

# The New York Times

MUSIC; If It's June, This Must Be Jazz

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Published: June 15, 2007

Every year in New York, toward the end of June, jazz suddenly becomes easier to understand. Not that the music empties out its tough ideas and becomes more glossy or simple-minded. Rather, the picture of what jazz is around the world grows sharper, as the possibilities of what to hear grow finer and deeper.

The glut of good gigs has to do with the JVC Jazz Festival New York and the Vision Festival, which run concurrently in the last two weeks of June. Bookings in some of the jazz clubs are folded into the JVC schedule, but even unaffiliated small spaces, theaters and festivals get into the spirit, competing for listeners, making use of the players and audiences in town.

As usual, a road map is in order. Here are some high points of the next two weeks, most of them from the festivals. The jazz listings in this section have more complete information about the riches of the season.

Today

Cassandra Wilson/Olu Dara In the early 1990s Cassandra Wilson made "Blue Light 'Til Dawn," an album with light, slow-moving, Southern-signifying arrangements informed by '60s folk and pop. The trumpeter, guitarist and songwriter Olu Dara, a Mississippian like Ms. Wilson, was one of her collaborators; his own subsequent solo albums, full of acoustic guitar grooves and rural-blues echoes, complemented hers. Central Park SummerStage, Rumsey Playfield, midpark at 70th Street, summerstage.org, 7 p.m., free.

Tuesday

'Bourbon Street Comes to Broadway': Preservation Hall Jazz Band JVC-New York's first big concert is organized around the Preservation Hall Jazz Band of New Orleans, founded in 1961 by Allan and Sandra Jaffe, a young couple who became important guardians of the city's early jazz. (Among their boosters was George Wein, the original producer of the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival and also the founder of the JVC Festival. He visited New Orleans for the first time in 1962 and got a education in the city and its music from the Jaffes.)

Long a beloved but sleepy part of New Orleans music history, the band has raised its profile in recent years, touring and recording with new vigor. Here the band, led by the trumpeter John Brunious, with the Jaffes' son Ben on bass, shares the stage with the keyboardist, singer, songwriter and producer Allen Toussaint, a New Orleans genius, as well as the violinist Jenny Scheinman and the saxophonist Steve Wilson, who can play

with heart in almost any style. Town Hall, 123 West 43rd Street, Manhattan, 8 p.m., \$40 to \$55.

Wednesday

**Branford Marsalis/Joshua Redman Trio** Mr. Marsalis started making his own records in 1984, Mr. Redman nine years later. But as if responding to a common call, both these tenor saxophonists have crystallized what they do best and made possibly the best records of their careers over the last year: Mr. Marsalis's "Braggtown" and Mr. Redman's "Back East." With Mr. Marsalis this comes down to the mechanics of his gloriously coordinated, hard-hitting quartet; with Mr. Redman, it's the clarity and flow of his improvising within the simplicity of a trio setting. Town Hall, JVC, 8 p.m., \$50 to \$65.

**Bill Dixon and Sound Vision Orchestra** As a trumpeter Mr. Dixon breaks down his playing to liquid blobs of sound: slow, low and dark, or fast metallic smears. As a composer he sometimes writes music -- in the case of his Wednesday concert, dense and bracing large-scale orchestral material -- that he radically reshapes in performance.

Born in 1925, he was a senior member of the 1960s jazz avant-garde in New York even as it was starting. In 1964 he produced the October Revolution in Jazz, a four-day festival of music and politicized panel discussions about vanguard art and economics that was one of the models for today's Vision Festival. (He will receive a lifetime recognition award this year.)

Mr. Dixon will play new music with a 17-piece band, some of its members former students from the nearly 30 years he taught at Bennington College. "It's an untitled long work, subdivided into a lot of sections," he said the other day.

He rehearses the band with written scores but lets real-time considerations -- how the room sounds, how certain people are playing -- change the piece as it's being performed. "I'll be able to interlope or set up things," he explained. "Section A, for instance, might not come at the beginning. It comes down to this: How do you make a piece of music sound both as though it were notated and as if it could only happen once this way?"  
Vision, Angel Orensanz Foundation, 7:30, \$30.

Friday, June 22

**50 Violins for Leroy Jenkins** The violinist Leroy Jenkins died in February, at 74, and took a lot of history with him. Coming from a fertile time and place for American music -- Chicago in the 1940s and '50s -- he often became involved, after moving to New York, in bands and projects that were either leaderless avant-garde jazz cooperatives or complicated cross-discipline projects. (These range from his early small bands, like the Revolutionary Ensemble, to his late multimedia operas.) Along the way he built an entire community around him, and here he will be honored with a 50-violin salute, led onstage by the violinist Billy Bang. Vision, 7 p.m., \$30.

