

THE HARTFORD JAZZ SOCIETY

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Free Master Class by Pianist Geri Allen



Geri Allen's Website: www.geriallen.com/

One of four master classes by artists featured in the Hartford Jazz Society's
2007 - 2008 Jazz at the Atheneum Series

Saturday, November 17, 2007, 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

The Artists Collective (in the Atrium)

1200 Albany Avenue, Hartford

**** FREE ADMISSION ****

The Hartford Jazz Society's Master Classes are sponsored by CIGNA Foundation with support from The Fisher Foundation, The Knox Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Greater Hartford Arts Council, Aetna Foundation, Roberts Foundation, Maximilian and Marion Hoffman Foundation, and The Mortensen Foundation.

Directions: The Artists Collective (www.artistscollective.org) is located at the corner of Woodland Street and Albany Avenue in Hartford. There is ample free and attended parking in the parking lot at the rear of the building. Enter the parking lot from Woodland Street.

Special thanks to the Artists Collective for hosting this event!

Bring your instrument to the class!

Student participants will be seated closest to the instructor; observers will be seated behind them. If you are a student, or a teacher who wants to enroll one or more students, please register early so that we can assure sufficient preferred student seating. Register through the HJS office at 860-242-6688, or by e-mail to: hartjazzsocinc@aol.com and provide your name, address, phone number, e-mail address, school and grade. Observers are welcome if seats are available but please remember that these classes are for the students—we want to give STUDENTS every opportunity to learn and participate.

Information on upcoming master class by NEA Jazz Master Paquito D'Rivera (April 5) and guitarist Kurt Rosenwinkel (May 31) can be found at: www.hartfordjazzsociety.com/ - or call HJS at 860-242-6688

Geri Allen

*Geri Allen put her heart on the line Wednesday at the Jazz Bakery. Her heart, her imagination, her spirit and her capacity to enliven everything from soul-drenched spirituals to hard-edged post-bop ... her playing throughout Wednesday's opening set was a paragon example of the complex of musical styles and issues facing jazz pianists in post-20th century jazz ... The set peaked with a climactic blues -- basic and straight-ahead -- in which Allen reached deeply into the jauntily swinging, mainstream aspects of her style. Hearing it, one could only marvel at the stylistic range and improvisational depth she had brought to her hourlong set ... it was Allen's spotlight, and she claimed it with musical wisdom and inventive depth. – Don Heckman, *The Los Angeles Times*, October 20, 2006*

*For more than 20 years, Geri Allen has been an archetype of the new breed of contemporary jazz musician who is equally versed in the most modern, cutting-edge music as well as the most traditional. When she works with more experimental player-composer-iconoclasts like Ornette Coleman or Steve Coleman (no relation), she may break a few rules, but when she plays jazz standards and the American songbook, it's clear she knows how to follow those rules, and to be creative within them. – Will Friedwall, *The New York Sun*, August 25, 2006*

*When Geri Allen opened her Kimmel Center show Saturday night, the nascent weekend nor'easter raged outside, but the currents within the music of Allen and her quartet raged as well. The Detroit-born pianist, representing the city of her birth in the center's "One Nation Under Jazz" series, introduced the spiritual "Oh, Freedom" with fast, harmonically complicated runs and stately declarations that revealed an intimate knowledge of classical piano. Allen flew solo for several minutes, and by the time drummer Mark Johnson entered the fray with a nearly silent, sparklike touch of his crash/sizzle cymbal, the effect was startling, almost electronic. Allen, with the help of some great lighting, had created a mysterious, dark ambience. – *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, February 13, 2006*

“Geri Allen continues off a banner year with what I feel is another monumental leap forward as her new release comes forth, “Timeless Portraits and Dreams.” Strict and vibrant keyboard arrangements capturing the soul of the piece performed ... Allen’s finesse and angelic tones of the ivory exhibit stunning execution. Allen’s talent succeeds in separating her from the standard jazz pianist template molding a special example for the young pianists to strive for. A truly gifted pianist should be a world unto his or her own while under the influence of composing magic. This Allen has accomplished with over twenty years of pure ivory joy and again this year will please the masses. – eJazzNews.com

“Whether Geri Allen performs solo, in a classic trio setting, or in a larger group, her music is typically lush yet elusive, expansive and abstract, lyrical while imbued with tensile strength, sophisticated modernism, essences of gospel, swing, and the blues. As a composer and improviser, leader or collaborative accompanist, she draws from the virtues and beauties of the American jazz tradition and enriches it in return. But her music truly transcends category through its expressive immediacy, originality, nuance, and universality.” – Howard Mandel

*“Jazz embodies all that is best in us. Because it is a clear reflection of who we are, jazz can also reflect the wide range of human strengths and frailties. In jazz, we have complete freedom of expression. Jazz “is” who we are. At its best, we move out of the way, and become vessels ready to receive, vulnerable, and open to Divine influence ... The potent experience of jazz connects us all. It reaches into the human soul, and the human soul is our bridge to enter into this Divine experience, whereby our lives become connected ... Timeless Portraits and Dreams is about connections, jazz connections. All of our global musical cultures are inextricably connected.” – Geri Allen, liner notes in *Timeless Portraits and Dreams**