

THE MODERN JAZZ QUARTET CELEBRATION



Notably boasting no less than two British Jazz Award 2013 winners (Jim Hart and Steve Brown), the MJQ celebration was formed by the late **Michael Garrick MBE in 2010**. After sell out shows across the country, the band was going from strength to strength when Michael tragically died in November 2011. After his death, the band were determined to continue what he started, recruiting the fine young pianist Barry Green. A coincidence of note is that Michael Garrick's first working band was a tribute to the MJQ, the MJQ being one of his main musical influences. It seems poignant that his musical career

be bookended in this way. In honour of Michael's memory, the band assimilated a couple of Michael's finest original compositions into their repertoire, to be performed alongside the MJQ favourites.

In December 2012 The MJQ Celebration recorded an album, featuring special guest saxophonist **Dave O'Higgins**.



Jim Hart

Jim Hart is one of the most in demand musicians on the European jazz scene as a soloist and as a sideman on both drums and vibes. A founder member of London's LOOP collective and now resident in France he has recored five albums under his own name with his bands The Cloudmakers Trio, Gemini and The Jim Hart Quartet. His other major projects include the Ivo Neame quintet/octet, Marius Nesest's Birds,

Julien Lourau's Electric Biddle, Stan Sulzmann's Neon Quartet and Duo Plus.

In 2008 Jim became the regular drummer for Sir John Dankworth and Dame Cleo Laine. He continues to play for Cleo today.

Jim has toured extensively with many visiting American musicians in the last few years including Ralph Alessi, Joel Frahm, Jaleel Shaw, Terrel Stafford, Logan Richardson and Richie Barshay and in 2010 he was a special guest with Wynton Marsalis and the Lincoln Centre Jazz Orchestra as part of their London residency with the Barbican centre. In 2013 and 2012 Jim was nominated in the prestigious Downbeat readers poll in the vibraphone category and he was nominated for musician of the year in the 2011 Parliamentary jazz awards. Five times winner of a British Jazz award he has also been a recipient of the Worshipful Company of musicians Bronze medal.

*"one of the UK's most creative new jazz artists." – **The Guardian***

*"Outstanding" – **Financial Times***

*"one of the brightest stars on the UK and European Jazz scene" - **John Surman***

*"Hart has developed an impressively individual voice." –**Jazzwize.***

*"Jim Hart's vibraphone work shows why this lonely instrument deserves more ears" - **JazzTimes***

*"His vibes playing is a revelation" – **The Times***

*"Definitely the best vibes playing I've heard in a long time." – **Joe Locke***



Steve Brown

Born in Manchester, England, Steve developed an early interest in music and began playing drums at age 14. By age 19, he was performing with local jazz groups. By the time he was 23, Steve had become the "first call" jazz drummer in Manchester, working with Scott Hamilton, Art Farmer and UK artists during their engagements in the city. In 1996, Brown moved to London and began working as a sideman with many of the capital's finest musicians including engagements with jazz greats Harry 'Sweets' Edison and Conte Candoli. During the next 4 years his playing career went from strength to strength and Steve was the winner of the 'Drums' and 'Rising Star' categories in the 1999 British Jazz Awards. He has gone on to win the British Jazz award in 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009 & 2011.

In 2000 Steve joined the quartet of the great jazz saxophonist Scott Hamilton, with whom he has toured internationally over the last seven years. He is also featured on his last five recordings for Concord records.

In between his engagements with the Scott Hamilton quartet, Steve continues to perform and record with a wide variety of artists including Benny Golson, Benny Green, Barry Harris, Junior Mance, Charles McPherson and Hod O'Brien.



Barry Green

Barry studied classical and jazz piano at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, graduating in 2002. Whilst still studying, he began playing professionally in a varied range of musical styles. Barry plays regularly in jazz venues all over the UK, including Ronnie Scotts, Pizza Express Dean Street, the 606 Club and The Vortex. In 2007 he played in Germany, Ireland, Spain and France. Some musicians with whom he has performed and recorded with include: Dave Friesen Martin Speake, Bobby Wellins, Mick Hutton, Spike Wells, Anita Wardell, Tina May, Jean Toussaint, Tom Rainey, Christine Tobin,

Anders Christiansson, Richie Cole, Jeff Williams, Bob Martin, Chris Laurence, Stan Sulzmann, Julian Argeulles, Trudy Kerr, Bill McHenry, The BBC Big Band, Gene Calderazzo, Marc Lockheart, Dave Cliff, Phil Robson, Tommy Whittle and Allison Neale.

