

October 1 to 8, 2023

# Amelia Island Jazz Festival



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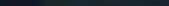
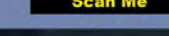
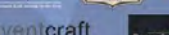
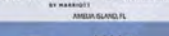
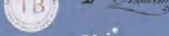
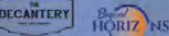


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Celebrating 20 years  
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on Amelia Island

## Festival Program



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## Get Jazzed at the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Amelia Island Jazz Festival

The 20th annual Amelia Island Jazz Festival promises explosive concerts filled with captivating swinging jazz, delivered by today's top jazz talents with unmatched passion and soul. Our remarkable history boasts headliners like the John Pizzarelli Trio, Steve March-Tormé, Delfeayo Marsalis, Jamil Sharif, Requinte Trio with Janis Siegel, Henry Johnson, Néstor Torres, Bria Skonberg, Houston Person, Kevin Mahogany, Larry Coryell, Randy Brecker, Tony Monaco, Mindy Abair, Royal Crown Revue, Spyro Gyra, David Benoit, Buckwheat Zydeco, Ramsey Lewis, David Sanborn, Christian Tamburr, Harry Allen, Marcus Printup, Richie Cole, Frank Tiberi, the Woody Herman Sax Section, the 19-piece US Navy Big Band Southeast, and the Dynamic Les DeMerle Band featuring vocalist Bonnie Eisele.

This year, we're thrilled to feature the world-renowned Manhattan Transfer on their Farewell Tour, commemorating their 50th Anniversary. They continue to set the global standard as an innovative vocal powerhouse. Additionally, we welcome back the Latin Grammy award-winning flautist Néstor Torres, ready to mesmerize the audience once more. Saturday brings the pride of the festival, 9-time Grammy nominated vocalist Tierney Sutton and her band.

But the excitement doesn't end there. We're diving into the groove with the LPT Salsa Orchestra, the Southeast's new Salsa music ambassadors. Plus, there will be so much more during the 8 days of world-class jazz on Amelia Island.



Les DeMerle & John Pizzarelli at the 2022 AIJF

*Join us in celebrating the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of The Amelia Island Jazz Festival – it's going to be an unforgettable experience.*

**ARE YOU READY?**

*Les DeMerle*

Artistic Director, Amelia Island Jazz Festival

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# 2023 Amelia Island Jazz Festival Board of Directors



**Les DeMerle**  
President & Artistic  
Director  
(middle)

**Bonnie Eisele**  
Vice President  
(2<sup>nd</sup> right)

**Suzanne McLeod**  
Secretary  
(2<sup>nd</sup> left)

**Chris Twiggs**  
Treasurer  
(right)

**Johnnie Robinson**  
Director  
(left)

## The Mission of the Amelia Island Jazz Festival

As a not for profit 501(c)(3) corporation, the Les DeMerle Amelia Island Jazz Festival distributes proceeds toward a scholarship program to fund college educations for aspiring jazz musicians and works to provide a rich, diverse jazz offering to the Amelia Island area.

It is doing this by offering educational programs and jazz workshops in area schools and senior centers and promoting Amelia Island as a tourist destination by drawing jazz enthusiasts from around the nation and the world.

## A Special "Thank You" to our Volunteer Committee Chairs

**Ann Burtha**  
Volunteer Coordinator

**Dawn Lunt**  
Tickets / Ushers

**Lynne Ruppel & Mary McGurn**  
Fundraising

**Kathy DeCou**  
Merchandising

**Michael Rothschild**  
Promotion & Publicity

## Proclamation

**WHEREAS**, for many years the Les DeMerle Amelia Island Jazz Festival has brought exciting world-class jazz entertainment to Fernandina Beach in styles including Contemporary, Big Band, Latin, Swing, Dixieland, Blues and more; and

**WHEREAS**, this year, the Amelia Island Jazz Festival is celebrating its 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary featuring headlining performers which include ten-time Grammy Award-winning vocal group, The Manhattan Transfer, internationally acclaimed flautist, Néstor Torres, nine-time Grammy nominated Tierney Sutton Band, exciting LPT 10-piece Salsa Orchestra, the twenty-one-piece University of North Florida Jazz Ensemble Two directed by Dennis Marks, the Spare Rib Six Dixieland Band, and the Dynamic Les DeMerle Band featuring Bonnie Eisele. It is truly an honor and a privilege to have these world-class performers among us; and

**WHEREAS**, the Amelia Island Jazz Festival is endorsed by jazz icons Wynton Marsalis, Tony Bennett, David Sanborn and Ramsey Lewis; and

**WHEREAS**, in an effort to reach out to as many concert goers as possible, the Amelia Island Jazz Festival is offering a wide range of concert venues including the Courtyard Amelia Island/SpringHill Suites by Marriott, First Baptist Church, Sadler Ranch, The Decantery, Mocama Beer Company, and the Fernandina Beach Atlantic Avenue Recreation Center; and

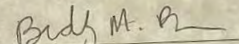
**WHEREAS**, the Amelia Island Jazz Festival presents a free community concert and many educational programs including Jazz In The Schools, Jazz For Kids, Jazz For Seniors, as well as a Scholarship Program which supports continuing music education for high school musicians who desire to study jazz music in college.

**NOW THEREFORE**, I, Bradley M. Bean, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the City of Fernandina Beach, Florida, do hereby encourage the citizens of Fernandina Beach to participate in the Amelia Island Jazz Festival celebrations and further proclaim the week of October 1 through October 8, 2023, as:

### "Les DeMerle Amelia Island Jazz Festival Week"

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I hereunto set my hand and cause the Official Seal of the City of Fernandina Beach, Florida to be affixed this 19th day of September, 2023.

CITY OF FERNANDINA BEACH

  
Bradley M. Bean  
Mayor - Commissioner





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**Pierre Laporte, CPA**

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\* If your name is not mentioned and/or if you joined after our printing deadline, note that all of us are grateful to you as well and we look forward to seeing you at the Volunteer Party.

