

KILBOURN CONCERT SERIES

KEVIN HAYS TRIO

Thursday, February 13, 2025

Kilbourn Hall

7:30 PM



EASTMAN
SCHOOL OF MUSIC
UNIVERSITY of ROCHESTER

PROGRAM

Selections to be announced from the stage.

KEVIN HAYS TRIO

Kevin Hays, piano
Alexander Claffy, bass
Eric Harland, drum set

MEET THE ARTISTS

“There are plenty of talented pianists... but few have Hays’ melodic charms and sense of style.” — *The New Yorker* “Best of the Year” list

“A jolt of joy.” — *The New York Times*

“He’s all encompassing. Phenomenally so!”
— John Scofield



“Kevin Hays is a true original. Everything he plays has a deep intelligence and swing.” — Brad Mehldau

GRAMMY Award-winning jazz pianist/composer **Kevin Hays** is internationally recognized as one of the most original and compelling musicians of his generation. His many recordings have received critical acclaim from *The New York Times*, *DownBeat*, and *Jazz Times*, as well as the “Coup de Coeur” award from the Académie Charles Cros (France).

Kevin has appeared on numerous albums as a guest artist, recording with Chris Potter, Bill Stewart, Joshua Redman, Jeff Ballard, Nicholas Payton, and Al Foster, among many others. Notable collaborations include a piano duo project with Brad Mehldau (Modern Music - Nonesuch), and world tours with James Taylor, Sonny Rollins, John Scofield, Joe Henderson, and Roy Haynes.

In addition to his celebrated work as pianist and composer, Kevin has become increasingly known as a gifted and expressive singer/songwriter. In 2015, he released the widely lauded recording *New Day* (Sunnyside), on which he performed his own songs along with a riveting performance of the Jimmy Webb classic, *Highwayman*.

Hope, a 2019 collaboration with Beninese guitarist Lionel Loueke, was released on Edition Records. The music on *Hope* seems to move effortlessly between melodic serenity and rhythmic interplay, highlighting the beauty and intimacy of the piano/acoustic guitar format.

Hays co-wrote several compositions on Steve Gadd Band’s eponymous album which garnered the 2019 GRAMMY Award for Best

MEET THE ARTISTS

Contemporary Instrumental Album. The album also features Kevin's own *Spring Song*, the sole vocal track.

Kevin's most recent trio recording *Bridges* with bassist Ben Street and legendary drummer Billy Hart features new Hays compositions and songs by Hart, Milton Nascimento, The Beatles, Wayne Shorter, and Bill Frisell. The trio recently premiered at the Village Vanguard in NYC.

Bassist **Alex Claffy** has become one of the most in-demand performers of his generation, both as a sideman working with the biggest names in jazz and popular music, and also as a bandleader, composer and producer having just released his fourth album as a leader *Music From Big Orange* in late 2022 with another record on the way featuring Michael "Sonny Step" Stephenson in early 2023.



Living in New York City but born and raised in Philadelphia, PA, Claffy is the next great jazz artist in his hometown's storied lineage, following in the footsteps of Philadelphia bass luminaries such as Christian McBride, Percy Heath, and Jimmy Garrison.

His résumé as a sideman reads as a veritable who's who of jazz royalty, ranging from jazz masters such as George Coleman, Harold Mabern, Randy Brecker, Jimmy Cobb, George Cables, Wallace Roney, Mike LeDonne, Fred Hersch, Victor Lewis, and Louis Hayes, to the top stars of today such as Nicholas Payton, Christian Adjtunde Adjuah, Kevin Hays, Aaron Parks, Seamus Blake, and Kurt Rosenwinkel - the latter of which he's appeared with three times at Village Vanguard since the Summer of 2022.

His work in more pop settings with the likes of trumpet icon Chris Botti, the genre-bending songstress Veronica Swift, and breakout Hamilton star vocalist Leslie Odom Jr. prove his versatility as a bassist and musician know no bounds.

MEET THE ARTISTS

When he's not touring the world headlining major jazz festivals and clubs, Claffy can be found in any of the top venues in New York City's decorated jazz scene such as Birdland, the Blue Note, Dizzy's Club, SMOKE and Smalls, as well as frequent trips back to Philadelphia, where he is committed to enriching and enlivening his hometown scene as well.

