

Allyn Johnson

Allyn Johnson, pianist and native of Washington, DC, is a multitalented musician, composer, arranger, and producer, whose trademark sound gives brilliance and fortitude to the art of jazz improvisation. Johnson, who began playing piano at the age of five, got his start with the youth choir in his uncle's church. While a student at the University of the District of Columbia (UDC), Johnson was mentored by the late, great jazz legend Calvin Jones. Johnson graduated magna cum laude from UDC in 1997, with a bachelor's degree in jazz studies and has since become the director of the Jazz Studies program at the university.

Ben Williams

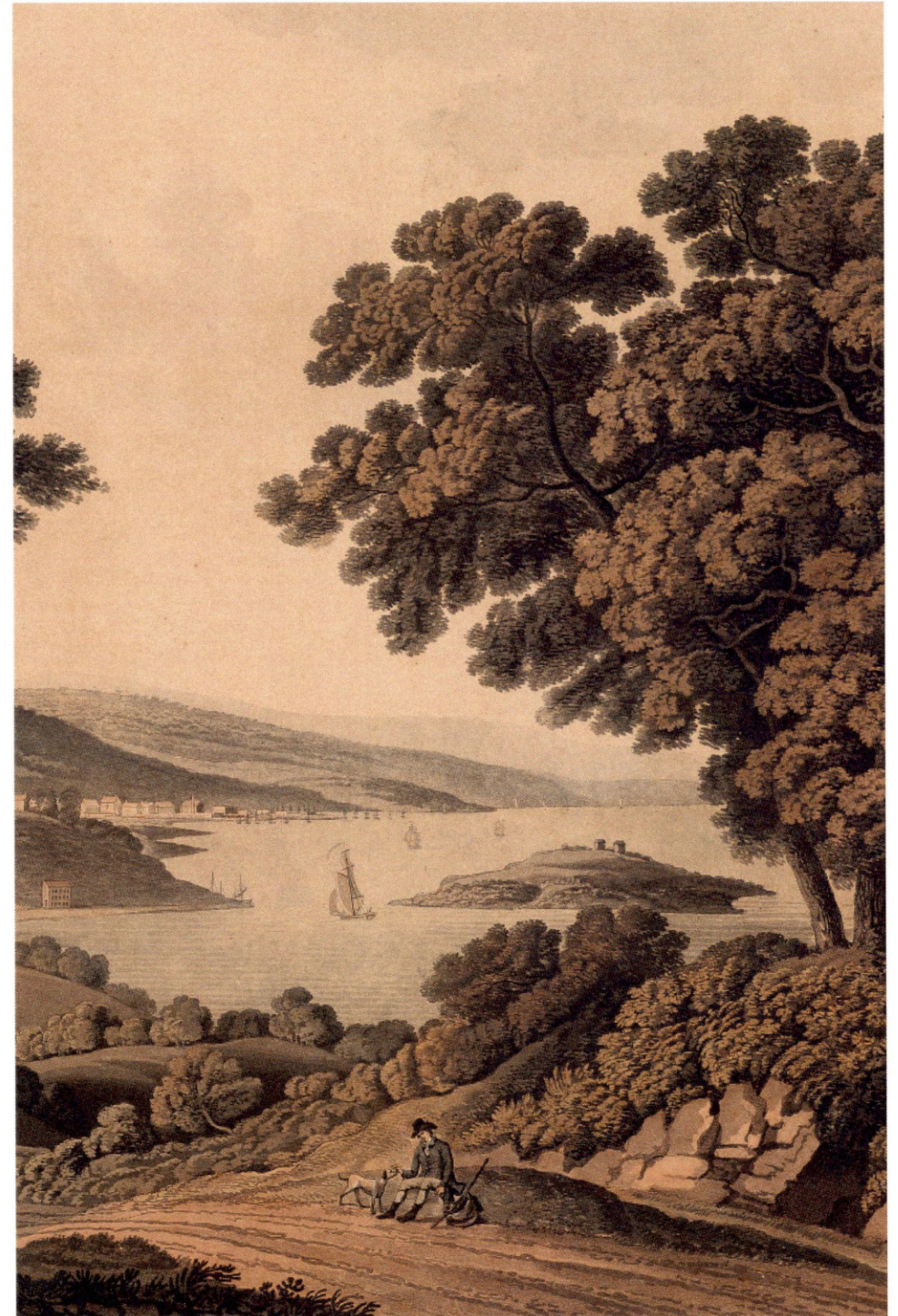
Ben Williams is an acclaimed international bassist, Grammy winner, composer, improviser, and music educator. In 2013, he received a Grammy Award with the Pat Metheny Unity Band for "Best Instrumental Jazz Album of the Year." In 2016, he appeared with Don Cheadle in the movie *Miles Ahead* and performed at the White House for President and Mrs. Obama.