## Special Thanks ...

*to people and organizations who so generously contributed their time and expertise to the Amelia Island Jazz Festival*

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Amelia Island Wine Company	FSU Jazz Ensemble 2	Mariela Murphy
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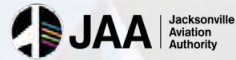
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In order to fulfill its potential, the Amelia Island Jazz Festival must raise funds to sustain growth. To facilitate fund raising, the Festival seeks sponsorship from corporations and individuals.

### Concert Venues



The Atlantic Recreation Center



The 2022 Jazz & Wine Tasting at the Decantery

### Lodging Partners



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Jazz Photo by John Parr



The Manhattan Transfer has achieved an incomparable career of pop and jazz hits, a legacy that defines the group as it celebrates its 50th Anniversary. The legendary quartet has won 10 Grammy Awards out of 20 nominations and has been inducted into the Vocal Group Hall of Fame.

With their current release *FIFTY* (Concord/Craft Recordings), the group has earned its 21st Grammy nomination, this one for Best Jazz Vocal Album! The London review of their SOLD OUT show on Nov. 24th heralded the group:

“The musicianship is breathtakingly good – their intricate close-harmony singing is stunning, the arrangements top-notch. And they make it look so easy, which it isn’t.” Recorded with the WDR Funkhausorchester during the pandemic, on two continents, the music celebrates their many transitions, recognizing their musicality and versatility – they treated pop tunes like jazz tunes and jazz tunes like pop! Their inductions this year into the East Coast Music Hall of Fame and the Vocal Music Hall of Fame recognized their incredible history.

In 1981, they became the first group ever to win Grammys in both Pop and Jazz categories in the same year – Best Pop Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocal for “Boy From New York City” and Best Jazz Performance for Duo or Group for “Until I Met You (Corner Pocket).” The dozen Grammy nominations they received for their Vocalese album in 1985 were second to Michael Jackson’s *Thriller* as the most nominated album in one year.

Their dynamic performances and sense of style have led them to become one of

the most iconic music groups in the world. With their enduring creativity, energy, and joy in their music, the group has joined the pantheon of the entertainment industry. Recognized for their unique sound, The Manhattan Transfer has also recorded with an impressive array of artists, including Tony Bennett, Bette Midler, Smokey Robinson, Laura Nyro, Phil Collins, B.B. King, Chaka Khan, James Taylor, and Frankie Valli.

The group was born when Tim Hauser was paying his bills as a New York City cab driver. He aspired to form a vocal harmony quartet that could authentically embrace a variety of musical styles and still create something unique in American popular music. In his taxi he met the next members of the group – Laurel Massé and Janis Siegel. Alan Paul, who was appearing in the Broadway cast of *Grease* at the time, was recommended as an additional male voice. The four of them became The Manhattan Transfer on October 1st, 1972.

Soon after their inception, the group began performing regularly throughout New York City – at underground clubs including Trude Heller’s, the Mercer Arts Center, Max’s Kansas City, Club 82, and other cabaret venues. Quickly, they were the number one live attraction in Manhattan. They were signed to Atlantic Records and released their self-titled debut album in 1975. The second single from that album, a cover of the gospel classic “Operator,” gave the group its first national hit. More hits, like “The Boy From New York City,” “Twilight Zone/Twilight Tone,” followed. The vocal remake of the jazz classic “Birdland” became the group’s anthem and earned them their first two Grammy Awards.

Cheryl Bentyne joined The Manhattan Transfer in 1979, replacing Laurel. Trist Curless became a member of the group in 2014. Together, Janis, Alan, Cheryl, and Trist have remained true to the integrity and artistry left to them by founding member Tim Houser, who passed away in 2014.

The group has released 19 singles and 29 albums over their incredible career and their music has been widely featured in major films and television shows. Their 50th Anniversary celebration will see the release of *FIFTY*, the new album, and a 5-disc historic CD boxed set.

With sold-out world tours and record sales in the millions, The Manhattan Transfer continues to bring unique and extraordinary melodic and jazz-infused vocals to new and established audiences, spanning generations.







# Néstor Torres

*Flautist*

Néstor Torres, the accomplished flautist from Puerto Rico, has left an indelible mark on the world of music through his remarkable journey. With a background spanning classical, jazz, and Cuban dance music, Torres stands as a testament to the transcendence of musical boundaries.

Born in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, Torres embarked on a musical odyssey that would see him master the flute across diverse genres. His journey began with classical flute studies at New York City's Mannes School of Music. However, Torres sought to expand his horizons, diving into jazz at Berklee College of Music and further embracing both classical and jazz at the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston.

During this period, Torres made a pivotal decision to immerse himself in the 'Charanga' Cuban dance music style. This choice significantly influenced his musical identity, infusing it with a melodic and irresistibly danceable quality.

Torres' musical journey yielded impressive results, including 14 solo recordings, 4 Latin Grammy nominations, one Grammy nomination, and the coveted Latin Grammy Award. His discography showcases a fusion of Latin, classical, jazz, and pop influences, resulting in a rich and engaging tapestry of sound.

What sets Néstor Torres apart is not just his studio achievements but also his captivating live performances. His stage presence and ability to create immersive musical experiences reaffirm his status as a force to be reckoned with in the world of jazz flute. Collaborations with artists like Gloria Estefan, Kenny Loggins, Dave Matthews, Herbie Hancock, Tito Puente, Michel Camilo, Paquito D' Rivera, and Arturo Sandoval highlight his versatility and ability to harmonize with diverse musical sensibilities.

Additionally, Torres' orchestral performances with prestigious ensembles like the Cleveland, Singapore, and New World Symphony Orchestras demonstrate the depth of his musicality and the universal appeal of his flute artistry.

