



## Faculty Jazz Quartet

Tuesday, February 24, 2015 at 8:00 pm

Dr. Bobbie Bailey & Family Performance Center, Morgan Hall

Seventy-fourth Concert of the 2014-15 Concert Season

### *"The Music of Jim Hall"*

featuring

Trey Wright, guitar

Sam Skelton, saxophone

Robert Dickson, bass

Justin Chesarek, drums

**Alone Together** / Arthur Schwartz

**Down From Antigua** / Jim Hall

**First Song (For Ruth)** / Charlie Haden

**Angel Eyes** / Matt Dennis

**The Answer is Yes** / Jim Hall

**Mr. Blues** / Jim Hall

**Skylark** / Hoagy Carmichael

**Say Hello To Calypso** / Jim Hall

## program notes



### **Remembering Jim Hall**

(1930-2013)

*by Jason Shadrick*

Every time Jim Hall opened his case there was a sticker inside the lid that reminded him of his mantra, "Make musical sense." Hall died in his sleep on December 10, 2013, at the age of 83. His contributions to guitar - both as a player and composer - elevated the instrument and made a deep and lasting impression on the musical world.

At times, Hall could be both elegant and angular with his approach but he never stopped searching for the next sound. Much in the mold of Hendrix, Michael Hedges and Les Paul, Hall was an innovator who stretched, bent, and pushed the boundaries of modern jazz guitar and created a uniquely soulful language all his own. His approach to harmony, comping, and rhythm was groundbreaking and his landmark album with saxophonist Sonny Rollins, *The Bridge*, is a classic example of this.

It could be argued that the jazz guitar tree is rooted in four names: Django, Charlie, Wes, and Jim. Virtually every guitarist, from classical to shred, has

been touched by the music that flowed from that quartet. The influence of Hall's music moved well outside jazz circles, with followers including esteemed players like Wilco's sonic wizard Nels Cline and Testament's Alex Skolnick. The beauty and grace of his playing expanded beyond swing with a commanding authenticity.

Early in his career, Hall played with two forward-thinking groups that broke stereotypes of what a jazz group should be. The Chico Hamilton Quintet, which also featured cellist Fred Katz and flautist Buddy Collette, was a chamber-jazz group that found Hall playing a decidedly non-jazz instrument - a Gibson Les Paul Custom. And in 1957, clarinetist Jimmy Giuffre asked Hall to join his trio with bassist Ralph Pena. The JG3 incorporated blues and folk elements along with classical counterpoint to create a unique slant on the West coast swing of that era.

"When you have Jim Hall, you don't need a pianist," said trumpeter Art Farmer. That rather famous quote followed Hall around and helped establish his reputation as an enriching and sympathetic accompanist. His two albums with pianist Bill Evans, *Undercurrent* and *Intermodulation*, demonstrated exactly how intimate improvised music could be. Other duo partners included bassist Ron Carter, guitarists Pat Metheny and Bill Frisell, and pianist Geoffrey Keezer.

With each new group or recording project Hall was determined to push the music forward. His 1975 album, *Live!*, is a template for the modern guitar trio and to this day is an excellent study in group interaction and inventive melodic interpretation. Hall continued to record and tour in a variety of formats through the '80s and '90s. He was among the first modern jazz guitarists to be honored as an NEA Jazz Master in 2004, in addition to writing a concerto for guitar and orchestra that was debuted at the World Guitar Congress.

The word "retire" had no meaning to Hall. He continued to record and perform up until the end of his life. Just this past November, Hall played with his trio that included Scott Colley on bass, and drummer Lewis Nash for a two-night stand at Jazz at Lincoln Center and were joined by guitarists Peter Bernstein and John Abercrombie. "When I went backstage to say goodbye Jim said 'Great job, John'," remembers Abercrombie. "Then he remarked on Peter Bernstien's playing, and how much Peter always amazed him. He added, as his final remark, 'These kids today!'"

Even after some recent health issues slowed down Hall's physical abilities, he never lost his touch for the instrument. The notes that would flow out of his Sadowsky archtop combined the best of bebop, folk, blues, and Americana. His individual spirit brought joy to many people and he will be sorely missed.

