

Nora McCarthy and The People Of Peace Quintet-

“HARMONY, LOVE AND CREATIVITY COMMINGLING” Donald Elfman/ SEPTEMBER 2016 | THE NEW YORK CITY JAZZ RECORD

An intensely spiritual and soulful post-bop modern jazz group that performs original music/lyrics, re-imagined classics by some of the masters of jazz, with rhythmically charged arrangements, inventive improvisations, moody heartfelt ballads and McCarthy’s horn-like, rapid-fire singing and joyous scatting. Uplifting, Thought Provoking, and Transforming.



MEMBERS OF THE PEOPLE OF PEACE QUINTET

Nora McCarthy-voice, Jorge Sylvester-alto saxophone,

Pablo Vergara-piano, Donald Nicks-bass

Kenny Grohowski-drums

NORA McCARTHY

Jazz Voice, Composer, Lyricist, Poet, Bandleader, Writer

A unique and original singer, poet, songwriter and innovative improviser, McCarthy is an important force in the advanced New York jazz scene since 1996 when she recorded her first of thus far nine CD's, *red&blue* with John diMartino, Essiet Okon Essiet, Alvester Garnett, Mike Lee and Sato Takeishi. Winner of the 38th Annual Jazz Station Awards Best Jazz of 2016 in two categories, Female Singer and The Best Vocal Jazz CD, *blesSINGS*, McCarthy's musical roots run deep. Her burnished alto voice is rich with a distinctive style that cuts a broad swath from soul, rhythm & blues, jazz, Bebop, post-bop, and the free, avant-garde idioms but her sound is reminiscent of the great voices and horns in jazz.

Nora currently leads the following creative ensembles: The People of Peace Quintet, The Nora McCarthy OrganicTrio with guitarist Marvin Sewell and bassist Donald Nicks, The HeartStrings Project – performing the music of the most poetic singer/songwriters of the past fifty years, Nora McCarthy Qu'ART'et a modern jazz group rooted in tradition that melds original music with reimagined standards, A Small Dream In Red Expressionist Voice and Saxophone Duo, Manna For Thought Improvising Trio and The Modern Voice Ensemble – An experimental vocal group that implements McCarthy's concepts for composition and improvisation.

McCarthy is a member and co-founder of: ConceptualMotion Orchestra, a 20-piece all original music big band for which she contributes compositions and poetry; and a member of the following ensembles: the Jorge Sylvester ACE (Afro-Caribbean-Experimental) Collective and its Extended Edition w Strings (Double CD Spirit Driven recorded in Austria and released in 2013); Composer/Conductor/Trombonist, George Brandon's Blue Unity Ensemble – a CD Towards the Hill of Joy, was released in 2013. Nora was also a member of Conductor, Lawrence D. "Butch" Morris' A Chorus of Poets (2005-2010).

Nora has performed with many notable musicians over the span of her career, most recently drumming legend, Bernard "Pretty" Purdie as a featured vocal artist with his and pianist David Haney's Jazz Stories at Joe's Pub and also in trio with Jazz Legend Bassist Reggie Workman at the Middle Collegiate Church, NYC.

Nora graced the highly-coveted cover of the 2016 February/March issue of Jazz Inside Magazine as the featured artist. “What has impressed me about Nora McCarthy is that she is much more than a jazz vocalist—or specifically, a female jazz vocalist. She is a singer, she plays piano, she composes music and writes lyrics—comprehensive artistry in the grand tradition of someone like Carmen McRae or Betty Carter.” Eric Nemeyer, Publisher of Jazz Inside Magazine, 2016

Nora and her trio frequently perform at the Bar Next Door in Greenwich Village, NYC and elsewhere in NYC.