A pivotal moment in Torres' career was winning the Latin Grammy for his album "This Side Of Paradise" in the Pop instrumental category. The timing of this achievement, scheduled for September 11, 2001, proved to be poignant, showcasing his music's ability to transcend boundaries and offer solace during times of global turmoil.

Beyond his accomplishments as a musician, Néstor Torres has become an agent of change, using his talents to bridge cultures and promote understanding. His compositions, including "Successors," "Marta y Maria," and "Disarmament Suite," commissioned by institutions such as the Miami Children's Chorus, St. Martha-Yamaha Concert Series, and ICAP (International Committee of Artists for Peace), reflect his commitment to multicultural fusion as a means of expressing the complex tapestry of today's world.

Néstor Torres' contributions extend beyond music. He has been recognized for his dedication to youth, education, and cultural exchanges, receiving two honorary doctorate degrees from Barry University and Carlos Albizu University.

In the words of Ralph A. Mirello from the Huffington Post, Néstor Torres is undeniably a remarkable player, and his "live" recordings serve as a testament to the excitement and joy he generates through his music. For anyone who loves jazz flute or seeks to explore the rich repertoire of jazz flute traditions, Néstor Torres is a must-have experience.

Néstor Torres' rhythmic and mellifluous flute sound stands apart in the world of music, showcasing the power of artistic expression to transcend boundaries and enrich lives. His journey exemplifies the limitless possibilities of musical exploration and the enduring impact of an artist dedicated to breaking down barriers through the universal language of music.







# Tierney Sutton Band

Vocals

An 8-time Grammy nominee, Sutton has received 7 consecutive nominations for “Best Jazz Vocal Album” - a nomination for every project she has released for the last decade. In 2013 she released *After Blue*, a jazz-inspired re-imagining of the legacy of Joni Mitchell. The album received wide acclaim and was Sutton’s breakout as a leader without her longtime Band, and features Al Jarreau, Hubert Laws, Peter Erskine, Larry Goldings, Mark Summer, Kevin Axt, Serge Merlaud and The Turtle Island String Quartet.

With a recording and touring history spanning over 20 years and 9 CDs, The Tierney Sutton Band, “TSB” has traveled a rare path. Comprised of Sutton and instrumental virtuosos C. V. Dashiell,

Trey Henry and Christian Jacob, the band functions as a true collaborative (and legally incorporated) unit and makes all musical as well as business decisions as partners. In 2011 the TSB received a Grammy nomination for its collaborative arranging, the only collaborative team ever to receive that honor.

“A serious jazz artist who takes the whole enterprise to another level”

~ The New York Times

Their discography is thematic and rich and past TSB projects have addressed: *Americana* (American Road, 2011) *Materialism* (Desire, 2009), *The Pursuit of Happiness* (On The Other Side, 2007), as well as the musical legacies of Bill Evans (*Blue in Green*, 2001) and Frank Sinatra (*Dancing in The Dark*, 2003). Along these same lines, TSB released a new recording in Fall 2016, *The Sting Variations*. In addition to this, Christian Jacob and TSB scored

the original music for Clint Eastwood’s feature film “Sully”, starring Tom Hanks and Laura Linney. The film premiered on September 9, 2016.

Tierney has headlined in recent years at The Hollywood Bowl, Carnegie Hall, The Kennedy Center and Jazz At Lincoln Center. She can also be heard on film and television soundtracks including that of The Academy Award-nominated film “The Cooler” as well as on television commercials (BMW, Green Giant, Yoplait Yogurt, Coke)

When she is off the road, Tierney is in demand as both a producer and vocal educator. She taught for over a decade at USC’s Thornton School of Music and served for 5 years as Vocal Department Head at The Los Angeles College of Music in Pasadena, CA where she created a new curriculum for vocalists of all genres. Tierney has taught and mentored some of music’s finest new generation of singers including Gretchen Parlato and Sara Gazarek.

“With certain singers, it’s possible to pinpoint the specific recordings that marked the transition from great to iconic. As with Ella Fitzgerald’s Songbooks for Norman Granz or Frank Sinatra’s initial teaming with Nelson Riddle at Capital, Tierney Sutton’s sixth disc is her passport into the classic... Sutton’s brilliance is her ability to blend seamlessly with the three superlative bandmates - pianist Christian Jacob, bassist Trey Henry (here alternating with Kevin Axt) and drummer Ray Brinker - who have been integral to her escalating success for more than a decade. Providing a continuous flow of support, strength and inspiration, they are her Granz, her Riddle.”

~ Jazz Times







## Les DeMerle

*Drums / Vocals*

Les, a native of Brooklyn, NY, launched his career at age 16 as drummer for jazz vibraphone great, Lionel Hampton. He toured for 12 years with jazz trumpet master, Harry James, and recorded three albums with him including the Grammy Award winning, “King James Version”. Les’ own jazz/rock/fusion band, Transfusion, recorded five award-winning LPs. He has toured with The Manhattan Transfer and appeared with such musical greats as Lou Rawls, Sammy Davis, Jr., Frank Sinatra, Mel Tormé, and Joe Williams. A resident of Amelia Island since 1991, Les continues to perform at concerts, festivals and Jazz cruises with his trio, quartet and Dynamic Les DeMerle Big Band Orchestra featuring Bonnie Eisele. They have recorded 16 CDs including the new release, *SOUND 67 Once In a Lifetime* on Origin Records.

As an author, Les has written two best-selling educational drum books: “Jazz/Rock Fusion, Volumes I and II”, published by Hal Leonard. In addition he produced a two-part instructional drum videos, “Jazz Drum Set Applications, Parts I & II”, to impart his extensive knowledge to drummers

around the world. He extends his teachings via private in-person and on-line lessons and ongoing appearances at drum clinics nationwide.

