Montclair State University
JOHN J. CALI SCHOOL OF MUSIC
PRESENTS

MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY

JAZZ ENSEMBLE

Dr. Oscar Perez, *director*

CALI SCHOOL OF MUSIC

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31
8PM
ALEXANDER KASSER THEATER

Daniel Gurskis
Dean, College of the Arts

Shea Scruggs
Director
John J. Cali School of Music

John J. Cali
School of Music
MONTCLAIR
STATE UNIVERSITY

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JAZZ ENSEMBLE

Saxophones

Noah Barr, *Performance, Seattle, WA*

Adam Alvarez, *Jazz Studies, Staten Island, NY*

Kyle Gentile, *Jazz Studies, Ho Ho Kus, NJ*

Will Travis, *Jazz Studies, Hollis, ME*

Theo Parrott, *Jazz Studies, Brisbane, Australia*

Trumpets

Gianna Ciaburri, *Performance, Staten Island, NY*

Myles Twitty, *Jazz Studies, Cincinnati, OH*

Matthew Gabriel Leal, *Jazz Studies, Nogales, AZ*

Jameson Klinsky, *Finance, Jackson, NJ*

Fred Guterl, *Jazz Studies, Bloomfield, NJ*

Trombones

Marin Cowell, *Performance, Clinton, NJ*

Calvin Harper, *Performance, Ridgewood, NJ*

David Laird, *Performance, Milleville, NJ*

James Quinn, *Performance, Brooklyn, NY*

Rhythm Section

Lucy Allen, *Jazz Studies, Havertown, PA - Piano*

Daniel Sokolski, *Jazz Studies, Hawthorne, NJ - Piano*

Trisha Cates, *Jazz Studies, Torrington, WY - Bass*

Emek Demir, *Jazz Studies, Nutley, NJ - Bass*

Jon Schneider, *Jazz Studies, Staten Island, NY – Drums*

MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY JAZZ ENSEMBLE

The **MONTCLAIR STATE JAZZ ENSEMBLE**, under the direction of Jazz Studies coordinator **Dr. Oscar Perez**, is honored to present a varied program of music from Duke Ellington, Alan Ferber, Tony Kadleck, Thad Jones, Chico O'Farrill, Jim McNeely and Oscar Perez. The MSUJE, comprised of majors in Jazz Studies and other music majors, is dedicated to performing music representative of contemporary literature composed for the large jazz ensemble and music of historical importance to the genre.

Since its founding, the MSU Jazz Ensemble has performed with a variety of guest soloists, including long-time friend and colleague David Bixler, the Grammy award-winning leader of the New York Voices, Darmon Meader, trumpeter/arranger Michael Philip Mossman, Grammy-nominated trombonist/composer Alan Ferber, trumpeter/composer John Daversa, trumpeter Ingrid Jensen, saxophonist/composer Ed Palermo, harmonica virtuoso Hendrik Meurkens, percussionist/composer Roland Vazquez, jazz guitar legend Bucky Pizzarelli, Grammy award-winning vocal group New York Voices (2006 Crawford Concert), trumpeters Terell Stafford and Tony Kadleck, saxophonists Don Braden, Dave Demsey, and Andy Fusco, trombonist Tom "Bones" Malone, and vocalist Holli Ross. Along with a concert performance each semester on the MSU campus, the band served as the clinic ensemble for Dennis Mackrel at the 2016 NJAJE Conference, has performed at Cecil's Jazz Club in West Orange, Trumpets Jazz Club in Montclair, Shanghai Jazz in Madison, the Villanova Jazz Festival, and The University of the Arts Jazz Festival, and has appeared locally as guests of the Bloomfield Youth Band and Belleville High School Jazz Festival. Select students have also been chosen to participate in the NJAJE Intercollegiate Jazz Band since the inception of that ensemble twenty years ago.

Our recent Immersive Residencies featured clarinet and saxophone legend Paquito D'Rivera in concert at Merkin Hall as well as our 2025 Crawford Concert, which featured Grammy-nominated vocalist Jazzmeia Horn alongside Jazz Ensemble. In 2023, the MSUJE, along with the MSU Wind Symphony accompanied trumpet legend Arturo Sandoval. In 2022, the MSUJE, Cali's Wind

Symphony, and the University Singers performed at the Metropolitan Museum's Grace Rainey Rogers Concert Hall. In 2021 Crawford Concert featured Vertical Voices alongside our vocal jazz ensemble, Vocamotion. Last year we welcomed trumpet giant Randy Brecker to play alongside our University Jazz Ensemble. Through the Cali School's Immersive Residency Program, our students have had the opportunity to play alongside Pat Metheny, Bela Fleck, Christian McBride, and Wynton Marsalis. We have also featured our amazing faculty Marcus Printup, well-known as a longtime member of the Jazz Lincoln Center Orchestra, along with vocal professor Aubrey Johnson and long-standing guitar faculty member Dave Stryker. Since then, we have showcased faculty members Bruce Williams, Mike Lee, Steve Nelson, Billy Hart, Bill Moring and Steve Johns in concerts at Kasser Theater, the Montclair Jazz Festival and Dizzy's Club Coca-Cola.

