

Old Dominion University

2018-2019

F. Ludwig Diehn Concert Series



Houston Person

with

John Toomey, piano

Jimmy Masters, bass

Chuck Redd, drums

Concert: April 15, 7:30 p.m.

Wilson G. Chandler Recital Hall

F. Ludwig Diehn Center for the Performing Arts



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Biographies

Houston Person

Houston Person knows the music business inside out, from booking his own tours to producing his own albums. As eclectic as he is talented, Person has recorded everything from disco and gospel to pop and R&B, in addition to his trademark, soulful hard bop. After years as producer and house tenor for HighNote Records and touring with the late Etta Jones, Person is now known as a master of popular songs played in a relaxed, highly accessible style reminiscent of the great Ben Webster.

Person grew up in Florence, South Carolina, and remembers his parents listening to lots of music at home, including jazz. First playing piano before switching to the tenor sax at age 17, he went on to study music at South Carolina State College (where he is included in the school's Hall of Fame), and later pursued advanced studies at Hartt College of Music in Hartford, Connecticut. As a member of the United States Air Force band stationed in Germany, he played with Eddie Harris, Cedar Walton and Don Ellis, later working as a sideman for organist Johnny "Hammond" Smith in the mid-1960s.

Person built his reputation as a leader with a series of soulful recordings for Prestige in the '60s. However, for a large part of his career he was best-known for his legendary partnership with the great vocalist Etta Jones, which lasted over 30 years until her death in 2001. Recently he has performed with vocalist Barbara Morrison, the great

Ernie Andrews and in the past, has worked with Ernestine Anderson, Della Griffin and Dakota Staton.

Person's appearances as sideman are legion and include recordings with Etta Jones, Lena Horne, Lou Rawls, Dakota Staton, Horace Silver, Charles Earland, Joey DeFrancesco, and many others. As a record producer, he has worked with many artists, including Etta Jones, Freddy Cole, Charles Brown, David "Fathead" Newman, Dakota Staton and Ernie Andrews. In 1990, his recording with Ron Carter, "Something in Common" (Muse), won the Independent Jazz Record of the Year Award, and he received an Indie Award for his recording, "Why Not?" (Muse). Other awards have included the prestigious Eubie Blake Jazz Award (1982) and the Fred Hampton Scholarship Fund Image Award (1993), and he has been honored with a "Houston Person/ Etta Jones Day" in Hartford County, Maryland (1982) and in Washington, D.C. (1983). Houston Person has recorded over 150 albums as a leader on Prestige, Westbound, Mercury, Savoy and Muse, which became HighNote Records. His HighNote recordings as both tenor artist and producer, "My Buddy: Etta Jones Sings the Songs of Buddy Johnson" and "Etta Jones Sings Lady Day," were Grammy finalists in the Best Jazz Vocal category in 1999 and 2000, respectively. HighNote has issued a three-disc collection of some of his finest recordings along with four new tracks all recorded at the famed Rudy Van Gelder Studio in Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey. Entitled "The Art and Soul of Houston Person" (HCD 7200), this is the first multidisc retrospective of an artist's

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recorded work to be issued by the label. Of Houston's latest recordings, "Chemistry" (HCD 7293) is an eagerly awaited new duo recording with the legendary bassist Ron Carter, while "Rain or Shine" (HCD 7309) features the same winning combination of outstanding sonics, time-tested tunes and great jazz which has made Person one of the most respected tenor saxophonists in jazz.

Wrote Gary Giddens in the Village Voice, "I have always admired Houston Person for his huge tone, bluff humor, and pointed obbligato. ... Person lucidly rides the beat with figures you think you've heard but haven't. These are not recycled licks or clichés; they simply seem familiar, like family. ... Gray hair aside, Person is unchanged, an unmoved mover of certain jazz essentials." Ask him what's important in his music, and Houston Person notes that, "It's important that it's relaxing ... relaxes you and makes you feel good. ... I'm going to always play the things that I think contributes to good jazz, such as the blues and swinging."