In 2001, Les’ longtime dream of creating a diversified jazz festival on Amelia Island came to fruition. He and his wife Bonnie produced the Festival for three years prior to its incorporation as a non-profit 501(c) 3 tax exempt organization. With the help of generous sponsors and hardworking volunteers, the Amelia Island Jazz Festival has grown into an event which attracts major jazz artists and attendees from across the country. But Les insists there will be more. “We’re still growing” he says, “and we continue towards our goal of building the festival into a nationally recognized annual event.”

**“Les DeMerle is the best all-around drummer I’ve ever had, and that’s saying a lot when you remember that Buddy Rich and Louis Bellson manned that post before him.”**

*~Harry James, World famous trumpeter and bandleader*



## Bonnie Eisele

*Vocals*

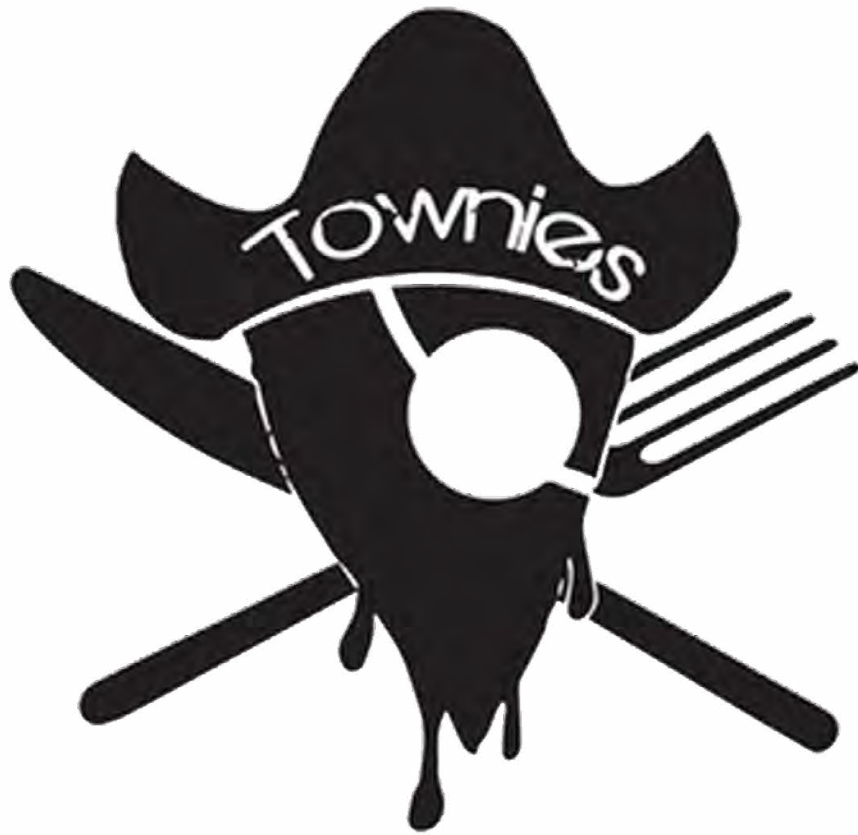
A native of Chicago suburb Naperville, Illinois, vocalist and recording artist, Bonnie Eisele, began her career singing in community theater productions. She continued her studies of music and voice at the University of Illinois, Champaign, where she starred in musical plays in the University Theatre while majoring in speech/speech therapy. After graduation she toured the United States and Europe with The Chicago Free Street Theater, an original musical theater and dance group. Returning to Chicago, Bonnie became vice president and sales representative of a jingle company and also sang on many local and national television commercials including spots for United Airlines, KFC, and Hallmark Greeting Cards.

Bonnie’s diverse performing experience includes singing at the Chicago Playboy Club, Chicago Fest, Drury Lane Theater and Miami’s Fontainebleau Resort. She studied music and dance in Brazil on a Rotary Foundation Graduate Fellowship.

Wife of Les DeMerle, Bonnie is the featured vocalist with the Dynamic Les DeMerle Band, from trio to 17-piece orchestra, currently appearing in Jazz Clubs, concerts, festivals, corporate engagements and as a guest entertainer on cruise ships. She has performed with Les DeMerle at many popular jazz clubs including Somerset’s in Singapore, City Jazz in Orlando, The Jazz Corner in Hilton Head, Arturo Sandoval’s in Miami, Breezy Jazz House in Jacksonville and Venice Jazz Club in Italy.

Bonnie has recorded 15 studio and live CDs as featured vocalist for the Dynamic Les DeMerle Band. She is admirably comfortable with a wide range of material in four languages. Her extensive and tasteful repertoire transcends all forms of jazz artistry, from Swing to Latin. No matter the type of song, Bonnie injects a distinctive and soulful style into its performance.





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## LPT Salsa Orchestra

*Latin Jazz*

LPT, a dynamic 10-piece band hailing from Jacksonville, FL, is all about high energy. Over the past four years, they've electrified stages across the Southeast, from New Orleans to Atlanta and Savannah, making festival appearances their norm. Lead vocalist Josue A. Cruz notes the upgrade in dressing rooms, humorously implying their growing success. Opening for Santana and Trombone Shorty expanded their reach.

Now, LPT is ready to conquer the music world with their debut album, "Sin Parar," featuring nine original compositions ranging from intricate to jaw-dropping salsa. This album promises to captivate both seasoned salsa enthusiasts and newcomers alike.

In June 2015, LPT debuted in a small Riverside coffee shop in Jacksonville, wowing the standing-room-only crowd. Monthly gigs at Rain Dogs followed, but the demand outgrew the venue. Early fans shared tips on where to stand and dance during packed shows. LPT's growth led to a full ten-piece orchestra, with bigger stages beckoning.

Their infectious energy transcends Jacksonville, spreading to St. Augustine and Gainesville. Requests from even farther away are pouring in. Despite the logistical challenges of a ten-piece band, LPT embraces their role as salsa ambassadors, bridging cultural divides. They believe that dance and joy belong to everyone and aim to promote freedom, love, and inclusion through salsa music.

