

JACOB BURNS FILM CENTER



Swing Into Summer with Jazz-Inspired Films and Performances at the Jacob Burns Film Center

Jazz Sessions Features Four Jazz Performances and Five Unique Films, Including a Special Preview Screening of the Documentary [She's Got Jazz](#)—which follows four female artists who are shaking up the music genre—and a performance by film subject Veronica Swift

Pleasantville, NY – The [Jacob Burns Film Center](#) (JBFC), a nonprofit cultural arts center and one of the most successful suburban film houses in the country, announces the return of their annual series [Jazz Sessions: Beyond the Notes](#), now in its 11th year. From **May 29–June 19**, the JBFC will screen an assortment of films that look at jazz from the inside out, reflecting on how the genre has enriched our culture and image abroad and paved the way for the future of music. These films look at how a world-famous war photographer, an *Esquire* magazine art director, politicians, and two German immigrants in search of “*schwing*” all helped shape the jazz musician’s journey in America.

Jazz Sessions kicks off May 29 with Oscar-nominated documentary [A Great Day in Harlem](#)—which explores the story behind the iconic photograph and Jazz age era with interviews, performances, and never-before-seen footage—followed by a performance from jazz pianist and composer Emmet Cohen, as well as a reception. Also included in the lineup is a special preview of the new documentary [She's Got Jazz](#), which looks at four young women who are changing the jazz landscape and opening doors—including jazz singer Veronica Swift, who returns to the JBFC this year for another highly-anticipated performance. Audiences can also go backstage with Thelonious Monk, Hall Overton, and more in [The Jazz Loft According to W. Eugene Smith](#) before taking in a performance from Jazz pianist Ben Paterson, or explore the unique relationship between German émigrés and Jazz stars such as Miles Davis, Herbie Hancock, and John Coltrane in [It Must Swing!: The Blue Note Story](#).

Closing out the series is [The Jazz Ambassadors](#), which examines the travels of Louis Armstrong, Dizzy Gillespie, and Duke Ellington from 1955 on, when the US asked its greatest jazz artists to travel the world as cultural ambassadors amidst the burgeoning civil rights movement and growing anger at Jim Crow laws. After the screening, audiences will revel in both a live performance from acclaimed jazz drummer Bryan Carter of “Bryan Carter & The Young Swangers,” as well as a reception.

Jazz Sessions: Beyond the Notes is sponsored by Adam R. Rose and Peter R. McQuillan. The JBFC Member pre-sale for Jazz Sessions begins Tuesday, May 7 at noon; tickets go on sale to the general public Friday, May 10 at noon. Please find the full line-up listed below.

For more information, visit burnsfilmcenter.org/film, FB: [@JacobBurnsFilmCenter](https://www.facebook.com/JacobBurnsFilmCenter), Twitter: [@JBFC_ny](https://twitter.com/JBFC_ny) and Instagram: [@JBFC_pville](https://www.instagram.com/JBFC_pville).

Jacob Burns Film Center is a nonprofit arts and education hub located on a three-building campus in the New York Metro area. The JBFC brings the transformative power of film to the surrounding community through unique programming and discussion, shared experiences, and educational initiatives. Since opening in 2001, over 3,000,000 people have enjoyed the best of current American and foreign cinema, unique film series, and special events at the five-screen theater complex. A pioneer in visual literacy education, the JBFC offers courses in filmmaking, screenwriting, animation, and more for students of all ages at our state-of-the-art Media Arts Lab, and develops media literacy curricula for schools throughout the region.

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2019 Jazz Sessions: Beyond the Notes Schedule

Ticket Price: \$20 (members), \$25 (nonmembers), unless otherwise noted

May 29 at 7:15 PM – [A Great Day in Harlem with Performance by Emmet Cohen](#)

- This Oscar-nominated documentary explores the story behind the iconic photograph and provides a lively, fascinating window into an unprecedented era in music history, packed with interviews, subjects, performances, and never-before-seen footage.
- **Emmet Cohen** is a recognized prodigy and one of his generation's pivotal artistic figures, a multifaceted American jazz pianist and composer at the mere age of 28. Cohen recently was awarded the 2019 Cole Porter Fellowship by the American Pianists Association.

