

## 2007-08 Middle School Jazz Academy Faculty

### **Eli Yamin, Director, Piano**

Eli Yamin is a jazz pianist, composer, educator, bandleader and Steinway artist. He has toured extensively throughout the world and serves as pianist and education consultant for The Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad, produced by Jazz at Lincoln Center and the U.S. State Department. Yamin co-founded The Jazz Drama Program, which commissioned him to write six jazz musicals for children including *Message From Saturn* and *Nora's Ark*. He has recorded numerous CD's including *Suns of Cosmic Consciousness* with the group Solar. Yamin holds a Master's Degree in Music Education from Lehman College, City University of New York.

### **Annette A. Aguilar, Percussion**

Annette A. Aguilar is a multi-percussionist, recording artist, producer and bandleader born in San Francisco into a family from Nicaragua. Performing with renowned Latin artists from Santana, Cal Tjader and Pete and Sheila Escovedo (Sheila E) and Tito Puente as early as the age of 16. She has also performed with artists like Darlene Love, Stevie Wonder, Dave Valentine, The Grateful Dead, Toshi Reagon, Casselberry-Dupree and many great New York City jazz and Latin groups. In 1992, she formed her Latin and Brazilian jazz group, Annette A. Aguilar & StringBeans. They released two albums, their debut *Special Friends* and the latest titled *NO Cheap Dates*. Both are produced on her own label, which has received numerous outstanding reviews nationally and abroad. Aguilar earned a bachelor's degree in music performance from San Francisco State University, master's degree from Manhattan School of Music and a master's in music education at CUNY.

### **Alvin Atkinson Jr., Jazz Language Instructor, Drums**

Alvin Atkinson, Jr. has been balancing a career as a performer and an educator for over 15 years, playing alongside artists such as Houston Person, James Carter, Oscar Brown Jr. and Cecil Bridgewater, among others. Recent highlights include recently recording the theme music for NY One Television. Atkinson performed at the White House for President George W. Bush and performed as the house drummer for the Emeril Live television show on the Food Network. He has toured domestically and internationally and has toured Africa, South America, the Middle East and Asia through The Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad program produced by Jazz at Lincoln Center and the U.S. State Department.

### **Jamie Baum, Flute**

Jamie Baum is a NYC jazz flutist/composer/clinician/recording artist has toured in over 20 countries with several renowned musicians as a leader and/or sidewoman ranging from George Russell, Randy Brecker, Donald Brown, Kenny Barron and Tom Harrell to Dave Douglas, Uri Caine, Fred Hersch and Paul Motian. Receiving critical praise for 3 albums as a leader, she was nominated by the Jazz Journalists Association as "Flutist of the Year" in 2005 & 2006, in *Down Beat* Critics Polls annually since 1998 and toured for the DOS/Kennedy Center Jazz Ambassador program throughout South Asia and South America from 1999 to 2003. Baum is on the faculty of the Manhattan School of Music and teaches private lessons through The New School.

### **Chris Byars, Ensemble Instructor, Saxophone**

Chris Byars is a saxophonist/composer/arranger born and raised in New York. As a child, he sang with the New City Opera and Metropolitan Opera Children's Choruses. While listening to Charlie Parker and studying with Barry Harris, Byars became interested in jazz and started to play the saxophone. Byars is simultaneously working on many projects, including touring the Balkans in February 2008 as part of The Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad, releasing his latest CD, an audio/visual concept entitled *Jazz Pictures at an Exhibition of Himalayan Art*, composing for and performing with the Teddy Charles Quintet at the Village Vanguard in March 2008, and assisting legendary arranger Don Sebesky with voluminous music preparation.

### **Claire Daly, Baritone Sax**

Claire Daly has won the *Down Beat* Critic's Poll "Rising Star" category for the past 5 years. Her first album *Swing Low* is in the Bill Clinton Library in Little Rock, AK as a album significant to him while in office. In 2005, Daly was voted "Baritone Saxophonist of the Year" by the Jazz Journalist Association. Her teachers have included Joe Viola, George Garzone, Danny Bank, Joe Lovano and many others. Her albums are available at her website: [www.clairedalymusic.com](http://www.clairedalymusic.com). She is currently creating a multi-media event inspired by her second cousin Mary Joyce, who crossed Alaska by dogsled in 1936.