As for the mysterious name "LPT," its meaning remains undisclosed. Some say it's simply three letters side by side, while others offer more playful interpretations. Regardless, LPT will continue to champion salsa music and the Afro-Cuban sound's roots.

### **MEMBERS:**

Milan Algood – Timbales, Vocals  
Jonah Pierre – Bongo & Bell  
Josué A. Cruz – Lead Vocals  
Stan Piper - Bass  
Angel D. Garcia – Keys, Vocals  
Juan Carlos Rollan – Tenor Sax, Vocals  
Mike Emmert – Baritone Sax  
Juan Pablo Salvat - Congas  
Bryant Patterson – Trombone  
Steve Strawley - Trumpet



# The Dynamic Les DeMerle



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## UNF Jazz Ensemble 2

Dennis Marks, Assistant Professor of Jazz Bass, is the conductor of this elite jazz band at the University of North Florida. The performance repertoire of this 21-piece University of North Florida Jazz Ensemble is quite varied. The material chosen is from all idioms of big band jazz, including swing, bop, funk, and fusion. This ensemble is consistently joined by high-quality players, realizing a wide variety of sound colors and textures. The UNF Jazz Ensemble 2 has played at several important venues over the last few years and has the honor of being the opening act for the featured spring artist in the Great American Jazz Series and once again they kick off the 20th AIJF with great style and energy.



UNF Jazz Ensemble 2



Lawrence Buckner - Bass

## Lawrence Buckner

Lawrence Buckner is a graduate of Edward Waters College, Magna cum Laude with a degree in Biology/pre med. He is a US Army Veteran and served in Panama, speaks several languages and is a world traveler. He is the former musical director for the Ritz Theatre & Museum in Jacksonville, FL. He has performed and written for an array of national artists and enjoys sharing his craft by teaching others.

## Rob Chapman

Rob Chapman received a Bachelor of Music degree from Valdosta State University in 1999. After graduation, he traveled the world as a Music Director and bandleader for Royal Caribbean Cruise lines for 5 years. Now on dry land, this St. Augustine, FL based saxophonist can be seen performing with the Satin Swing Orchestra, Florida Jazz Plus, The TBA Bigband, numerous Broadway musicals and his own Quartet throughout the state. Rob has performed with the top names in jazz such as Kurt Elling, Jane Monheit, Maceo Parker and Dave Brubeck. Rob has also shared the stage with the Temptations, The Four Tops, Johnny Mathis, Martina McBride and George Clinton to name a few.



Rob Chapman - Saxophone





Terry "Doc" Handy - Percussion

## Terry "Doc" Handy

Born and raised in Jacksonville, FL – Doc credits his older brother's love for the piano for driving him to become a musician. Doc has played percussion for over 30 years over a diverse array of genres including Rhythm & Blues, Jazz, and Latin Jazz. He has performed globally in Europe, Korea, and Panama and was also selected as the opening act for many greats including James Brown, Aaron Neville, Macy Gray, Kool and the Gang, Kirk Whalum, Brian Culbertson, and EL Gran Combo.

## Joe DeRenzo

Joseph Peter DeRenzo is an American jazz drummer, composer, producer, lyricist, arranger, actor and photographer, currently living and working in New York City. In October 1987, he joined the Screen Actors Guild where he remains a member. January 2005, DeRenzo recorded his first CD entitled *Of Night and Day* with longtime friend and jazz pianist Tom Zink. DeRenzo has worked with Nile's Project to help stop MRSA through public awareness concerts featuring his Beatles tribute band "Joe DeRenzo & Friends, a jazzy tribute to The Beatles".



Joe DeRenzo - Drums

## Marvin Ferebee

Marvin Ferebee, a seasoned freelance lead trumpet player, boasts a remarkable career collaborating with industry giants. He's shared the stage with luminaries such as Barry Manilow, Ray Charles, Rosemary Clooney, Aretha Franklin, and many more. His trumpet journey began at 13, and he was later named outstanding instrumentalist in high school. Following graduation, he pursued higher education with a music scholarship before serving in the US Air Force TAC Headquarters Band, touring across the eastern United States and Canada.



Marvin Ferebee - Trumpet

## Clarence Hines

As a performer, Clarence has had the opportunity to perform and tour with musicians such as Johnny Mathis, Josh Groban, The Temptations, The O'Jays, Johnny Rivera, Hector Tricoche, John Pizzarelli, Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra and the Harry James Orchestra. In addition to performing all across the U.S., Clarence's musical endeavors have taken him around the world – from Canada to Panama, France to Russia. He can be heard as a sideman on various recordings on labels such as Origin and Sea Breeze. As a composer and arranger, Clarence has written works for various ensembles ranging from large and small jazz ensembles to studio orchestras. Clarence served as trombonist in the U.S. Army's famed 82nd Airborne Division Band and the 79th Army Band.



Clarence Hines - Trombone

## Jim Malmgren

Jim joined the United States Navy as a musician/trumpeter in 1984. He studied trumpet with Jazz legends Bobby Shew, Wayne Bergeron, Charley Davis, Steve Dillard, Gary Pack, and Eric Miyashiro. Jim performed on stage with Jon Faddis, Jeff Tyzik, Eric Miyashiro's EM Big Band, Tom Pierson Big Band, Les DeMerle Big Band, The Fabulous Equinox Orchestra, Ben Vereen, The Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra, just to mention a few.



Jim Malmgren - Trumpet

## Dennis Marks

Dennis Marks has been playing bass with Arturo Sandoval for many years and has performed on Sandoval's last six recordings, including the Grammy award winning *Hot-House*. Dennis also has performed with such jazz greats as Dizzy Gillespie, Dave Liebman, Bob Mintzer, Maynard Ferguson, and Pat Metheny. He has played at many major jazz festivals in recent years, including the JVC Festival in New York, the Playboy Festival in Los Angeles, and the North Sea Festival in Holland.