In his spare time he's an avid vinyl collector, has a voracious appetite for podcasts and the greats of stand-up comedy, as well as his dedication to his work as a clinician and teacher, hosting a private studio of bass students as well as adjunct work at his alma mater, the New School of Jazz.

Multi-GRAMMY Nominated and Winning Drummer, **Eric Harland** is the most "in demand drummer" of his generation. He has already been on over 500 recordings and multiple film scores at his age of 47. Eric has been recognized in the *Boston Globe*, *The New York Times*, *JazzTimes*, *Modern Drummer*, *All About Jazz*, *The New Yorker*, *DownBeat*, *L'uomo Vogue*, and other prominent publications.



It has been his privilege to share the stage with masters such as Betty Carter, Joe Henderson, MyCoy Tyner, Michael Brecker, Terence Blanchard, Branford and Wynton Marsalis, Wayne Shorter, Savion Glover, SFJAZZ Collective, and many others, as well as today's up and coming artists like Esperanza Spalding, Jane Monheit, Taylor Eigsti, Julian Lage, Stacie Orrico, Robert Glasper, and so on. His current list of performing groups are "JAMES FARM" with Joshua Redman, "PRISM" with Dave Holland and Kevin Eubanks, "SANGAM" with Charles Lloyd and Zakir Hussain, "Charles Lloyd New Quartet," "OVERTONE" with Dave Holland, Jason Moran, and Chris Potter, Chris Potter Circuits Trio, Gonzalo Rubalcaba Trio D'ETE, and "VOYAGER," Eric's own widely recognized group. But Eric doesn't stop there, he also manages to fit in many collaborations with world renowned artist like Les Claypool "PRIMUS," "DISPATCH" the band, KRS1, John Mayer, Gigi Hadid, Spike Lee, Steve Miller, Mariah Carey, Randy Jackson from "AMERICAN IDOL," and etc.

MEET THE ARTISTS

Eric Harland was the Resident Artistic Director at the SFJAZZ Center for the 2014-2016 Season. He also was Artist in Resident at the Monterey Jazz Festival 2014 Season. Harland also had the supreme privilege of being invited and attending President Barack Obama's 2016 White House State Dinner in honor of Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

Through Harland's extensive travels, he has come to realize that "the deepest secret is that life is not a process of discovery, but a process of creation." When Eric Harland contributes... his intention is therefore to create the highest musical experience so that every listener may have insight... into the musical moment.

We acknowledge with respect the Seneca Nation, known as the "Great Hill People" and "Keepers of the Western Door" of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. We take this opportunity to thank the people whose ancestral lands the Eastman School of Music of the University of Rochester currently occupies in Rochester, New York.

UPCOMING EASTMAN SERIES CONCERTS

Tickets for all series concerts can be purchased at EastmanTheatre.org

FACULTY ARTIST SERIES

**Priscilla Yuen, Irina Lupines, &
Soojin Kang, collaborative piano**

Kilbourn Hall

Sunday, February 16, 2025 at 3:30 PM

FACULTY ARTIST SERIES

Mikhail Kopelman, violin

Kilbourn Hall

Monday, February 17, 2025 at 7:30 PM

KODAK HALL SERIES

***Titanic* Live**

Kodak Hall at Eastman Theatre

Friday, February 21, 2025 at 7:30 PM

Nominated for 14 Academy Awards, *Titanic* is still globally one of the most loved films ever made. The event will see the film screened in high definition, as James Horner's timeless score is played live on stage by a live orchestra, conducted by Mark Watters, accompanied by Eric Rigler playing Uilleann Pipes and Whistles and vocal soloist Alice Zawadzki.

UPCOMING STUDENT ENSEMBLE CONCERTS

All student performances are free unless otherwise noted.

OSSIA

Kilbourn Hall

Monday, February 17, 2025 at 7:30 PM

Eastman New Jazz Ensemble

Kodak Hall at Eastman Theatre

Tuesday, February 18, 2025 at 7:30 PM



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