary Brown, cello | Marcelo Maccagnan, bass guitar | Maxime Cholley, drums*

This season, while construction is progressing within the Downtown Library, customers are asked to use the Arch Street entrance to access the CCC during Baby Grand Jazz. The doors are to open at 2:00 p.m. and the concerts are from 3:00-4:00 p.m., Sundays, January – April. All shows will continue to be streamed on Hartford Public Library's [Facebook page](#) and [YouTube channel](#).

Baby Grand Jazz at Hartford Public Library is sponsored by the Kaman Foundation. Longtime partners include the Hartford Jazz Society and WWUH 91.3 FM. For more information, visit: [www.hplct.org/classes-seminars-exhibits/baby-grand-jazz](http://www.hplct.org/classes-seminars-exhibits/baby-grand-jazz)

**About Hartford Public Library:** Founded as the Library Company in 1774, and over its 250 years, Hartford Public Library has remained at the forefront of redefining the urban library experience in the 21st century. With seven locations throughout the city, the library provides education, intellectual



enrichment, and cultural development for thousands of children, youth, and adults every year. Hartford Public Library has also gained local and national recognition for its wide range of new initiatives and partnerships designed to meet the needs of a diverse and dynamic city and region, including immigration services, employment assistance, and youth leadership training. For more information, visit [hplct.org](http://hplct.org)

###