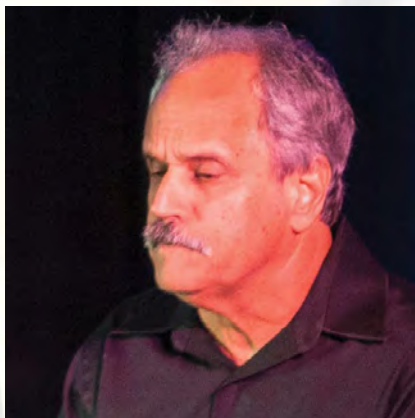


Dennis Marks - Bass



## Mike Levine

Pianist, Mike Levine, is a man of many talents whose career is a blend of different aspects of music. He attended the University of Miami where he studied piano with Vince Maggio. While at UM, Mike formed a group with Billy Ross. They released their first album *That Summer Something* in 1981, which featured Pat Metheny as a guest artist. Mike wrote the majority of the band's compositions. The recording earned national recognition and stayed on the top ten contemporary jazz charts for six weeks. Subsequently they recorded *Humidity* which also did well. The Ross-Levine Band was the opening act for Michael Franks, Gato Barbieri, Dionne Warwick, and many others. Mike also recorded three well received CD's that were on the top of the Smooth Jazz Charts, *From The Heart*, *Thinking of You*, *Star Gazing*, and *Just Chillin'*. Mike has been a member of the Les DeMerle Band and Orchestra for many years. He also works closely with Les creating many of the Band's arrangements.



Mike Levine - Piano

## Doug Matthews

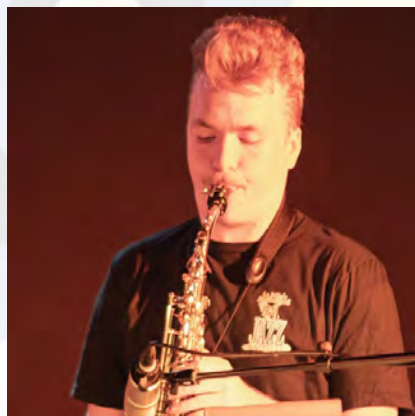
Doug has performed with Louie Bellson, Randy Brecker, Dizzy Gillespie, Branford Marsalis, James Moody, Percy Sledge, Dennis Yost and the Dynamic Les DeMerle Big Band. He is an active composer and arranger, and several of his compositions and arrangements have been recorded by various artists. Doug also is director of the piano program at LaVilla School of the Arts in Jacksonville. Doug is one of the most exciting pianists to perform with Les and Bonnie. He always adds fire to the performances.



Doug Matthews - Piano

## Ajax McDonell

Ajax McDonell is a young jazz musician from Ocala, Florida, who is studying at the University of North Florida. He is currently playing lead alto saxophone in JE1, UNF's premier big band. Ajax has been performing and studying various jazz styles such as swing, bebop, Blues, Bossa Nova, funk and more for nearly a decade. He has previously been featured in the Les DeMerle band alongside Dr. Bill Prince and Bonnie Eisele. He has also studied under the incredible jazz talents of Todd DelGiudice, Lynne Arriale, Dennis Marks, and Scott Giddons.



Ajax McDonell - Saxophone

## Longineu Parsons II

Parsons has been hailed internationally as being one of the world's finest trumpet players. He is also a master of recorders, flute, percussion, and sings the blues. His music crosses genres and defies classification. He played the role of Louis Armstrong in the Natl. Production of "Satchmo". Dr. Parsons has performed in over thirty countries in North, South and Central America, Europe, Asia, the Middle East and Africa, appearing before such dignitaries as the King of Morocco, the President of Gabon, the Royal Family of the Netherlands, The Royal Family of Monaco and for UNESCO and more.



Longineu Parsons - Trumpeter/Composer

## Bill Prince

Dr. Bill Prince is a professor emeritus of music at the University of North Florida and holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree with a major in Theory and Composition from the University of Miami. His compositions and arrangements have been performed and/or recorded by jazz ensembles throughout the United States and Canada. Music has taken him to all 50 states and approximately 75 countries. One of Bill's most unique talents is his ability to perform professionally on several instruments including trumpet, flugelhorn, trombone, flute, clarinet, saxophone, piano, and electric bass. He also produced



Bill Prince Multi Instruments

his own CD, *Happy Thoughts*, on which he composed, arranged and performed all parts. Dr. Bill Prince was inducted into the Jacksonville Jazz Festival Hall of Fame for his contribution to jazz education and his legacy as a performer and supporter of jazz in Jacksonville.

## Cameron Strine

Trombonist Cameron Strine is an active musician in the Jacksonville area performing regularly in a variety of groups including big bands, combos, and orchestral settings. Cameron spent several years in New York City studying music and performing with many of the city's top musicians. He holds a Bachelor of Music from UNF and a Master of Music from the Manhattan School of Music. While in New York, Cameron was an active teacher, running his own private music studio and teaching music at several NYC public schools.



Cameron Strine - Trombone



# PARK WEST GALLERY



**Title:** 2023 Amelia Island Jazz Festival  
**Artist:** Kostabi, Mark  
[www.parkwestgallery.com](http://www.parkwestgallery.com)

## Matt Vance

Matt Vance is one of the top-call professional woodwind performers in Florida and the southeast United States. He is a member of seven-time Grammy-nominated recording artists Chuck Owen and the Jazz Surge, performs regularly with the Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra, and has performed with many name artists throughout his career, including Aretha Franklin, Gladys Knight, Barry Manilow, Martina McBride, Olivia Newton-John, Debbie Reynolds, The Temptations and Ben Vereen.



*Matt Vance - Saxophone*

## Joe Watts



*Joe Watts - Trombone/Vocals*

Joe Watts studied music at Florida A+M University. He was a musician and assistant arranger at Busch Gardens and later at Walt Disney in Orlando, FL. While living in Sweden he performed with many European and American artists. He wrote for and performed with artists as Diane Schuur, Dr. Lonnie Smith, Nat Adderly, The O'Jays, Longineau Parsons and other American singers and musicians. He comments that writing, singing, and playing music has paved the way for him to see the world and explore many different kinds of music and cultures, and it will continue to do so in the future.

