

Grace Kelly

Thursday, April 24, 2014

8:00 p.m.

Gorell Recital Hall
John Sutton Hall

The Grace Kelly Quintet

Grace Kelly, saxophones/vocals
Jason Palmer, trumpet
Pete McCann, guitar
Evan Gregor, bass
Diego Voglino, drums

Grace Kelly is a truly unique artist. You have heard the name before from the movies but perhaps you have also heard of this 21 year-old Korean American singer/songwriter/saxophonist/composer. Grace wrote her first song when she was 7 years old, recorded her first of 8 independently released CDs at 12, and orchestrated, arranged and performed an original composition with the Boston Pops Orchestra at 14.

Musical energy flows from the heart of this “phenom,” who was born Grace Chung on May 15, 1992. She became Grace Kelly after her mother divorced and remarried and her stepfather, Bob Kelly,



legally adopted Grace and her sister Christina. The strong classical music background of her mother’s family led Grace to begin piano lessons at age six, and she still does much of her composing at the piano as she sings wordlessly. Singing, dancing, writing songs, and theater were also early passions, soon joined by a fascination with the recordings of Stan Getz and other jazz saxophonists that her parents played during Sunday brunches.

She began to study the clarinet at her elementary school in the fourth grade and began private saxophone lessons a few months later. Further inspiration was provided by vocalist Ann Hamp-

ton Callaway, who detected “the boundless spirit and imagination of a natural artist” when she met Kelly in 2002. Another early champion, middle school music teacher Ken Berman, was so inspired by the pre-teen’s playing and writing that he insisted, “you have to record.” What followed was her first disc, *Dreaming*. “The CD release took place on March 17, 2004,” she recalls, “and as soon as I walked on stage, I realized that performing was my favorite thing to do.”

Trumpeter and Jazz at Lincoln Center artistic director Wynton Marsalis was so impressed with Kelly’s three-night stand as guest of the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra that he invited her to join the ensemble at the Kennedy Center’s Eisenhower Theater in Washington, D.C., for Barack Obama’s Inauguration Celebration. Harry Connick, Jr. heard Kelly in a master class on a December afternoon and brought her on stage to sit in with his band that night.

As a bandleader, Grace has performed over 600 concerts worldwide in such notable venues as the Hollywood Bowl, Kennedy Center, Carnegie Hall, and Symphony Hall and major festivals such as Montreal, Newport, and Montreux and clubs around the world such

as Birdland (New York), Porgy and Bess (Vienna), Ronnie Scott’s (London), and many more. Grace has also performed and/or recorded with artists such as Huey Lewis, Harry Connick Jr, Dave Brubeck, Gloria Estefan, David Sanborn, Esperanza Spalding, Phil Woods, James Cotton, and Wynton Marsalis to name a few.

Grace has been featured on CNN.com (*Making of a Prodigy*), *Glamour Magazine’s* Top Ten College Women 2011, and multiple appearances on NPR. Grace has also won many awards, some of which include multiple recognitions such as ASCAP Composer awards, *Downbeat Magazine* awards, Boston Music awards, FNX/Phoenix Best Music Poll, and multiple International Songwriting Competitions. *Downbeat* Critics Poll added to her list naming her one of the Alto Saxophone Rising Stars, the youngest ever to be named so.

Here are a few comments from her colleagues:

“Grace Kelly writes great songs, sings beautifully, is a world class saxophonist, and is going to be a big big star.”
– Huey Lewis

“Grace Kelly plays with intelligence, wit and feeling. She has a great amount of natural ability and the ability to adapt that is the hallmark

of a first-class jazz musician.” —

Wynton Marsalis

“As everybody knows, she is a remarkably mature player.” – David Sanborn

Jason Palmer, trumpet, is becoming one of the most in demand jazz musicians of his generation. He has shared the stage with icons such as Roy Haynes, Herbie Hancock, Jimmy Smith, Wynton Marsalis, Greg Osby, Kurt Rosenwinkel, Ravi Coltrane, Geri Allen, Patrice Rushen, Clarence Penn, Common (hip-hop icon), Roy Hargrove, Billy Pierce, and others. Jason took First Place in the 2009 Carmine Caruso International Jazz Trumpet Solo Competition, and the 2007 issue of *Downbeat Magazine* cited Jason as one of the Top 25 Trumpeters of the Future.