# biographies

## Senior Lecturer in Jazz Guitar and Jazz Studies

**T**rey Wright is a jazz guitarist, composer, and recording artist based in Roswell, Georgia. Initially inspired by the blues, Trey was exposed to jazz early in his development by a private instructor. While studying Sociology at the University of Georgia, Wright furthered his study of jazz improvisation with pianist and composer, Steve Dancz. In 1994, he co-founded the Athens/Atlanta based jazz band, Squat. The group is a six-time winner of Best Jazz Band at the Flagpole Athens Music Awards and has been a featured artist at the Atlanta Jazz Festival, Bel Chere, the Twilight Athens Jazz Festival, the Cherry Blossom Festival, Harvest Midtown, and Athfest. Several of Trey's compositions with the group have received international airplay and have been featured on Sirius radio and NPR's *All Things Considered*.

Trey also performs freelance in the Athens and Atlanta area and has performed with Yellowjackets' bassist Jimmy Haslip, John Patitucci, Joe Lovano, Corey Christiansen, and Darmon Meader of the New York Voices. Trey has performed at the Montreux Jazz Festival, Jazz A Vienne, and the World Sacred Music Festival in Bangalore, India. As a solo guitarist and with his trio, Trey has been a featured performer at the Athens Music and Arts Festival, the Lake Oconee Jazz Festival, and the Atlanta Jazz Festival. In early 2008, Trey began playing with the Georgia Symphony Jazz Orchestra.

In December of 2002, Trey completed a Master of Music degree in Jazz Studies at Georgia State University, and he currently teaches Applied Jazz Guitar, Jazz Theory and Composition, Jazz Guitar Ensemble, Jazz History, Jazz Improvisation, and The History of Rock at Kennesaw State University. Trey has also taught at LaGrange College, Gainesville College, the Atlanta Institute of Music, and was a Jazz Artist in Residence at the University of Georgia. In addition, Trey writes a column on Jazz Harmony for the Guitar for the quarterly print magazine, *Just Jazz Guitar*.

In 2006, Trey released his first CD, *Where I'm Calling From*, receiving rave reviews and airplay throughout the United States, New Zealand, England, Australia, Germany, Italy, Canada, Luxembourg, Scotland, and the Netherlands. The Trey Wright Trio released *Thinking Out Loud* in the summer of 2009 on Blue Canoe Records. In 2010, The CD was included in the first round Grammy Nominations for Best Jazz Instrumental Album. In the Fall of 2012, the Trey Wright Trio's version of Thom Yorke's, "Analyze," was included on the compilation *Head Radio Retransmissions: A Tribute to Radiohead* on the German label ESC records. Trey's long awaited collaboration with Grammy winning saxophonist Mace Hibbard, *The Hibbard/Wright Project*, was released

in May 2013, and Trey will release a new CD titled *Songs From Oak Avenue* on Blue Canoe Records in February 2015.

### **Director of Jazz Studies and Senior Lecturer in Saxophone**

**S**am Skelton, a native of Conyers, Georgia, has been active on the Atlanta music scene for well over two decades. Skelton graduated summa cum laude from Georgia State University and the private studio of Tony Carere with a degree in Jazz Studies.

During his course of study at GSU, Skelton was a Montgomery Music Scholar and a two-time fellowship recipient to the Aspen Music Festival. He continued his saxophone studies with Kenneth Radnofsky at Boston University in 1991.

As a woodwind doubler, Skelton is well versed in any genre of music. His grasp of saxophone, clarinet and flute has enabled him to remain very busy in live performance as well as in the studio.

Skelton has performed and/or soloed with The London Symphony Orchestra, The Atlanta Symphony, The Atlanta Pops, The Peachtree Pops, The Atlanta Ballet Orchestra and The Cobb Symphony Orchestra as well as numerous local high school and civic ensembles. World Premiers include James Oliviero's *Children of A Common Mother*, Lee Johnson's *Ora Pro Mi: Concerto for Winds Soloist* (clarinet, flute and soprano saxophone) and *Seaside Symphony* (clarinet and soprano saxophone soloist). Skelton also played the premier recording of *Ora Pro Mi* and *Seaside Symphony* with the London Symphony Orchestra.