BIOGRAPHY

Dr. Oscar Perez

Dr. Oscar Perez, a New York City native, has performed, traveled and recorded in the musical groups of **Phoebe Snow, Lakecia Benjamin, Wycliffe Gordon, Christian McBride, Rudresh Mahanthappa, Charenee Wade, the Mingus Big Band, Dave Stryker, Steve Turre, Eddie Allen, Ted Chubb, Abel Mireles LatiNext Project, Charlie Porter, Roseanna Vitro, Bruce Williams** and **Don Braden.** During his formative years, he shared the bandstand with jazz legends **Bunky Green, George Russell, Dianne Reeves,** and **Curtis Fuller.** He has performed on many of the world's famous stages, including the Kennedy Center, the New Jersey Performing Arts Center, the Blue Note, the Jazz Standard, Detroit, Monterey, and Newport Jazz Festivals, and the festival circuit throughout Europe, Asia, South America, and Australia.

He is the recipient of the 2006 **ASCAP/IAJE Composition Commission** in honor of **Billy Strayhorn.** Oscar's group, featuring **Antonio Hart**, premiered the work at the 2007 International Association of Jazz Education Convention. He has also been commissioned to arrange music for **Chick Corea, Regina Carter, Bela Fleck, Arturo Sandoval,** R&B vocalist **Jon B,** and the **MSM Jazz Orchestra** featuring **Sean Jones**. He has been a member of the BMI Composer's Workshop, writing for Studio Orchestra, Big Band, and performing concerts of original compositions for large ensembles.

His critically acclaimed CD **Afropean Affair** is the result of a New Works Grant by **Chamber Music America** for his septet, **Oscar Perez Nuevo Comienzo.** He placed 2nd in the 2014 Jacksonville Jazz Piano Competition. His latest endeavor, **Prepare a Place for Me**, is available through all media outlets.

Perez earned a Doctorate in Jazz Arts Advancement from the Manhattan School of Music under the tutelage of **Stefon Harris, Ingrid Jensen,** and **Jim McNeely.** Previous studies at the New England Conservatory, University of North Florida, and the Aaron Copland School of Music at Queens College gave him the opportunity to serve under the guidance of **Danilo Perez, Michael Mossman**, and S**ir Roland Hanna,** respectively. Perez has served on adjudication panels for ASCAP and Chamber Music America. He has been an educator through Carnegie Hall, the Kupferberg Center at Queens College, Jazz House Kids in Montclair, Jazz at Lincoln Center, and the New Jersey Association for Jazz Education. In 2023, he directed the NJ All-State Jazz Ensemble with a culminating concert at NJPAC. He has held faculty positions at Drew University and the Manhattan School of Music. Dr. Perez is Coordinator of Jazz Studies at the **Cali School of Music at Montclair State University** in Montclair, NJ

PROGRAM

Program to be selected from the following:

Blues in Hoss' Flat (as played by the Count Basie Orchestra)
Composed and arranged by Frank Foster

Boom Boom
Composed and arranged by Bob Brookmeyer

Butter (as played by the Thad Jones Mel Lewis Orchestra)
Composed by Thad Jones
Arranged by Jerry Dodgion

Don't Git Sassy (as played by the Thad Jones Mel Lewis Orchestra)
Composed and arranged by Thad Jones

PROGRAM *(cont.)*

Program to be selected from the following:

Easy Money (as played by the Clayton-Hamilton Orchestra)
Composed by Benny Carter
Arranged by John Clayton

Esy
Composed and arranged by Tito Puente

Oye Me
Composed by Félix Reyna
Arranged by Machito

Paseo Promenade (as played by the Count Basie Orchestra)
Composed and arranged by Benny Carter

Peggy's Blue Skylight
Composed by Charles Mingus
Arranged by Ronnie Cuber

Purple Gazelle (as played by the Duke Ellington Orchestra)
Composed and arranged by Duke Ellington

Sky Blue
Composed and arranged by Maria Schneider

Skylark (as played by the Thad Jones Mel Lewis Orchestra)
Composed by Hoagy Carmichael
Arranged by Bob Brookmeyer

Summer in Central Park
Composed by Horace Silver
Arranged by Gavin Ard

THE HOLLI ROSS FUND FOR JAZZ STUDIES

The Holli Ross Fund for Jazz Studies has been established to promote professionalism in jazz studies and is inspired by Holli Ross' unwavering dedication to the next generation of jazz artists. Donations will directly fund scholarships and endeavors to help our students realize their full potential.