## Mark Kostabi

Renowned artist Mark Kostabi, featured by Park West Gallery as the official 2023 AIJF artist, expresses excitement and honor. Regrettably, prior commitments prevent his in-person attendance at this year's Festival, yet he extends heartfelt wishes and gratitude to all involved. Kostabi's art graces over 50 museum collections globally, including iconic institutions like the Museum of Modern Art, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Guggenheim Museum, Los Angeles' Museum of Contemporary Art, National Gallery of Modern Art in Rome, and Groninger Museum in Holland.



*Mark Kostabi - Official 2023 AIJF Artist*



## About the Amelia Island Jazz Festival

The Amelia Island Jazz Festival enriches the local culture by introducing diverse audiences to the vibrant world of jazz, an authentic American art form. With world-class performances spanning swing, bebop, Dixieland, big band, Latin, and contemporary styles, this year's event again takes place in beautiful Amelia Island venues: Courtyard | Springhill Suites by Marriott, Sadler Ranch, the Decantery, Atlantic Rec Center, and the new addition, FB First Amelia Island.

Held each October, the festival showcases jazz legends alongside emerging talents. Established in 2001, it aspires to global acclaim, following in the footsteps of iconic festivals like Monterey and Newport Jazz. Guided by Artistic Director Les DeMerle, an esteemed jazz professional, the Festival has delighted audiences with luminaries such as John Pizzarelli Trio, Steve March-Tormé, Delfeayo Marsalis, Jamil Sharif, Henry Johnson, the Requite Trio with Janis Siegel,



*The Manhattan Transfer*



*Néstor Torres*

*Tierney Sutton Band*

Roseanna Vitro, Néstor Torres, Houston Person, Bria Skonberg, Larry Coryell, Kevin Mahogany, Randy Brecker, Tony Monaco, Mindi Abair, the Royal Crown Revue, David Benoit, Spyro Gyra, Buckwheat Zydeco, Nicole Henry, Ramsey Lewis, David Sanborn, Harry Allen, Marcus Printup, Bill Allred, Richie Cole, Longineu Parsons, Frank Tiberi and the Woody Herman Sax Section.

In celebration of its 20th anniversary, the Amelia Island Jazz Festival proudly presents The Manhattan Transfer, who are commemorating their remarkable 50th anniversary. This unique convergence of milestones in the jazz world makes the 2023 Festival truly exceptional.

The Amelia Island Jazz Festival continues to emphasize the timeless appeal of jazz, uniting individuals of all ages and backgrounds through their shared love for this musical genre. The festival remains dedicated to its mission: delivering world-class, culturally enriching jazz to Amelia Island and northeastern Florida, offering educational programs, and promoting the island as a premier tourist destination. The artists, volunteers, and board of directors extend their heartfelt gratitude for your support in advancing this mission.

Thank  
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Carol Guse

For all you do for the Amelia Island Jazz Festival  
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## The Amelia Island Jazz Festival Educational Programs

The cornerstone of the Amelia Island Jazz Festival is its educational programs. Led by Les DeMerle, Founder and Artistic Director, the Festival seeks to enrich minds with the sounds, excitement and vitality of jazz. Programs include:

### Jazz in the Schools

The purpose of this program is to expose young people to the art of jazz, while motivating students to pursue jazz as a musical endeavor, featuring workshops led by master musicians for grade school, middle school, and high school students. Several hundred area students attend this program



Jazz in Schools

each year. In 2023 the Festival partnered with Arts Alive Nassau and held several summer camps to encourage young performers to pursue careers in jazz. Working together with Arts Alive Nassau the goal of the Amelia Island Jazz Festival is to continue to offer a rich cultural experience for youth.

### Jazz for Seniors

With the purpose of providing quality entertainment to the area's senior population, this program has become an annual cultural highlight for many who cannot easily travel to other Festival performances. These events consist of demonstrations and informative musical programs at senior centers. Over the years, several hundred seniors have been entertained by the Festival.



Jazz for Seniors



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## The Amelia Island Jazz Festival Scholarship Program

Every year, the Amelia Island Jazz Festival's educational initiatives culminate in the presentation of the Amelia Island Jazz Festival Scholarship. The Festival's Board of Directors is committed to preserving jazz, a quintessential American art form, by offering support to young, talented individuals pursuing their aspirations of becoming jazz musicians.

This financial grant is dedicated to deserving high school musicians who exhibit substantial potential for excelling in jazz at the college level. Each scholarship is bestowed upon a graduating high school senior who has been accepted into a college jazz program. The recipient can allocate the scholarship funds toward their college-related expenses, essential for majoring or minoring in music with a focus on jazz performance or related studies.

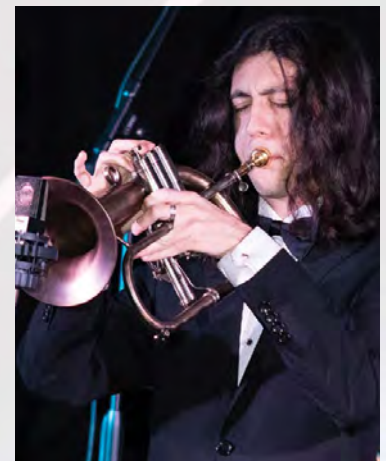
*If you, or you know someone who is interested to apply for this award, contact the AIJF Scholarship Program in writing or find more details about the scholarship and/or the application on line at [www.ameliainlandjazzfestival.com/our-jazz-education-program/](http://www.ameliainlandjazzfestival.com/our-jazz-education-program/)*

### *Giovanni Martinez* 2023 AIJF Scholarship Winner

At just 18 years old, Giovanni Martinez is a senior at the esteemed Douglas Anderson School of the Arts. His journey with the trumpet began nine years ago when he learned that his great uncle, Miguel Martinez, held the title of "The Father of Mariachi Trumpet". Since then, Giovanni has woven various genres into his musical tapestry, with a primary focus on honing his skills in the realm of jazz. His musical influences range from his great uncle Miguel to icons like Clifford Brown, Maurice André, Arturo Sandoval, Louis Armstrong, and Wynton Marsalis, among others.