John Toomey

Professor John Toomey has been recognized for excellence in teaching several times, including his designation as University Professor for excellence in teaching, an honorary title awarded to less than 2 percent of the faculty at the university. Other honors include Teletechnet Professor of the Year, and winner of the prestigious SCHEV Outstanding Faculty Award. In 1991, Professor Toomey was designated

a cultural specialist in jazz by the United States Information Agency, and was sent to Botswana, Africa, in this capacity to both teach and perform.

In the area of research, Professor Toomey serves as both director and performer for the Attucks Jazz Series under the umbrella of the Virginia Arts Festival, performs often on the Diehn Concert Series stage with various jazz artists, and served as performer and music director for Havana Nights, a state-of-the-art jazz club in Hampton Roads. In all of these venues, he has performed in concert with nationally and internationally acclaimed jazz artists, such as Randy Brecker, John Fedchock, John Abercrombie and Terrell Stafford. Toomey has toured with jazz vocalist Rene Marie, including appearances at the JVC Festival in France and the Monterey Festival in California, and is featured on the recording "Live at the Jazz Standard." The original score he composed for "The Boys of H Company" (2004) was recently aired in Singapore and Japan, and has been featured on national television dozens of times. Toomey is currently featured on two recordings that were released in early 2015, "Timely," with Glenn Wilson and John D'earth, and "Fluidity," with trombone great John Fedchock. Before his tenure at Old Dominion University, Toomey performed and toured the world with jazz trumpet legend Maynard Ferguson, with whom he recorded two CDs, "High Voltage 2" and "Big Bop Nouveau."

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Jimmy Masters

Jimmy Masters has served as first-call bassist in Hampton Roads for the better part of the last 25 years. His past endeavors include time spent teaching at the Governor's Magnet School for the Arts, Hampton University, the College of William & Mary and Tidewater Community College. He has performed with numerous jazz greats from vocalists such as Jon Hendricks, Sheila Jordan, Chris Connor and Kurt Elling; to pianists James Williams, Mulgrew Miller, Kenny Drew Jr. and Fred Hersch; saxophonists Gary Thomas, Steve Wilson, Rich Perry, Ken Peplowski and Glenn Wilson; vibraphonists Joe Locke and Chuck Redd; and brass players such as Tim Hagans, Clark Terry, Terell Stafford, Ingrid Jensen, John D'earth and John Fedchock.

He has produced several well-received recordings for the VSOJAZ label and for National Public Radio & Television. While continuing to serve as an active member of the Hampton Roads jazz community, his musical exploits have expanded to include contemporary acoustic music, bluegrass and traditional country music. He has toured Europe and performed in legendary clubs such as Blues Alley and the One Step Down in Washington, D.C., and Ryles Jazz Club in Boston.

Chuck Redd

Chuck Redd is an accomplished performer on both drums and vibraphone. He began performing and recording internationally in 1980 at the age of 21 when he joined the

Charlie Byrd Trio. That year, he also joined the Great Guitars (Barney Kessel, Charlie Byrd and Herb Ellis.) To his credit are 13 extensive European tours and five tours of Japan with the Barney Kessel Trio, Ken Peplowski, Terry Gibbs and Conte Candoli.

Redd is featured on more than 70 recordings, including Arbors CD "All This and Heaven Too," featuring Gene Bertoncini and George Mraz, and "The Swing Kings," an all-star session featuring Bucky and John Pizzarelli, Ray Kennedy and Ken Peplowski. Redd can also be heard on the soundtrack to the popular PBS television series "The Great Chefs" and the NPR broadcast "Jazz Smithsonian."

In addition to leading his own groups, Redd was a member of the Smithsonian Jazz Masterworks Orchestra for 15 years. He frequently performs in New York City and headlines nationally at festivals and clubs. Chuck Redd is on the faculty at the University of Maryland School of Music and presents master classes, workshops and lectures around the country.



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IRKO

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Houston Person

With the John Toomey Trio

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