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ANNAPOLIS JAZZ & ROOTS FESTIVAL RETURNS IN NOVEMBER

The Chesapeake Bay and an historic city nestled along its shores form the perfect back drop for the Annapolis Jazz & Roots Festival held weekends November 7-16. Now in its fourth year, the musical feast was founded in the maritime neighborhood of Eastport. In 2025, the festival extends to surrounding areas and includes eight venues. Most events are free; two require admission. Reservations are strongly advised for all events.

This year's theme is "World Travelers & Hometown Heroes." Events celebrate the accomplishments of musicians, dancers, visual artists and others who have left an indelible mark on the map of Maryland's cultural landscape. Some iconic figures, such as musician Eva Cassidy and Footworks Percussive Dance Ensemble founder Eileen Carson Schatz, are no longer with us, but left powerful and inspiring legacies around the globe. International and regional artists will help us tell their stories.

WEEKEND ONE

Opening Night on November 7 will be held at Peerless Rens, an historic Black social club in Eastport. The Tribute to Eva Cassidy features **Alexis Tantau and Letitia VanSant with Rusty Sal**. These popular Baltimore based, genre crossing musicians have been heard in many countries, receiving considerable critical praise for recordings and live performance. Attend shows at 6 or 8 PM. Light meals and drinks will be on sale. Tickets are \$25 in advance and \$35 at the door.

On Saturday, view "Sacred Spaces," an exhibition featuring paintings and mixed media art by **Jabari Jefferson** at Banneker-Douglass-Tubman Museum. At 1 PM, he'll take part in an interview and discussion with his musician father, J.C. Jefferson. The topic: how music can inspire art and vice versa! At 2 PM, the **J.C. Jefferson Quartet** will salute incomparable producer, composer, director and musician Quincy Jones, one year after his passing.

Sunday affords rejuvenation. Get your groove back with soulful funk and rock trio **Michael McHenry Tribe**. They'll appear at Pip Moyer Recreation Center from 3-5:00 PM. McHenry has worked with names like The Jacksons, Sheena Easton, George Clinton/P. Funk and La Toya Jackson.

WEEKEND TWO

Weekend Two kicks off on Friday, November 14 with **Unified Jazz Ensemble**, a group that settled in Annapolis after a decade of touring. Join them as they revisit the days when jazz conquered the nation

via radio, television, film and live performance. Enjoy the priceless sounds of Duke Ellington, Count Basie and Benny Goodman in spacious and beautiful Eastport U.M. Church at 7 PM. Attendees are welcome to come dressed in the styles of clothing worn in the jazz heydays of the 1920s -1940s.

Saturday events begin at 11 AM. Since the first year of the festival, morning concerts and lectures have been hugely popular. Held at Eastport-Annapolis Neck Library, this one features the **Ed Hrybyk Trio** in an intriguing concert titled “Bass Traditions: Charles Mingus, Ray Brown, Oscar Pettiford and More.” Listen to some amazing jazz and bring curiosity and ideas to the Q & A held afterward.

Catch an amazing concert at 3 PM the same day at Unitarian Universalist Church of Annapolis, a venue situated in a tapestry of trees. Enjoy the atmosphere as **Footworks Percussive Dance Ensemble** offers the best in Americana in song and dance. The event pays tribute to the late dancer and choreographer, Footworks founder Eileen Carson Schatz. With help from former dancers and current Music Director Mark Schatz, she took traditional music and dance forms to great performance heights, finding international acclaim in the U.S., Canada, the U.K., France, Germany and Japan. Schatz has also worked with such artists as Bella Fleck, Nickel Creek, Emmy Lou Harris and Linda Ronstadt.

The festival ends with afternoon and evening events on Sunday, November 16. At 3 PM, **The Freedom Choir** performs a world music program at St. Luke’s Episcopal Church. Stellar acoustics will amplify the inspiring sounds of a community choir. It’s led by Elizabeth Melvin, another Hometown Hero whose stellar musical career as a multi-instrumentalist, vocalist, bandleader and choir director spans decades.

The grand finale concert features the **Joshua Redman Quartet**. With his latest Blue Note album, *Words Fall Short*, Joshua Redman unveils a powerful new chapter in his storied career with help from his dynamic group. Tickets are \$25-\$85. Purchase directly from the venue, Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts (<https://marylandhall.org/maryland-hall-presents>).

FUNDING

Annapolis Jazz & Roots is an affiliate under the umbrella of the Annapolis Community Foundation. AJRF is grateful for support from the Maryland State Arts Council, Arts Council of Anne Arundel County, Art in Public Places Commission, Anne Arundel County Public Library & Foundation and in-kind contributors KSP Communications and Jazz Beyond Borders.

Visit <http://www.annapolisjazzandrootsfestival.com> for information about artists, music and venues.

Annapolis Jazz & Roots aims to foster an appreciation for cultural diversity and artistic excellence in a cordial and inviting atmosphere by offering inspiring educational and fun activities to people of many ages, interests and backgrounds. AJRF works with government, businesses and non-profit organizations to amplify the effects of existing programs and services and improve public access. The Advisory Board includes Kristoffer Belgica, Anne Heald, Eric Peltosalo, Todd Powell, Theresa Sise and Della Sztuk. Paula (Paulina) Phillips is founder and executive director.