He is a member of Ingrid Laubrock's quintet, which toured Germany and Ireland in 2007. He is also a member of Laubrock's two-piano nonet (featuring Tom Rainey and Liam Noble). The nonet performed at Cheltenham Jazz festival in 2007 and performed at the Berlin Jazz Festival later that year. Barry is also part of bassist Larry Bartley's trio (with Winston Clifford). This trio formed the core part of an Octet that performed and was recorded at 2006's Cheltenham Jazz festival.

"The pianist can effortlessly sustain a graceful Bill Evans-like lyrical swing, but also massages the ideas of the others. His contemporary references give him a broad sweep, and he has much to do with this set's freedom from bop-standard rigidities... The pianist wraps a light tracery around Speake against ringing cymbal and thumping keynotes on Jitterbug Waltz, and then plays a pungent solo..."

John Fordham, The Guardian, Friday, June 27th 2008

'Green's piano provided some real interaction with the vocals, sometimes prodding, sometimes holding back, and often inserting deft little phrases that decorated the lyrics with taste and sensitivity.'

Alyn Shipton, The Times

"That Green possesses such wide ranging interests will surprise no-one who has caught him with the various band leaders to whose groups he contributes his sparkling but cogent piano work"

Chris Parker, Vortex



Matt Ridley

Since graduating from Trinity College of Music in 2005, Matt has established himself as one of the most versatile, creative and hard-working bass players on the UK jazz scene. Known for his imaginative soloing, solid time keeping and great sound, he is in demand for both straight-ahead and modern jazz.

He has performed worldwide and at many of London's most prestigious venues such as the Purcell Room, the Cadogan Hall, Ronnie Scott's, Dean Street Pizza Express Jazz Club, King's Place, the Barbican main stage, and the O2 Arena. He is a regular at the Swanage, Marlborough and Scarborough jazz festivals, and continues to perform at others both at home and abroad.

Long time collaborators include Darius Brubeck, with whom he has recorded 3 albums, most recently with Dave O'Higgins on sax. For 3 years Matt played in UK jazz legend Michael Garrick's quartet, big band and Lyric Ensemble. Since 2008 he has recorded and performed extensively with oud maestro Attab Haddad in his project combining middle eastern, flamenco and jazz music. More recently, Matt has been working with Issie Barratt in her large ensemble, and touring with up-and-coming guitarist Ant Law.

As a band leader, Matt released his debut album '**Thymos**' on the prestigious **Whirlwind Recordings** label in **2013**. Featuring the talents of award-winning pianist **John Turville**, drummer **George Hart**, and guest appearances from saxophone superstar **Jason Yarde**, oud maestro **Attab Haddad** and percussionist **Vasilis Sirikis**, the album represents a substantial artistic statement of both compositional and improvisational chutzpah. The release was followed by an extensive UK tour, both of which were lauded by critics (see reviews page). The group continue to perform as a quartet and a 2nd album is scheduled for release in late 2015.

In addition to his original music project, Matt leads the '**MJQ Celebration**'. A straight-ahead yet modern outfit, the band comprises Brit-jazz award winner vibraphonist **Jim Hart**, (notably one of the very few UK artists to be nominated in the 'Downbeat' reader's poll), pianist **Barry Green**, and Brit-jazz multi-award winner **Steve Brown** on drums. Propelled by Ridley's ebullient swing, the group lend an exciting modern sensibility to the well known and loved repertoire of the Modern Jazz Quartet. The group released an eponymous CD in April 2014 (produced by Ridley), which received glowing reviews and was described by the London Jazz Blog as 'an enormously entertaining project, already leaping on top of an 'early best of 2014' pile'

'one of the most exciting young jazz bass players around'

- Marlbank

'Ridley and Brown like masters of the metronome, spot on at every juncture'

- Peter Vacher, Jazzwise

'an imaginative soloist who also roots the band with strength and simplicity'

- Alison Bentley, London Jazz Blog

'Ridley has a solid, woody sound and his solos are nimble and to the point'

- Mike Hobart, Jazzwise

'his soloing is impressive, utilising the whole of the scale-length to produce imaginative improvisations'

- **Bebop Spoken Here**

'the double bass versatility and compositional talent of Matt Ridley drive the quartet along'

- **Adrian Pallant, London Jazz News**

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