



# NEWSLETTER

ADVANCING JAZZ ALONG THE GULF COAST!



As jazz was born in the 1920s, historically women have always been a minority as singers of jazz and continue to be in a world dominated by men. Here we pay homage to the Top 10 Female American Jazz Singers who made and continue to make history in jazz music.

## CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S MONTH: THE WOMEN OF JAZZ

BY SYLVIA BROOKS

Female jazz vocalists have always excelled and flourished in one area of the genre. There have been countless talented jazz singers, but the best

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## TOP 10 BEST FEMALE AMERICAN JAZZ SINGERS

(CONTINUED)

female jazz singers have unique voices and personalities that ensure they hold their own against their male counterparts. We present here a list of the American jazz singers female of all time: The Best American Jazz Singers Female:

### 1. Ella Fitzgerald: The Queen of Scatting

Ella Fitzgerald began singing with Chick Webb's band at the decade's end. From Newport News, Virginia, the First Lady Of Song herself won first prize in an amateur talent competition at New York's Apollo Theater in 1934, when she became well known on the stage.

### 2. Billie Holiday: The Lady with a Broken Heart

Billie Holiday has a way of communicating with a song that is second to none, despite her lack of technical proficiency.

Her voice was deeply soulful, making every song she sang seem poignantly personal.

### 3. Sarah Vaughan: The Divine One

Sarah Vaughan, a New Jersey singer with a gorgeous, full-bodied voice and a tremulous vibrato, is often called the Divine One because of her heavenly voice. Before launching her solo career in the late 1940s, she sang with Earl Hines and Billy Eckstine's bands.

### 4. Nina Simone: The Priestess of Soul

The singer and songwriter Nina Simone was an activist for civil rights and a musician. She was a talented jazz musician, playing both piano and guitar. Nina Simone used her music to speak out against racism and oppression; her voice was powerful for the civil rights movement and helped inspire other artists.

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### **5. Carmen McRae: The Quintessential Song Stylist**

The young McRae was drawn to jazz as a child, as she was born in Harlem. When she was 17, she met Billie Holiday, who would prove to be her greatest inspiration. Her last recording was released in 1991.

### **6. Dinah Washington: The Queen of the Jukeboxes**

Jazz and blues singer Dinah Washington was known for her vocal range and ability to convey emotion through her music. She began her career singing in Chicago nightclubs, recorded over 30 albums, and won multiple Grammy Awards.

### **7. Anita O'Day: The Swinging Innovator**

Anita O'Day has now been hailed as the best jazz vocalist of her generation; she was branded The Jezebel Of Jazz by mainstream media for drug offenses that resulted in prison time. Despite being born in Kansas City, O'Day, born Anita

Colton, had a long and successful career spanning 65 years.

### **8. Etta James: The Empress of R&B and Jazz**

A powerful singer with a signature style, Etta James interpreted classic standards and modern pop songs with her soulful interpretations. Though she passed away in 2012, her music inspires new generations of jazz singers and fans. James released a series of critically acclaimed albums in the following years and earned Awards. Though she passed away in 2012, her music inspires new generations of jazz singers.

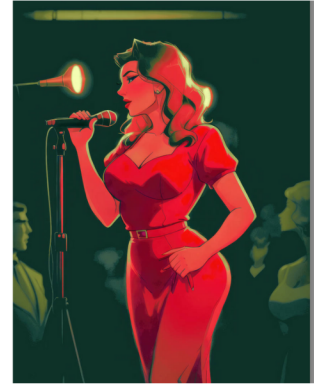
### **9. Diana Krall: The Modern Jazz Chanteuse**

A three-time Grammy winner from Nanaimo, British Columbia, this sultry singer has a deft touch on the piano, making her the top-selling female jazz singer of the 21st century. In

1993, Krall made her debut, but it wasn't until she began working with her longtime producer, Tommy LiPuma, in 1995 that she became the star of the modern era, thanks to albums like *The Look Of Love*, which brought her to prominence. While Krall can swing with élan, her style is more of a languorous ballad and sensuous bossa nova.

### **10. Cassandra Wilson: The Boundary-Pushing Visionary**

As part of Steve Coleman's M-Base collective in the mid-80s, Mississippi-born Wilson first made her mark on jazz heads when she first came on their radar with her smoky timbre and ability to take a song from any genre and turn it into something indisputably her own. Wilson's work gained a broader audience in 1993, after seven albums for the indie label JMT, so she moved to Blue Note.



### **Conclusion: Resonating Voices of Jazz Greatness**

There have been many notable jazz musicians in the smooth genre of music since the Jazz Age began in the 1920s, including some exceptional female musicians. Each has a distinctive quality that sets them apart, and all have made a profound contribution to jazz singing, and some still do so. Those who want to experience [jazz music in LA](#) can listen to jazz music albums by Sylvia Brooks, a world-renowned jazz singer dedicated to bringing healing to the world. There are a few Jazz with Strings original albums that are very popular.

# WHAT'S JAZZING

BY CAROLYN TOKSON

If you missed the UWF Jazz Combo and Jazz Ensemble concert directed by Dr. Joseph Spaniola recently, you missed an evening of delightful jazz featuring some of the students you would recognize from our previous Jazz Pensacola Student Jazz Competitions and our Jazz Jams. Special guest vocalist, Professor Sara Schoch really brought the house down with her performance of "Orange Colored Sky" and "That Old Black Magic". Gabby Carley, winner of the vocal division of our 2023 Student Competition also performed "Going to Chicago Blues" and "Any Old Time". The concert was well attended by an enthusiastic audience of jazz fans who clearly appreciated the program featuring a wide variety of compositions and styles. Within the same week, I attended a fundraiser for the Unitarian Universalists Church of Pensacola by Bobby van Duesen who always leaves everyone with a smile.