As a sideman on over 175 compact discs, Skelton remains very active in the studio and can be heard on recordings by such artists as: Elton John, December Radio, Babbie Mason, Howard Tate, Matchbox 20, Train, Edwin McCain, The Gap Band and The Ohio Players. Television and radio jingles include *The Georgia Lottery*, *Glen Beck*, *The Weather Channel*, *The Travel Channel*, *Ford*, *The Cartoon Network*, *CNN*, *Nature's Own*, *Popeye's*, *Papa John's* and *Turner South*. Television appearances include *In the Heat of the Night*, *Savannah* and *Sinbad's Summer Jam II* on HBO.

Skelton is currently Director of Jazz Studies and Lecturer in Saxophone at Kennesaw State University. He is also Artistic Director of CSO Jazz and GYSO Jazz. Skelton served as Professor of Saxophone at Georgia State University from 1991-2004 and was Jazz Ensemble Director at Georgia Tech from 2002-2004 and Artist-in-Residence at The University of Georgia Jazz Department. He served as Visiting Professor of Saxophone at Furman University 2001-02. Professional associations include: Georgia Music Educators Association, Georgia Association of Jazz Educators, National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences (voting member) and the American Federation of Musicians.

## **Robert Dickson, Bass**

**R**obert Dickson, originally from Montgomery, Alabama, received his Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Alabama and a Master of Music from the University of New Orleans where he was a graduate teaching assistant. He performed extensively in the New Orleans area and recently relocated to Atlanta after hurricane Katrina in the fall of 2005. In addition to his background in jazz, Mr. Dickson also attended the Brevard Music Camp as an orchestral bassist. He has performed with many jazz greats including Terri Lynne Carrington, Jerry Coker, Dizzy Gillespie, Lou Marini, Jason Marsalis, Steve Masakowski, Irvin Mayfield, Davy Mooney, Ed Petersen, Shannon Powell, Lew Soloff, and Johnny Vidacovich.

## **Artist-in-Residence Jazz Percussion**

**J**ustin Chesarek is all about swing. It's what drives him, it's what makes him strike drum heads with well-composed intensity, and it's why some of the best jazz musicians in Atlanta keep him on call. Since arriving in Atlanta in August, 2008, Justin Chesarek, a transplant from rural Pennsylvania, has made quite a name for himself.

He isn't your average session drummer. While regularly playing gigs with Gary Motley, Laura Coyle, and Gordon Vernick, Justin also flexes his composing muscles with his group "The Tree-O of Love," who maintain a regular Wednesday night gig at Churchill Grounds, Atlanta's premier jazz club. Pulling diverse influences from jazz, classical, rock, world music, Justin writes and plays music with emotion, putting his artistry and talent in every note and beat he comes across. The end product is jazz - the virtuosity of Bebop, the soul and funkiness of the early days of Fusion, and a retro-modern mindset oozing with musicality and a beat that gets the inner ear thumpin'.

"Composing as a drummer allows me to supply more of a concept of drums in melody. It gives me the opportunity to inject different rhythms and colors," Justin said. Consorting with members of jazz royalty including Houston Person, Jerry Bergonzi and Johnny O'Neal, just to name a few, Justin is regularly asked to perform with some of the biggest names around.

A graduate of Slippery Rock University, Slippery Rock, Pa., Justin holds a Bachelors of Music in Education. Under the direction of Dr. Stephen Hawk, Justin completed a two-week European tour, making appearances at the Montreaux Jazz Festival and the North Sea Jazz Festival. Justin finished his Masters of Music in Jazz Studies program in May, 2010, at Georgia State University and currently teaches at Emory University and Kennesaw State University.

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Michael Alexander  
Interim Director, KSU School of Music

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## upcoming events

*Unless otherwise noted, all events are held in Morgan Concert Hall and begin at 8 p.m.*

Thursday, February 26  
**Philharmonic and Concert Band**

Monday, March 9  
**Atlanta Chamber Players**

Monday, March 2  
**Summit Piano Trio**

Wednesday, March 11  
**Symphony Orchestra**

Wednesday, March 4  
**Faculty Recital: Judy Cole, piano**

Thursday, March 12  
**University Chorale and Women's Choir**

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