

Herbie Hancock Institute of Jazz and UCLA Announce Incoming Herbie Hancock Institute of Jazz Performance at UCLA Class of 2023

Christian Wissmuller • News • October 27, 2021



The Herbie Hancock Institute of Jazz Performance at UCLA, Class of 2023, includes (from left) Emilio Lasansky (bass), Art Baden (tenor saxophone), Javier Santiago (piano), Matthew Stubbs (clarinet), Darynn Dean (vocals), Devin Daniels (alto saxophone), Julien Knowles (trumpet) and Benjamin Ring (drums). Photo by Don Liebig/ASUCLA Photography for the Herbie Hancock Institute of Jazz

Eight extraordinary young jazz musicians have been selected for the [Herbie Hancock Institute of Jazz Performance at UCLA](#), Class of 2023 starting this fall. Each will attain a Master of Music in

Jazz Performance degree from [The UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music](#), one of the nation's top music schools, after completing this intensive, two-year program in spring 2023.

The Class of 2023 includes tenor saxophonist **Art Baden** of Rostov-on-Don, Russia; alto saxophonist **Devin Daniels** of Inglewood, California; vocalist **Darynn Dean** of Los Angeles, California; trumpeter **Julien Knowles** of Fresno, California; bassist **Emiliano Lasansky** of Iowa City, Iowa; drummer **Benjamin Ring** of Piedmont, California; pianist **Javier Santiago** of Minneapolis, Minnesota; and clarinetist **Matthew Stubbs** of San Jose, California. The musicians were selected through a rigorous application process culminating in an audition judged by legendary jazz pianist Herbie Hancock; renowned musician, producer and philanthropist Herb Alpert; and trumpeter, Blue Note recording artist and Institute of Jazz Performance alumnus Ambrose Akinmusire.

Herbie Hancock noted, "I am very excited about this new class of talented young musicians. They follow in the footsteps of their predecessors who are leaders in the world of creative music. I know they will also make important contributions and I look forward to hearing their ideas and encouraging their creativity during their time in this unique program."

Launched in 1995, the Institute of Jazz Performance accepts one ensemble of musicians for each class and provides them with unparalleled opportunities to study jazz and its defining element of improvisation with master musicians, composers and educators. All students receive full scholarships, along with stipends to cover their monthly living expenses. This enables them to be fully immersed in their education and development as artists.

Throughout each academic year, world-renowned jazz masters serve as Artists-in-Residence, teaching and performing with the students. Artists-in-Residence have included Kenny Barron, Terence Blanchard, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Terri Lyne Carrington, Ron Carter, Jack DeJohnette, Nnenna Freelon, Kenny Garrett, Barry Harris, Stefon Harris, Roy Haynes, Dave Holland, Wynton Marsalis, Jason Moran, Lewis Nash, Danilo Pérez, Dianne Reeves, John Scofield, and Wayne Shorter among many others. In addition, the students receive composition instruction from GRAMMY Award winner Billy Childs and study improvisation with Jerry Bergonzi and Dick Oatts – two of the world's top jazz improvisation experts. Students graduate with a master's degree in Jazz Performance from The UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music.

The aspiring musicians study both individually and as a small group, receiving personal mentoring, ensemble coaching, and lectures on the jazz tradition. They are also encouraged to experiment in expanding jazz in new directions through their compositions and performances. A music business and technology component helps prepare the students for their careers as professional musicians.

Under the mentorship of their acclaimed instructors, the college students – collectively known as the Herbie Hancock Institute of Jazz Performance Ensemble at UCLA – present high-profile concerts and lead jazz education and community outreach programs in Los Angeles, across the United States and around the world. In recent years, the students performed at International Jazz Day events in St. Petersburg, Russia; [Havana, Cuba](#); and the White House. They also have participated in performance and education tours of Argentina, Chile, China, Egypt, India, Morocco, Peru, Russia, Thailand and Vietnam with Herbie Hancock.

[Institute of Jazz Performance alumni](#) – including Ambrose Akinmusire, Lionel Loueke, Gretchen Parlato, Walter Smith III, Dayna Stephens and Helen Sung, along with many others – have gone on to major careers as performing and recording artists, touring the world with legendary jazz musicians and as leaders of their own groups.

Philanthropist and namesake of The Herb Alpert School of Music, Herb Alpert said, “This new group of incredible young musicians will be able to perform together and learn as a group after a challenging period in which the pandemic created so many obstacles for musicians and live music performances. For them to have the opportunity to learn one-on-one and as a group from jazz masters is a beacon of hope in this difficult time.”

Institute President Tom Carter said, “The Institute is pleased to welcome this new group of phenomenal musicians into the program, where they will learn from legendary artists and some of the most creative minds in music. These students will serve as jazz ambassadors throughout the world as they perform and teach, sharing what they learn from jazz masters with future generations of musicians.”

UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music Inaugural Dean Eileen Stempel shared “The Herbie Hancock Institute of Jazz Performance at UCLA provides the most promising jazz talents with opportunities to learn from world-renowned jazz artists. Studying on a full academic graduate fellowship in The Herb Alpert School of Music’s rich, creative environment, students focus entirely on developing their artistry. We are delighted to continue our partnership with the Herbie Hancock Institute of Jazz and invest in the future of this vital art form.”