*Bobby had joined Joe Occhipinti in his well attended program celebrating Black History Month at the West Florida Public Library on Spring St. just a few days before. There are so many opportunities to hear good music if one just looks for the opportunities. March offers the Jazz Jam the first Monday of the month and the Jazz in the Quarter event with a band led by Jazz Pensacola Board Member, Lawrence Young on March 18 and then the Jazz Pensacola Student Competition March 23 at Pensacola State College at 7 PM. During intermission, former Jazz Pensacola Board member, Carolyn Joyce Tokson will read a short selection from her volume of poetry, "Cobwebs Flying: ...in the Autumn" <https://a.co/d/ftpz6ax> which is now available on Amazon. The cover photo is by Manfred Laner who is a long-time sponsor of Jazz Pensacola's JazzFest. She will be joining many other local writers at the Emerald Coast Writers' Books by the Bay March 23 from 1-4Pm in the Author's Tent at Museum Plaza.*



## 2024 STUDENT JAZZ COMPETITION

You're invited to join us for an evening of local, talented school-age musicians as they compete for cash prizes in the following categories: College Instrumental, High School Instrumental, and Jazz Vocal.

Three finalists from each Division will perform in the live finals at the **Ashmore Auditorium on the campus of Pensacola State College on Saturday, March 23, at 7 p.m.** This event is free and open to the public. Cash awards for 1st, 2nd and 3rd in each Division, range from \$100 to \$500 and will be presented at the conclusion of the event.

Come out and support these young musicians for their musical talent and passion for jazz.

Jazz Pensacola is created for the purpose of advancing jazz music in Pensacola and the surrounding Gulf Coast region. Jazz Pensacola endeavors to provide a social forum for jazz performance, education, and enjoyment for listeners and musicians.



## APRIL 6 & 7

### Are YOU a VIP!

Less than a month away from our 41st Annual JazzFest event, the hallmark Spring event in Pensacola! Get your VIP tickets today at <https://www.jazzpensacola.com/2024-vip-tickets>

Enjoy covered seating in a prime location, snacks, beverages, VIP restroom facilities, and more!

No better way to kick off the Spring and Summer seasons!!!



# The Scoop!

BY STEVE DOUGLAS

We've put together an interesting lineup for this year's jazzfest. In keeping with our education mission, we continue to feature many middle school and high school jazz ensembles. When you hear these eighth through 12th graders playing jazz and soloing, you know the future is in good hands. In addition to these 8 schools we will also feature our local colleges, UWF, PSC and NW Florida State College. As a treat we have a spot for the local band director's to strut their collective stuff.

Following Ali, Mike Levine will remain on stage with his Quintet...

Miami Spice, and head straight for the Latin rhythms he's so well known for. Having been the pianist for 25 years for the Miami based Sabado Gigantic weekly variety show, the rhythms are just part of his DNA.

To close out the Saturday lineup, our own Jazz Pensacola Orchestra, an 18 piece big band directed by Douglas Holsworth will light a fire you won't forget.

**Don't forget to stop by the Odd Colony Brewery on Palafox for a special Saturday night jam 8:30-11:00pm. The Mike Levine Trio will be the house band, all festival musicians are invited. Free to the public.**



# The Scoop!

CONTINUED...

Following the Band Director's Band on Sunday we'll be Swingin' with John Saavedra, virtuoso guitarist in many styles from New Orleans. He and his band will be exploring the gypsy jazz of Django Reinhardt as well as more modern composers in that genre. Next up, Pearl Ash Jazz with the dynamic, always entertaining Pearl at the helm. Vivacious and exciting, she and her band will really deliver the goods. Her recent tribute to Nina Simone at Seville Quarter was a tremendous success. Utilizing her stage actress skills she wowed the crowd.

Then, True Connection takes the stage with their smoothed out sax driven renditions of jazz classics. We know from the crowd reaction at a recent jam session, they stole the show.

Finally, from New Orleans, Ablar, Danny Abel, guitar and Joe Ashlar, organ/keys. Clips of their NOLA club dates will make you wonder if this is real....they are so good and there's nothing like a killer organ based trio with sensational guitar work to close out the festival.

So there you have it. One monstrous weekend of great music, different styles, unusual instruments and energy to boot.



# JAZZ PENSACOLA EVENTS

## MARCH

- 3/04** COMMUNITY JAZZ JAM - ODD COLONY BREWERY @ 6:30 PM
- 3/06** RX: JUST WHAT THE DR. ORDERED - ASCENSION SACRED HEART  
2:00-4:00 PM
- 3/23** STUDENT JAZZ COMPETITION - ASHMORE AUDITORIUM @ 7:00 PM

### PENSACOLA LIBRARY COMMUNITY PERFORMANCES

**3/13**

**MOLINO BRANCH**

6450A HWY 95A, 850-435-1760  
WEDNESDAY, 11:00 - 12:00

**3/18**

**BELLVIEW LIBRARY**

6425 MOBILE HWY, 850-471-6360  
MONDAY, 12:00 - 2:00PM

**3/21**

**SOUTHWEST LIBRARY**

12248 GULF BEACH HWY, 850-453-7780  
THURSDAY, 1:00 - 3:00PM

**3/22**

**TRYON BRANCH**

1200 LANGLEY AVENUE, 850-471-6980  
FRIDAY, 1:00 - 3:00PM

BE SURE TO VISIT THE JAZZ ROOM AT THE MAIN BRANCH ON SPRING STREET!  
CHECK OUT RECORDINGS BY JAZZ GREATS AND BOOKS ABOUT ALL THINGS JAZZ!