Throughout his high school career, Martinez has earned a host of honors and accolades. He stood out as one of only five trumpet players chosen nationwide for the prestigious 2022 Next Generation Jazz Orchestra, performing under the guidance of Gerald Clayton at the renowned 2022 Monterey Jazz Festival. Additionally, Martinez secured a spot in the 2022 NAFME All-Nationals Jazz Ensemble, directed by Todd Stoll, and more recently, in Music For All's 2023 Jazz Band of America, led by Alan Baylock. His accolades include being recognized as a "Superior Musician" and "Outstanding Musician" at the 2022 National Jazz Festival, as well as earning the distinction of a YoungArts Merit Winner in Jazz Trumpet.

He remains steadfast in his ambition to continue on the path towards becoming a professional musician, eager to share his artistic voice with the world.



*2023 AIJF Scholarship Winner  
Giovanni Martinez - Flugelhorn/Trumpet*



## Hot Latin Jazz - Concert & Dance

Tuesday, October 3 • 7 - 10 pm

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## Jump, Jive And Wail / Swing Night Concert & Dance

Wednesday, October 4 • 7 - 10 pm

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Featuring: **The Dynamic Les DeMerle Little Big Band** with **Bonnie Eisele** - vocals, **Jim Malmgren** - trumpet, **Clarence Hines** - trombone, **Rob Chapman** - saxophone, **Ajax McDonell** - saxophone, **Doug Matthews** - piano, **Dennis Marks** - bass, **Les DeMerle** - drums/vocals



Thursday, October 5 • 7 pm

First Baptist Church Fernandina Beach  
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Marking their 50th Anniversary, The Manhattan Transfer stands as a beacon of excellence, maintaining their position as one of the globe's premier and pioneering vocal ensembles on their farewell tour.

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### Les DeMerle Sound 67

**Marvin Ferebee** - trumpet, **Matt Vance** - saxophone  
**Mike Levine** - piano, **Dennis Marks** - bass,  
**Doc Handy** - percussion, **Bonnie Eisele** - vocals,  
**Les DeMerle** drums



Les DeMerle at Riverboat NYC - 1967

## Néstor Torres in Concert

Friday, October 6 • 7 pm

Courtyard | Springhill Suites by Marriott  
2700 Atlantic Avenue • Fernandina Beach



Photo: MagicalPhotos/Mitchell Zachis

Starring: **Néstor Torres**

Grammy Award winning Néstor Torres' rhythmic and mellifluous flute sound remains apart in a class all by itself.

Also featuring:

### The Les DeMerle Jazz Quintet

**Les DeMerle** - drums, **Mike Levine** - piano,  
**Dennis Marks** - bass, **Doc Handy** - percussion,  
**Bonnie Eisele** - vocals



10:00 pm 'til 12 am

### Late Nite Jam at "Dizzy's Den"

At the Springhill Suites Harbor Room

Hosted by 2023 AIJF Scholar,  
Giovanni Martinez

## Tierney Sutton Band in Concert

Saturday, October 7 • 7 pm

Courtyard | Springhill Suites by Marriott  
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Starring: **Tierney Sutton Band**

9-time Grammy-nominated jazz vocalist, Tierney Sutton, fronts The Tierney Sutton Band which featuring instrumental virtuosos **Christian Jacob**, **Trey Henry**, **Kevin Axt** & **Ray Brinker**,



Also featuring:

### The Les DeMerle Jazz Quartet

**Les DeMerle** - drums, **Mike Levine** - piano,  
**Dennis Marks** - bass, **Bonnie Eisele** - vocals,  
& special guest **Longineu Parsons** - trumpet/vocals

10:00 pm 'til 12 am

### Late Nite Jam at "Dizzy's Den"

At the Springhill Suites Harbor Room

Hosted by 2023 AIJF Scholar,  
Giovanni Martinez

## Dixie to Swing Jazz Brunch

Sunday, October 8 • 10:30 am & 1 pm

Courtyard | Springhill Suites by Marriott  
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Wrap up the 2023 Jazz Festival with our Jazz Brunch, featuring a special Festival Menu at this fantastic venue.

Featuring:

### The Spare Rib Six Dixieland Band

**Longineu Parsons** - trumpet, **Bill Prince** - clarinet,  
**Cameron Strine** - trombone, **Mike Levine** - piano,  
**Dennis Marks** - bass, **Les DeMerle** - drums/vocals,  
**Bonnie Eisele** - vocals, plus Special Guests



The Spare Rib Six





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~ Jack Bowers, All About Jazz

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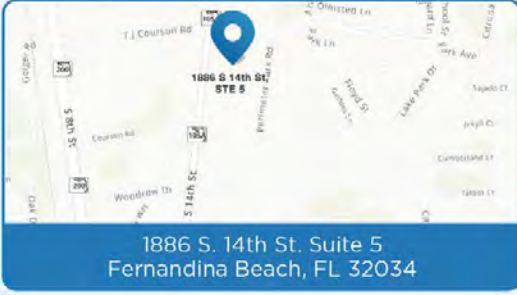
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### 2023 FESTIVAL PROGRAM Production:

Editor - Bonnie Eisele  
Design/Layout - Caroline Blochlinger  
(www.cbAdvertising.com)  
Photography - Caroline Blochlinger  
- misc. submitted

Published by the  
Amelia Island Jazz Festival, Inc.  
P.O. Box 16684  
Fernandina Beach, FL 32035



Jazz Hotline: (904) 504-4772  
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