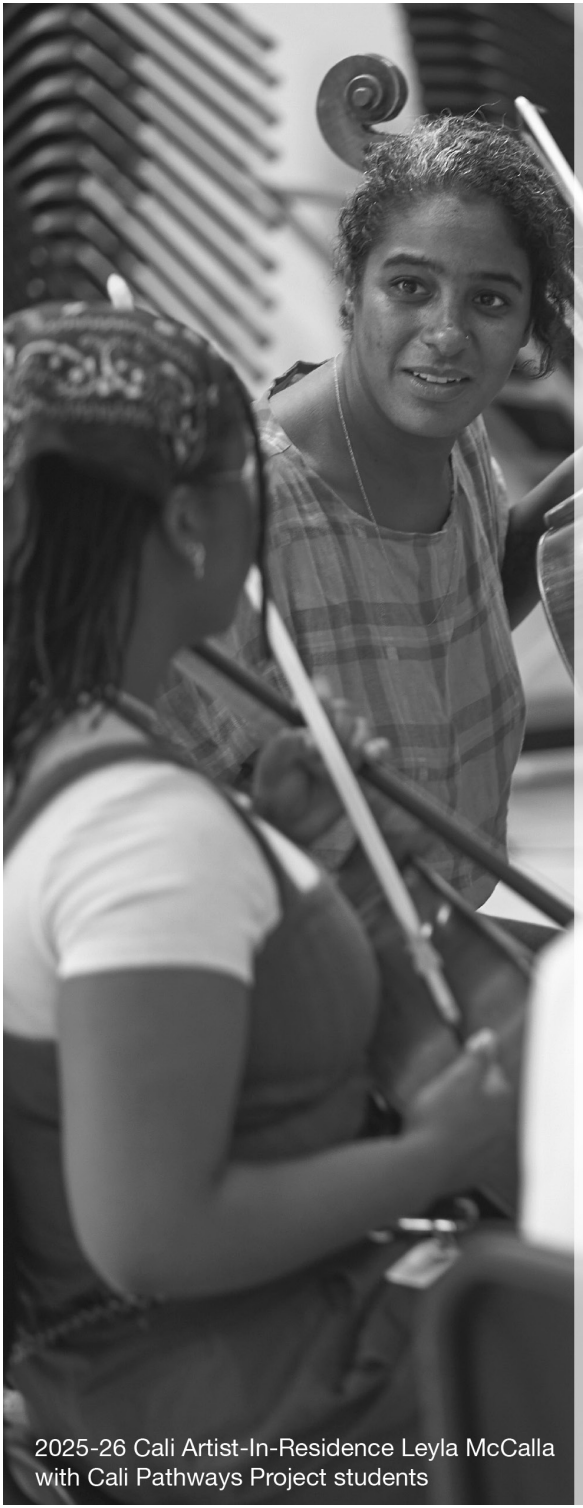
Holli Ross was the consummate student with a vision and found ways to learn what was required to bring that vision to fruition - even if in nontraditional ways. When Holli was earning her Bachelor's degree in bassoon performance from The Mannes College of Music, the field of jazz vocal studies did not formally exist. Following her interests, she asked if she could join an instrumental jazz class run by pianist Jack Reilly. He agreed and warned her that he'd treat her like any other instrumentalist. Later, she was tutored by saxophonist Warne Marsh, who also pushed her beyond the usual vocal requirements.

For thirteen years, Holli brought that same rigor and heart to her work as a faculty member of Montclair State University's John J. Cali School of Music, and it is a befitting channel through which her legacy will inspire the making of jazz by generations to come. Holli taught applied jazz voice and directed the jazz vocal ensemble, Vocamotion.

Words from the late **Holli Ross**:

"To be a singer is a special gift, because the voice reaches out to the most primal musical instincts in people. I don't just get to sing the beautiful melody, I get to tell the beautiful story…or sometimes, a story that ain't so pretty. My reward will always be the coming together of musical minds on the bandstand and the feeling that I am touching the heart of a listener."

Please consider a donation to this special fund by scanning the QR code



2025-26 Cali Artist-In-Residence Leyla McCalla with Cali Pathways Project students

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Cali **Scholarship Fund**

Your support helps bring the Cali experience to life, creating opportunities for students to learn, perform, collaborate, and grow as artists. Every gift strengthens the programs, performances, scholarships, and experiences that make our musical community distinctive while helping ensure that future generations can find their place at Cali.

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