His debut recording titled *Songbook* (Ayva Musica) features nine original compositions and includes guest saxophonists Ravi Coltrane and Greg Osby. Jason was a member of Greg Osby's quintet from 2004-2006 which performed at major jazz festivals across Europe as well as two stints at the Village Vanguard in New York City. He is currently a member of Grace Kelly's Quintet and Matana Robert's Mississippi Moonchile performing at major jazz festivals and venues throughout the U.S., Europe, and Canada. In September of 2009, Ja-

son completed an extensive tour of the U.K. in support of U.K. bassist Michael Janisch's debut album titled *Purpose Built*.

In addition to having a heavy performing schedule and leading his own quintet as house band at Boston's historical Wally's Jazz Café, Jason continues to maintain a fulfilling schedule as an educator, actor, and board member at JazzBoston. Jason was the leading actor in director Damien Chazelle's *Guy and Madeline on a Park Bench*. The movie received great reviews after premiering at the Tribeca Film Festival in 2009.

Pete McCann, guitar, is one of the first-call sidemen in New York. He works in several groups including the Patti Austin band, Lee Konitz Nonet, Chris Tarry Quintet, Melissa Stylianou group, New York Nonet, Dan Willis Sextet, JD Walter Trio, and Alison Wedding's group. Pete has performed with some of the greats in jazz including Kenny Wheeler, Dave Liebman, Lee Konitz, Kenny Garrett, Peter Erskine, Gary Thomas, Greg Osby, Brian Blade, and the Maria Schneider Orchestra.

He has appeared on over 60 CDs including *Almost Certainly Dreaming*, Chris Tarry group; *I Think It's Going to Rain Today*, Curtis Stigers; *The*

Other Side of Ellington, *The Palmetto All-Stars*; *Standard Wonder (The Music of Stevie Wonder)*, Dave Pietro; *Round 'Bout Now*, George Schuller; and *Phase 2*, Mahavishnu Project. Pete's playing encompasses a wide variety of musical styles and genres—Straight-ahead, Post-Bop, Avant-Garde, Latin, Jazz-Rock Fusion. He has performed throughout the United States, Canada, and Europe from clubs to jazz festivals, musicals, award shows, and even an opera.

Evan Gregor, a versatile acoustic and electric bassist, has been hired as a sideman by a wide range of artists including Gary Burton, Dave Liebman, Phil Woods, Patti Austin, Brad Shepik, Pete McCann, Darcy James Argue's Secret Society, The New York BMI Jazz Orchestra, Christian Scott, Bill Goodwin, Bob Dorough, Urbie Green, The Mahavishnu Project, Christian Howes, and many others, which has taken him all over the world. He is a member of Grace Kelly's quintet, Dave Liebman's "Lineage," Phil Woods and The Festival Orchestra, Danny Sher's Quintet, and other groups. He holds a Bachelor of Music degree in jazz composition/electric bass from Berklee College of Music and a Master of Music degree in acoustic bass from William Paterson, both *summa cum laude*.

Evan has served on the faculty at The Collective, an accredited school for college aged rhythm section players in New York City. He also teaches and coordinates ensembles for CampJazz in Delaware Water Gap, Pa., and recently released "From Student to Jazz Artist"—a unique 3+ hour interview/discussion with David Liebman on developing as a young artist, available through Advance Music.

www.gracekellymusic.com

In Residence

During the visit by Grace Kelly and her quintet, she presented a noon-time question and answer session hosted in the commons of Stapleton Library for the general public. This is part of our ongoing partnership with the IUP Libraries and funded through the **Mary Jane Schafer Memorial Speakers Fund**. Ms. Kelly also presented a workshop this afternoon for area music teachers and IUP students.

These outreach activities, part of every touring performance project presented in the Ovation! series, is coordinated through Lively Arts' ArtsPath arts-in-education program.