



Saturday, March 11, 2017, 8pm
Paramount Theatre, Oakland

A Double Bill Concert

The Hot Sardines
and
Jason Moran Celebrates Fats Waller

The Hot Sardines

Evan Palazzo, *leader and piano*
Elizabeth Bougerol, *vocals*
Nick Myers, *saxophone and clarinet*
Evan Crane, *bass and sousaphone*
AC Lincoln, *tap dancer*
Bob Parins, *guitar*
David Berger, *drums*
Todd Londagin, *trombone*

Jason Moran Celebrates Fats Waller

Jason Moran, *piano and Fender Rhodes*
Lisa E. Harris, *vocals*
Leron Thomas, *trumpet*
Tarus Mateen, *bass*
Charles Haynes, *drums*

Tonight's program will be announced from the stage and include one intermission.

*Jazz residency and education activities generously underwritten
by the Thatcher-Meyerson Family.*

*Cal Performances' presentations in Oakland are generously underwritten
by Signature Development Group.*

The Hot Sardines

In the talented hands of the New York-based The Hot Sardines, music first made famous decades ago comes alive through brassy horn arrangements, rollicking piano melodies, and vocals from a *chanteuse* who transports listeners to a different era with the mere lilt of her voice.

On *French Fries & Champagne*, the new album for Universal Music Classics, the jazz collective broadens its already impressive palette, combining covers and originals as they effortlessly channel New York speakeasies, Parisian cabarets, and New Orleans jazz halls.

Bandleader Evan “Bibs” Palazzo and lead singer “Miz Elizabeth” Bougerol met in 2007 after they both answered a Craigslist ad about a jazz jam session above a Manhattan noodle shop. The unlikely pair—she is a London School of Economics-educated travel writer who grew up in France, Canada, and the Ivory Coast; he is a New York City born-and-raised actor who studied theater at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia—bonded over their love for Fats Waller. Influenced also by such greats as Dinah Washington, Louis Armstrong, and Billie Holiday, they began playing open mic nights and small gigs; by 2011, they were headlining Midsummer Night Swing at New York’s Lincoln Center.

The Hot Sardines’ self-titled debut album, named by iTunes as one of the best jazz albums of 2014, spent more than a year on the *Billboard* jazz chart, debuting in the Top 10 alongside Michael Bublé, and Tony Bennett and Lady Gaga. The accolades began pouring in for the band: *DownBeat* called The Hot Sardines “one of the most delightfully energetic bands on New York’s ‘hot’ music scene,” while *The Times* (London) praised their “crisp musicianship” and “immaculate and witty showmanship,” declaring them “simply phenomenal.”

“We found ourselves in the perfect place at the perfect time,” says Evan. “As we explored this 100-year-old jazz, we began to look at it as a journey forward, not so much as a look back. This is music for today, not a museum piece.”

Indeed, “People Will Say We’re In Love” from the Rodgers & Hammerstein musical *Okla-homa!* gets reinvented as a tart tango. Jazz stan-

dard “Comes Love” starts as a minuet before vocalist Elizabeth, singing in her native French, conjures up spirits from the Roaring ’20s. The Hot Sardines even upend Robert Palmer’s 1985 classic “Addicted To Love” with Elizabeth’s cool vocals and hot horn arrangements.

French Fries & Champagne celebrates the duality of The Hot Sardines, reflecting both their glamorous and gritty sides. “When we started out as a band, we played illegal parties in these secret spots in Brooklyn. It was pretty down and dirty, and that was one of the reasons we loved it,” Elizabeth says. “Cut to a few years later and we were invited to play with the Boston Pops. We came up with the idea of half of the album being elegant and lush with strings, and then the other half is us going back to our roots.”

The name is also a reflection of the times, as lines blur between high and low culture, luxury and comfort. “The old rules—that champagne only goes with caviar, or *couture* and takeout don’t mix—are out the window. You see it everywhere... fashion, travel, food,” says Elizabeth. “Just be yourself and do what you like,” adds Evan. “Which is really how we approach everything we do.”

The Hot Sardines played more than 100 shows last year, taking their act from their familiar confines of New York across the country. And, to no one’s surprise but their own, they were greeted by music lovers everywhere. “In a weird way, it never occurred to me that anyone was listening to us outside of New York City. To show up in a town and have people say, ‘I love this song. I love this video’ is mind-blowing to me,” says Elizabeth, who adds she remembers the towns by the food. “I’m always trying to find some sort of mom-and-pop place where I can eat something that they make in that area.”