While Williams lives in New York City, he is well remembered in his hometown of Washington, DC, and is no stranger to the National Gallery of Art — at age twelve, his drawing titled *And the Band Plays On* was selected for an exhibition. Williams now returns to the Gallery with his trio. He has been playing the bass for more than twenty years, a craft he honed while growing up in the Northeast neighborhoods of Michigan Park, Woodridge, and Brookland. He graduated from the Duke Ellington School of the Arts and earned his BA in music education at Michigan State University. He completed his masters at the Juilliard School.

Williams was voted as Rising Star for the 2013 and 2015 *Downbeat* Critic's Poll Award and also received the Up and Coming Artist of the Year Award at the 16th Annual Jazz Journalists Association celebration. He has performed and recorded with a stunning array of artists, including George Benson, Terence Blanchard, Benny Golson, Herbie Hancock, Wynton Marsalis, and Pharrel Williams.

75TH SEASON OF CONCERTS

APRIL 5, 2017 • NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART



Cover J. Cartwright after George Beck, *Georgetown and the Federal City of Washington* (detail), 1801, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Otis T. Bradley

PROGRAM

12:10 • East Building Auditorium

"Washingtonians on Wednesdays"

Sponsored by the Billy Rose Foundation

The Ben Williams Trio, with tap dancer Maud Arnold

Maud Arnold, dancer

Jonathan Barber, drums

Allyn Johnson, piano

Ben Williams, bass

Honoring the legacy of jazz and tap while interpreting them through a scope of modern and contemporary styles.

The Musicians

Maud Arnold

Called one of "Tap's Leading Ladies" by *Dance Spirit Magazine*, Maud Arnold is a member of Syncopated Ladies, recently appearing on ABC's *Good Morning America* and BET's *106 & Park*. Teaching and performing in Russia, Canada, Brazil, Japan, Spain, Croatia, the United Kingdom, the United Arab Emirates, and the United States, Arnold has quickly become a sought after teacher, judge, and performer worldwide.

Arnold performed in sold-out concerts of Syncopated Ladies in Dubai, Washington, DC, and New York City and appeared on Season Eleven of Fox's *So You Think You Can Dance* with Syncopated Ladies as the winner of the Dance Crew Battle. Arnold can be seen in the 2014 Toyota Corolla's national commercial "Style Never Goes Out of Style" and has worked with Beyoncé on several commercials and music videos. Mentored and trained by Debbie Allen, Arnold has taught at Allen's dance academy in Los Angeles and her dance institute in Texas. Arnold is also co-director and producer of the critically acclaimed DC Tap Festival along with her sister Chloe Arnold. They have been recognized by the U.S. House of Representatives as arts preservers and ambassadors. Recently Arnold produced *Tap World*, a feature-length documentary, with Hollywood producer Dean Hargrove.

Jonathan Barber

Drummer Jonathan Barber, born in Hartford, Connecticut, has been playing the drums since the age of five. He was first introduced to the drums by his father and began nurturing his passion and talents at his family's church. During his senior year of high school, he became a member of Hartford's Artists Collective, founded by Jackie and Dollie McLean. There he studied with master artist, René McLean, who introduced him to jazz and its African roots and rhythms. It was at that point that Barber knew he wanted to be a musician. He graduated cum laude from the University of Hartford, Hartt School of Music, Jackie McLean Institute of Jazz, in music performance (Jazz Studies).

Barber quickly became an on-demand drummer in the Hartford jazz scene and began building his career in New York. He has had the opportunity to perform with many artists, including Jimmy Greene, Erykah Badu, Wallace Roney, Jeremy Pelt, Kenny Barron, John Patitucci, Kurt Elling, Terrace Martin, Charnett Moffett, Stanley Jordan, Harold Mabern, Steve Davis, Larry Willis, and Abraham Burton.

Since moving to New York City, Barber has traveled and toured nationally and internationally and performed in notable festivals and clubs. Currently, he has added bandleader to his international touring and teaching.