MEMORABLE PERFORMANCES:

- **MORAL SUPPORT** by Bill Considine for the JumpStart Staged Reading Series at Medicine Show Theatre, NYC, May, 2018. **DIRECTOR, Feliz Gardon;**
- **JAZZ STORIES** w/ David Haney and Bernard Purdie, Steve Swell, Yael Archer Modiano, Adam Lane, at The Public Theater/Joe’s Pub February 2017;
- **LISTEN TO ME -- AN OPERA –** (Music by: Rainy Orteca - Text by Gertrude Stein), 12/3,4/2016, Medicine Show Theatre, 549 W 52nd St., New York, NY 10019.
- A sold-out performance with the Jorge Sylvester ACE Collective Spring 2016 in Northampton, Mass. for Jazz Shares, at the Parlor Room.
- A sold-out concert at the illustrious Brucknerhaus in Linz, Austria debuting her original poetry as well as new compositions with Jorge Sylvester ACE Collective;
- Podgorica, Montenegro with A Small Dream In Red, for Jazz Month as well as an appearance on Good Morning Montenegro.
- ISIM (International Society for Improvising Musicians), 2013 with Jane Ira Bloom and her global ensemble at Roulette, Brooklyn, NY
- ISIM Festival, 2014 with A Small Dream in Red, innovative voice and saxophone duo, at New School University, NYC;
- VISION Festival X “Vision For a Just World,” NYC with the ConceptualMotion Orchestra
- VISION Festival XIV, Arts for Art, NYC with Butch Morris’ Chorus of Poets;
- The Will Connell Memorial Residency at The Stone and St. Peter’s Church, NYC with the ACE Collective, in December, 2014 and January 2015 respectively.

Nora hosts a jazz radio show for Cadence Jazz World (<http://www.cadencejazzworld.com>) called, “Nora’s Jazz Show” featuring the music of creative jazz and avant-jazz, world jazz and both new and old works, established and emerging artists, musicians from around the world.

Through her vast experience in the jazz and creative music field, Nora has developed a comprehensive 13-pronged approach to teaching voice, improvisation and career development. She is founder of, The Modern Voice Studio © and The Zen Of Singing...The Spiritual Path To Finding Your Voice ™ and currently teaches privately, conducts workshops, and master classes.

Nora is a teaching artist for the newly launched Medicine Show Theatre Arts & Education Program, NYC teaching her class in Vocal Freedom which focuses on improvisation and sound production for the creative vocal musician as well designing performance art classes for grade-school children. She is the Project Director for a series of master classes taking place in the summer 2018.

*A prolific lyricist, McCarthy has penned lyrics to dozens of jazz standards and countless other compositions by other artists including her own original music.

**McCarthy' has written over 30 compositions some are tributes to: Billie Holiday, Miles Davis, Sonny Rollins, Grover Washington, and Jimmy Scott.

DISCOGRAPHY

Manna For Thought - (RedZen Records), 2018
blesSINGS – (RedZen Records), 2016
A Time For Love – (RedZen Records), 2013
Spirit Driven (foUR Records) – 2013
In The Language Of Dreams (foUR Records), 2012

Toward A Hill of Joy, 2011
Circle Completing, 2009
A Small Dream In Red, 2005
red&blue, 1996 (re-release)

JORGE SYLVESTER

A unique innovator in the idiom of creative music, alto-saxophonist, conductor, composer, arranger, producer, Sylvester's sound is reminiscent of another time in jazz history when artists like Dolphy and Ornette were exploding on the scene and experimenting with concepts that would ultimately revolutionize music at large.

Born in Colon, Panama he attended the Panama Conservatory of Music and the University of Panama. He received a Bachelor of Science in Music from the State University of New York College at New Paltz in 1981 and has toured Europe, Israel with the World Saxophone Quartet performing alongside luminaries David Murray, Oliver Lake and Hammiet Bluiett.

In January, 2007, Mr. Sylvester returned to his native Panama as a member of the Panamanian All-Stars led and directed by pianist Danilo Perez at the fourth annual Panama Jazz Festival performing with Carlos Garnett, Santi Debriano, Billy Cobham and Renato Thoms.

Mr. Sylvester's discography as a leader includes his recent releases *Spirit Driven* and *In The Language of Dreams* with vocal artist/composer/poet, Nora McCarthy on Red Zen Records TM© and his highly acclaimed *In The Ear of the Beholder*, 2001 (Billboard's Spotlight, Feb. 2001) Jazz Magnet Records and MusiCollage Postcards, 1996, re-released on Arkadia Records) featured Claudio Roditi - trumpet, Marvin Sewell – guitar, Monte Croft – vibraphone – Gene Jackson – drums, Santi Debriano – acoustic bass and Bobby Sanabria – percussion. It received a **** rating from Downbeat Magazine and won a Billboard Critics' Choice award.)