In New York City, The Hot Sardines draw a young audience. In the rest of the country, multi-generations come to enjoy the music. “We’ll see daughters, mothers and grandmothers coming to our show together,” Evan says. “In Long Island, a young girl came up to Elizabeth with a can of sardines to sign. She was 7!”

In the hot jazz movement, The Hot Sardines stand apart for the innovation, verve, and sheer joy they bring to music, both new and old.



The Hot Sardines

“It’s a really cool time to be making music,” Elizabeth says. “Especially if you’re making music that started its life 100 years ago.”

For The Hot Sardines:

Theresa Teague, *tour manager*

Jason Moran was born January 21, 1975 in Houston, Texas. He began studying the piano at age six, but longed to quit the instrument until he first experienced the sounds of jazz legend Thelonious Monk, an experience that renewed his interest in music and established an early role model in his creative development.

Moran went on to attend Houston’s High School for the Performing and Visual Arts, where he became an active member of the jazz program, playing in the big band and leading a jazz quartet. His aspirations and talents eventually led him to New York City, where he attended the Manhattan School of Music, a school to which he was drawn by the prospect of studying with the pianist Jaki Byard, a jazz leftist who became Moran’s teacher for four years and a

role model for life. It was during this time that Moran also took lessons from forward-thinking pianists such as Muhal Richard Abrams and Andrew Hill, creative musicians who imparted a profound influence on Moran, and encouraged him to find his own distinct voice.

In 1997, while Moran was still a senior in college, the drummer Eric Harland, a high school classmate of his, recommended Moran to saxophonist Greg Osby, who was in the process of assembling a band for a European tour. Osby hired Moran based solely on Harland’s description of his playing, and the match proved to be auspicious. The connection between Osby and Moran was present as soon as they hit the bandstand, and Moran has become a fixture in Osby’s touring and recording bands ever since.

Moran made his professional recording debut on Osby’s 1997 Blue Note CD, *Further Ado*, which brought him to the attention of Blue Note executives who signed the pianist to his own record deal shortly thereafter. The association with Blue Note is fitting, placing Moran in the lineage of innovative pianist/composers

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

whose career beginnings were nurtured by the veteran jazz label, musicians such as Monk, Herbie Hancock, and Herbie Nichols.

Moran's debut recording as a leader, *Sound-track to Human Motion*, which found him in the company of Osby, Harland, vibraphonist Stefon Harris, and bassist Lonnie Plaxico, was released in 1999 to great critical acclaim (Ben Ratliff of *The New York Times* named it the best album of the year). The following year's *Facing Left* found Moran stripping down to a trio with bassist Tarus Mateen and drummer Nasheet Waits, and prompted *JazzTimes* magazine to declare the album "an instant classic." Moran augmented the trio for his third Blue Note release, *Black Stars*, adding avant-garde icon Sam Rivers, who plays saxophone, flute, and piano on the recording. Gary Giddins of the *Village Voice* exclaimed "*Black Stars* is possibly a Blue Note benchmark, definitely one of the year's outstanding discs."

Moran has performed as a sideman with such artists as Cassandra Wilson, Joe Lovano, Don Byron, Steve Coleman, Lee Konitz, Von Freeman, Ravi Coltrane, and Stefon Harris. He was the youngest honoree of the New Work Commission by the San Francisco Jazz Festival. He was also awarded a grant from Chamber Music America's New Works: Creation and Presentation program, which is funded by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. For these grants Moran used sampled conversations as vocal triggers, creating compositions that would be the foundation for much of his new work. *Jazziz* magazine wrote, "Moran is blessed with the courage of his own convictions—part scavenger and part seer, fluent in the cut/paste/splice devices of hip hop production...."

In 2002 Moran released his universally acclaimed solo piano disc *Modernistic*, and the Cork Jazz Festival awarded him the Guinness Rising Star Award. The next year's *The Bandwagon*, culled from the trio's six-day stint at New York's Village Vanguard, earned the team of Moran–Mateen–Waits a title as "the best new rhythm section in jazz" (*The New York Times*) and caused *Rolling Stone* to proclaim Moran "the most provocative thinker in current jazz."