Stefano Bollani solo A fine and freewheeling Italian pianist in his mid-30s, Mr. Bollani has come to the crucial understanding that he can find an audience without having to choose among attitudes, influences and styles: deeply playful or serious, ragtime, pop, Prokofiev, Jobim, Keith Jarrett, whatever. He is a particularly good solo performer (as suggested by last year's "Piano Solo," on ECM), so this performance will be a special one. Fazioli Salon at Klavierhaus, 211 West 58th Street, Manhattan, pianoculture.com, 8 p.m., \$25.

Saturday, June 23

Ganelin Trio Led by the Lithuanian pianist Vyacheslav Ganelin, the Ganelin Trio was the modern Soviet jazz group in the 1970s. In the '80s, when the group's recordings started to become known in the West, it became controversial. Full of improvisation and challenge, the music stood for an idea of freedom, yet Mr. Ganelin could never talk about it as such for fear of losing his livelihood. The group broke up in 1987, then re-formed; it has two new members now, the saxophonist Petras Vysniauskas and the drummer Klaus Kugel, and they're still playing highly interactive, tensile music. Vision, 7:30, \$30.

Sunday, June 24

Louis Moholo-Moholo A South African jazz drummer, Mr. Moholo-Moholo was part of the British jazz scene in the mid-'60s as a member of the Blue Notes and the Brotherhood of Breath, living in London and collaborating with South African and English musicians. (He recently returned to South Africa, where he leads a big band.) He's an exemplary modern drummer, in his flexibility between strong swing and a free-rhythm vocabulary, and he's still mostly unknown here: aside from one Vision Festival show six years ago, he hasn't played here since the 1960s. Vision, 9 p.m., \$30.

Monday, June 25

Lee Konitz Mr. Konitz turns 80 in October, and he remains radical, in his own way: He believes that a jazz improviser has to learn the basics, establish his own vocabulary, then try to escape his own patterns as much as possible.

"I feel more concerned with each note than I have ever been before," he said earlier this week. Starting from familiar ground on standards, he works variations on their melodies and can eventually travel toward a kind of sweet and lapidary free improvising.

This birthday concert -- organized by the saxophonist and arranger Ohad Talmor, a frequent collaborator over the last 15 years -- will show the two sides of Mr. Konitz, the improviser and the composer. He'll start off playing loosely and interactively among old friends: the saxophonists Joe Lovano and Ted Brown, the bassist Steve Swallow and the drummer Paul Motian. Then he'll perform his own pieces, arranged by Mr. Talmor, with three other groups: the Lee Konitz New Nonet; the Spring String Quartet, from Linz, Austria; and the Orquestra Jazz Matosinhos, a big band from Porto, Portugal. Zankel Hall, JVC, 8:30 p.m., \$50.

Wednesday, June 27

'Ron Carter: The Master at 70' The bassist Ron Carter, first famous as a member of Miles Davis's mid-1960s quintet and then loosed on the jazz world as a ubiquitous free agent, has played on so many records -- including more than 30 of his own -- that a concert like this seems almost necessary, never mind the fact that he turned 70 last month. He will perform with two other members of that great Davis group, the saxophonist Wayne Shorter and the pianist Herbie Hancock, alongside Billy Cobham on drums; in duet with the guitarist Jim Hall (a good thing, as their rich duet records are underrated); in a trio with the pianist Mulgrew Miller and the guitarist Russell Malone; and with his own quartet. Carnegie Hall, JVC, 8 p.m., \$30 to \$75.

Friday, June 29

Nancy Wilson Ms. Wilson remains an exciting jazz singer, despite the light, low-pressure subtleties of her voice, and even if her records have been treated as a kind of antidote to excitement. (Her hits started showing up on the Billboard easy-listening chart in the mid-'60s, but few can condescend to the casually brilliant album "Cannonball Adderley and Nancy Wilson" or the recently released "Live in Las Vegas.")

She turned 70 in February, and her concert at Carnegie will bring on a plankful of admirers: the singers Dianne Reeves, Kurt Elling and Nnenna Freelon; the violinist Regina Carter; and the pianists Herbie Hancock and Ramsey Lewis.

Ms. Wilson has hardly ever sung a duet with another vocalist, and she says she has been thinking of asking a guest to help her sing her old hit "Guess Who I Saw Today," about catching sight of a cheating spouse. ("Can I fix you a quick martini? As a matter of fact I'll have one with you/For, to tell you the truth, I've had quite a day too.") "I respect that more than any other song," she said the other day. "It just defines what I like to do: to dig in and sing a lyric that's going to hit somebody sentimentally, or even hard." JVC, 8 p.m., \$35 to \$85.

Where It's At

The JVC New York Jazz Festival will run through June 30 at various locations. Full schedule and other information: [festivalproductions.net](http://festivalproductions.net). The Vision Festival will run through June 24 at the Angel Orensanz Foundation for the Arts, 172 Norfolk Street, Lower East Side; [visionfestival.org](http://visionfestival.org).