<http://www.jorgesylvesteracemusic.com>

PABLO VERGARA

Producer, pianist and composer Pablo Vergara is an award-winning musician who has performed across four continents. A classically-trained pianist in his native Chile, Pablo moved to New York to study with some of his jazz heroes like Barry Harris, Ron Carter and Bruce Barth. Since then he has worked with artists like saxophone legend Gato Barbieri, Grammy winners Dave Valentin and Paquito D'Rivera, Turkish music masters Husnu Senlendirici and Omar Faruk, Claudia Acuña, Fred Wesley, Method Man, Bebel Gilberto, Mino Cinelu and the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen.

In 2013 Vergara composed and produced the score for Alejandro Fernandez Almendras's "To Kill A Man", winner of the Grand Jury Prize at Sundance Film Festival and Dutch Circle of Film Critics Award at Rotterdam Film Festival. Vergara also produced- and performed- the piano music score for Alejandro Fernandez feature film "By The Fire" (2011) featured at major festivals around the world, including San Sebastián, Toulouse and San Francisco.

Mr. Vergara studied at the Julliard School and at City College of New York and holds an MA in Music. He studied orchestration with Daniel Ott, counterpoint with Jonathan Pieslak and conducting with Vincent La Selva.

Performance credits include Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall, Washington DC's Kennedy Center, Istanbul Is Sanat, Paris' Le Zenith, New York's Central Park Summer Stage and Australia's Sidney Festival, amongst many others.

Pablo lives in Ditmas Park, Brooklyn, with his wife Anath and his son Camilo.

<http://www.pablovergaramusic.com>

DONALD NICKS

A most sought after bassist equally adept on both the acoustic and the electric, he studied with Buster Williams and Lyle Atkinson. For the past 18 or more years, Donald has been the bassist with Roy Ayers and has toured extensively with him as well as: Orlando Aviles, Luther Thomas, Nancy Wilson, Henry Threadgill, Charles Earland, Ray Mantilla and records and performs all over New York and the U.S. and well as Europe.

KENNY GROHOWSKI <http://www.kennygrohowski.com>

Brought up in a musical household in Miami, the 29-year-old drummer has been performing since the age of 14. His rich musical background is demonstrated through the growing list of his collaborators and guest artists, including Vernon Reid, Corey Unger (of Blood Has Been Shed), Emeline Michel, Peter Cincotti, Jorge Sylvester, Bobby Sanabria, Bill T. Jones, Rory Stuart, Cassandra Wilson, Richie Ray & Bobby Cruz, Giovanni Hidalgo, John Benitez, Francis Mbatia, Domingo Quinones, and Bobby Valentin.

Grohowski has been a member of bassist Lonnie Plaxico's band since 2003, and a member of Andy Milne's Dapp Theory since 2006, having come back from a successful US/Canada tour with Dapp Theory, with Highlight shows in Vancouver opening for Jazz and Bass legend, Stanley Clarke, and performed in the 2007 Latin Grammy Awards Live from Madison Square Garden with the award winning group RBD. He has appeared on several recordings, including Plaxico's hit "So Alive" [Sony, Japan]. As of 2009, Grohowski has become a new member of acclaimed Haitian singer/cultural figure Emeline Michel's Acoustic Quintet, and has also performed at the Museum of Modern Art with the Ze Luis Quartet as part of their Live Art performances. Grohowski has also toured across the United States, South America, and Europe, as well as in Australia and China with New Classical Composer Daniel Bernard Roumain (a.k.a. DBR). Kenny has also performed regularly with acclaimed bassist Felix Pastorius and his group since 2010, performing regularly at such New York City venues as Zinc Bar and The 55 Bar. Recently, Grohowski has written and recorded for Grammy Award winning Producer and Arranger Victor "Papo" Ortiz on the album "Eres Santo".