The Jazz Journalists Association named Moran the "Up-n-Coming Jazz Musician" of 2003. He has appeared on the cover of *JazzTimes* with Joe Lovano and on the cover of *DownBeat* with his mentor Andrew Hill. Moran topped the *DownBeat* critics poll in three categories in 2003 and 2004—Rising Star Jazz Artist, Rising Star Pianist, and Rising Star Composer. New York's Nightlife Awards honored Moran with awards for Best Jazz Combo and Best Performance—Solo Piano.

Moran has been a lecturer/instructor at the Banff Center for the Arts, Denmark's Vallekilde Jazz Camp, Skidmore College, the Manhattan School of Music, The New School, and his *alma mater*, the High School for the Performing and Visual Arts (HSPVA). In 1994 Moran's family created HSPVA's Moran Scholarship Award, which is given to an outstanding junior and senior in jazz. Moran took over responsibility for the program in 2001 as a sign of his commitment to education.

Moran's sixth Blue Note release, *Same Mother*, came in 2005. This blues-based recording adds guitarist Marvin Sewell to the Bandwagon. *Same Mother* is "a reconsideration of the blues that doesn't depend on clichéd dynamics and song structure" (*The New York Times*).

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Jason Moran

In 2005 Moran accepted separate commissions from three pre-eminent American arts institutions: Jazz at Lincoln Center, the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, and the Dia Art Foundation. Selected movements from the music created for these commissions—*RAIN*, *Milestone*, and *The Shape, the Scent, the Feel of Things*—constitute the recording *Artist In Residence*, which was released in 2006.

In 2007, Moran debuted the multimedia project *In My Mind: Monk at Town Hall, 1959*, a celebration of pianist and composer Thelonious Monk in honor of his 90th birthday. Commissioned by Duke Performances, Washington Performing Arts Society, SF Jazz, and Jazz at Symphony Center, *In My Mind* has been performed throughout the United States and Europe, including a performance at New York's Town Hall to mark the 50th anniversary of Monk's legendary concert.

The year 2010 was a momentous one for Moran. He was awarded the prestigious MacArthur Fellowship and released the most assured and focused recording of his career, *TEN*, which celebrated the 10-year anniversary of *The Bandwagon*. The album prompted *JazzTimes* to declare Moran “jazz’s greatest young conceptualist, [he] pierces the bubble around

jazz by reconnecting it not only to popular culture but also to the sounds of daily life.”

In 2011 Moran began a fruitful association with the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC, where he is now the artistic director for jazz, a role that allows him to develop programming and curate artists for one of the largest jazz programs in the country, as well as work with the center's other departments to coordinate programming for multidisciplinary festivals and events.

In the fall of 2014 Moran released *All Rise: A Joyful Elegy for Fats Waller*, a collaboration with the vocalist Meshell Ndegeocello that recasts the music of the legendary jazz entertainer Fats Waller as a modern dance party. The album is the studio culmination of a project that was born onstage at Harlem Stage Gatehouse (2011) as part of the Harlem Jazz Shrines series.

For Jason Moran:
Sascha Von Oertzen, *sound*
Louise Holland, *manager*

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Donor Spotlight

Cal Performances Salutes the Thatcher Meyerson Family

This season, Cal Performances' jazz residency and education activities are generously underwritten by the Thatcher Meyerson Family. Their generous gift is inspired by—and in loving memory of—family heads David and Shirley Thatcher.

In 1946, David and Shirley met working on a Democratic campaign in Philadelphia. The couple married the following year, and Shirley always said that she fell for David partly because of his jazz record collection.

Shortly thereafter, the Thatchers moved to California to fulfill David's dream of attending UC Berkeley, where he eventually received his Ed.D. Enthusiastic swing dancers, and always actively engaged in community life, David and Shirley soon welcomed three children to the family. As the years passed, the two campaigned for local Democrats, marched against the Vietnam War, volunteered for the PTA, gave citizenship classes, and edited the *Peace and Justice* newsletter. And through it all, they always included jazz concerts, museum visits, films, and adventurous dining in their family activities.

David and Shirley's middle child, Maris Thatcher Meyerson, remembers coming to Zellerbach Hall with her parents shortly after it opened in 1968. Now serving on Cal Performances' board of trustees as co-chair of the Education and Community Outreach Committee, Maris is grateful to continue her parents' legacy of giving back to the community.