June 5 at 7:15 PM – [She's Got Jazz with Performance by Veronica Swift](#)

- Director Jim Burns will introduce his new music film featuring four of the jazz world's rising stars—all women. Saxophonist Grace Kelly, trumpeter/singer Bria Skonberg, and vocalists Brianna Thomas and Veronica Swift are electrifying audiences with their fresh ideas, and attracting a growing following of young fans. The film takes viewers inside New York's jazz scene with exhilarating live performance footage from several of the city's hottest venues and intimate interviews with the artists themselves, who discuss the reality of shaking things up in a music genre that has been traditionally dominated by men.
- 24-year-old **Veronica Swift** is recognized as a top young singer in jazz. The child of vocalist Stephanie Nakasian and the late bebop pianist Hod O'Brien, Swift possesses not only a beautiful voice but boundless technique and vocal creativity. A regular at Birdland, she has toured with the Emmet Cohen Trio as well as the Benny Green Trio, Wynton Marsalis, the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra, and Chris Botti, and appeared at jazz festivals and clubs throughout the world.

June 6 at 7:30 PM – [It Must Swing! The Blue Note Story*](#)

***Tickets: \$9 (members), \$14 (nonmembers)**

- *It Must Swing!: The Blue Note Story* is about two German friends who founded the legendary jazz label Blue Note Records 80 years ago. The label famously dedicated itself exclusively to the

recording of American jazz music and assembled an impressive roster of international jazz stars, including Miles Davis, Herbie Hancock, John Coltrane, Sonny Rollins, Wayne Shorter, Thelonious Monk, Quincy Jones and more. The label provided a platform for Afro-American musicians, treating them as artists and equals at a time when they were discriminated against and ostracized.

June 12 at 7:15 PM – [The Jazz Loft According to W. Eugene Smith with Performance by Ben Paterson](#)

- Starting in the 1950's, dozens of jazz musicians jammed night after night in a dilapidated New York loft. Acclaimed photojournalist W. Eugene Smith, who lived next door, recorded and photographed the sessions and conversations, creating 4,000 hours of audiotape and 40,000 photographs between 1957 and 1965. A remarkable archive that provides insight into jazz history.
- **Ben Paterson** is a pianist, vocalist and composer. Originally from Philadelphia, Paterson is now based in New York, bringing his unique talents and style to a wider audience and performing at top-notch venues around town, in addition to clubs and festivals around the world. Combining a joyful swing feel with an impeccable touch, he has garnered international acclaim for his superb musicianship and engaging performances: *DownBeat* calls him "as soulful a pianist/organist as exists anywhere."

June 19 at 7:15 PM – [The Jazz Ambassadors with Performance by Bryan Carter](#)

- The Cold War and Civil Rights collide in this remarkable story of music, diplomacy, and race. Beginning in 1955, the United States asked its greatest jazz artists—Louis Armstrong, Dizzy Gillespie, Duke Ellington, and their racially diverse band members—to travel the world and fight on the frontlines of the Cold War as cultural ambassadors. The documentary reveals how the US State Department unwittingly gave the burgeoning civil rights movement a major voice on the world stage just when it needed one most.
- **Bryan Carter** has played and/or recorded with many notable artists including Clark Terry, McCoy Tyner, Wynton Marsalis, Marcus Roberts, Mulgrew Miller, Kenny Barron, Michael Feinstein, and Kurt Elling. Carter attended The Juilliard School and was the recipient of the Irene Diamond Scholarship as well as the Samuel L Jackson Scholarship. He was the house drummer for NBC'S "Maya & Marty." Carter serves as a teaching artist for the Jazz at Lincoln Center -Jazz for Young People program in New York City. He is currently touring the world with his band, Bryan Carter & The Young Swangers.