### **Jon Irabagon, Clarinet**

Jon Irabagon graduated from both the Manhattan School of Music and The Juilliard School, studying saxophone and clarinet with Dick Oatts and Victor Goines. He was a participant in Betty Carter's Jazz Ahead Program in Washington, D.C. and has won *Down Beat* Magazine awards in both performance and composition. Irabagon has performed with such luminaries as Wynton Marsalis, Billy Joel, John Abercrombie, Conor Oberst, Michael Buble, Vinnie Coliuta and Lou Reed.

### **Nabaté Isles, Trumpet**

Nabaté Isles, trumpeter/composer/educator, was born and raised in New York City. He received his bachelor's degree from the Eastman School of Music and his master's from New York University. Isles has performed and/or recorded with unique artists such as Mos Def, James Newton, Charli Persip, Steve Coleman, Ravi Coltrane, Lonnie Plaxico, Mike Longo, Oliver Lake, Christian McBride, Freda Payne, the Mingus Big Band and the José Limon Dance Company. He has also composed musical scores for six short films, and is currently producing a documentary in pre-production on jazz great Lee Morgan, with Lou DiBella, Mos Def, Marc Levin, and Sam Pollard attached. Isles is an adjunct professor of music technology at Bloomfield College.

### **Mary Ann McSweeney, Bass**

Mary Ann McSweeney is a bassist, composer, arranger and clinician who has worked professionally with Dizzy Gillespie, Lee Konitz, Bucky Pizzarelli and recorded with the New York Nonet. She has played around Europe and the U.S. with David Krakouer's Klezmer Madness and singer Audra McDonald. She has released two albums under her own name and recently produced and played on the upcoming release of Mike Fahn Quintets, *East and West*. She has had an adjunct position at New Jersey City University, El Camino College and Harbor College.

### **Warren Smith, Percussion**

A fixture on the jazz scene as a drummer and vibraphonist born in Chicago Ill., Warren I. Smith entered the professional music world at the early age of fourteen, working in various family bands in the late 1940's in the Chicago south side music scene. Smith relocated to New York City in 1957 and completed his master's at the Manhattan School of Music in 1958. That same year brought his first jazz gig in New York City with Kenny Burrell at Minton's Playhouse. Smith played Birdland in 1959 with Gil Evans and from 1960-1972 worked regularly with Johnny Richards' big band. Being the unsung percussionist on the scene with

Bernard Purdie, Smith played on all the Gladys Knight and the Pips' 45 hit singles; performed on numerous occasions with Dionne Warwick, did several tours, recording sessions and TV dates with Harry Belafonte and backed up Nat King Cole on his week summer tour of New England. In 1964 he played the R n R Shows with Murray the K. in Brooklyn, toured with Barbra Streisand throughout the U.S. In 1965, Smith recorded on the only collaborative album done by Marvin Gaye and Tammy Terrell, served as musical director of Janis Joplin in 1969 and in doing so played the Ed Sullivan Show, the San Francisco Ice Palace and her only European tour. Smith has also recorded, toured and performed live for television performances with Aretha Franklin from 1965-1978. Smith began to teach at Adelphi University in 1969 and later at the State University of New York in Old Westbury from 1971-1996. Never loosing sight, he has remained a prominent percussionist and drummer within the jazz world. Performing, touring and recording with many progressives including Charles Mingus, Miles Davis, Muhal Richard Abrams, Sam Rivers, Max Roach, M'Boom, Jabbo Ware, David Murray, Sonny Sharock, Anthony Davis and many other masters of the music.

#### **Deborah Weisz, Trombone**

Deborah Weisz, trombonist/ composer, has had a very diverse life in music, from playing in the Sahara Desert, with Roswell Rudd, to touring the world with Frank Sinatra. Originally from Chicago, Ill., Weisz's musical journey has included stops in Phoenix, Las Vegas, and NYC, where she has lived since 1993; performing a variety of music work while exploring the post-bop and beyond realms with her own groups. Along the way Weisz has also worked as an educator to give back and share her love of music with students.

*\*Faculty subject to change*