IMG Artists Presents

SOME ENCHANTED EVENING

Modern Sensations Jazz Up Broadway Favorites



starring **BENNY BENACK III** and **STELLA COLE**
showcasing **JABU GRAYBEAL**

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presents

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Celebrating a century of music from beloved Broadway shows, **SOME ENCHANTED EVENING** is a jazz-steeped sojourn exploring a bevy of The Great American Songbook's most enduring hits from the golden age to today. This captivating concert seamlessly blends timeless music and dance – celebrating beloved classics ("Over the Rainbow," "The Sound of Music") to contemporary favorites ("My Shot"). Featuring Emmy-nominated trumpeter and charismatic crooner Benny Benack III, the exceptionally talented singer and social media sensation Stella Cole, and dazzling tap dance phenom Jabu Graybeal, **SOME ENCHANTED EVENING** is more than a show. It's an unforgettable experience that pays homage to the enduring legacy of Broadway, bringing together music and dance in a way that resonates with audiences of all ages!

PERFORMANCE DATE
PERFORMANCE VENUE

This tour appears by arrangement with
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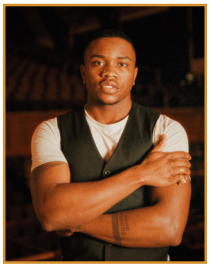
WHO'S WHO



Benny Benack III
(Trumpet, Vocals, Music Director)



Stella Cole
(Vocals)



Jabu Graybeal
(Tap Dance)



Miki Yamanaka
(Piano)
Oct 2–20, | Nov 15, 2024



Liya Grigoryan
(Piano)
Oct 23–Nov 14 | Nov 16–17, 2024



Russell Hall
(Bass)



Joe Peri
(Drums)



Jarien Jamanila
(Saxophone)

Benny Benack III *(Trumpet, Vocals, Music Director)* By age 31, Emmy-nominated trumpeter and singer Benny Benack III has proven to be that rarest of talents: not only a fiery trumpet player with a stirring command of the post-bop trumpet vernacular in the vein of Kenny Dorham and Freddie Hubbard, but also a singer with a sly, mature, naturally expressive delivery in the post-Sinatra mold, performing standards and his own astute songs with a thrilling sense of showmanship. This duel-threat ability was recognized by the 2022 Downbeat Critics Poll where he appeared as not only the #2 Rising Star Male Vocalist, but a top Rising Star Trumpeter as well. His superb intonation and bracing virtuosity enable him to handle astounding feats of originally composed vocalese (complex solos with written lyrics). On top of it all, he's a highly capable pianist as well.

Benny has performed internationally as an Emcee/Host for the YouTube sensation Postmodern Jukebox, and achieved his own viral success amassing millions of views for his crooning alongside the Grammy-award winning "8-Bit Big Band". In early 2020 he released *A Lot of Livin' to Do*, the follow-up to his well-received 2017 debut One of a Kind. This sophomore effort, richly varied in mood and brimming with bop inflection, features bassist extraordinaire and jazz ambassador Christian McBride (whose Grammy-award winning Big Band frequently calls upon Benny in the trumpet section) and drummer/producer Ulysses Owens, Jr., as well as the radiant Takeshi Ohbayashi on piano and Rhodes. His vocalese duet on "Social Call" from this album alongside fellow young star vocalist Veronica Swift became an instant smash hit single, being transcribed and learned by jazz vocalists around the world. Alongside his global touring as a straight-ahead/contemporary bandleader, Benny has appeared as a trumpet soloist in more commercial circles alongside Josh Groban, Ben Folds, fashion icon Isaac Mizrahi, Ann Hampton Callaway and more. He's been featured at Birdland, Jazz at Lincoln Center, Mezzrow, Bemelmans Bar at the Carlyle and other leading New York venues and has also been a special guest with the Pittsburgh Symphony Pops Orchestra, the Columbus Jazz Orchestra, and the Minsk Philharmonic Orchestra. He made his television debut in NBC's short-lived, SNL-inspired variety show "Maya & Marty" playing in the in-studio band led by acclaimed bassist & Broadway arranger Charlie Rosen. His global recognition has been bolstered by recent live-streaming concerts at Smalls Jazz Club, where he maintains a weekly residency, as well as frequent appearances on fellow young lion Emmet Cohen's "Emmet's Place" weekly show.

Third in a generational line of Pittsburgh jazz notables, Benny follows in the footsteps of his trumpeter/bandleader grandfather, Benny Benack, Sr. (1921-86), and his father Benny Benack, Jr., a saxophonist/clarinetist who gave the young Benny his first professional experience. Benny, Sr. hailed from a Pittsburgh lineage that also produced Roy Eldridge, Earl Hines, Art Blakey, Billy Strayhorn and so many more. He recorded the Pittsburgh Pirates' 1960 theme song "Beat 'Em Bucs" and toured with Tommy Dorsey and Raymond Scott, among others. Benny III returns to Pittsburgh often to perform, saluting his family forebears and the jazz heritage as a whole, nonetheless staking his bold and highly individual artistic claim. He is an endorsing artist with Torpedo Bags cases, CarolBrass flugelhorns, as well as various menswear fashion lines including X-Suit, Alain Dupetit, Proper Cloth & Vittone.

Stella Cole *(Vocals)* Beginning with an impromptu thirty second A cappella clip of "Over the Rainbow," Stella Cole has become a global viral sensation for simply doing what she has been passionate about her whole life — singing songs from the Great American Songbook.

Buoyed in part by her weekly livestream concerts on Tiktok from 2020 to 2022, the multi-talented singer's ever-growing numbers both embody and defy every superlative cliché (staggering, mind blowing, through the roof). Her most viral singing video has a whopping 27 million views. With a combined social media following of over 1.6 million, Stella has caught the attention

of superstars David Foster, James Taylor, Michael Buble, John Mayer and Meghan Trainor. Countless devoted fans from social media flock to see her perform, many of them traveling cross country and overseas to attend her sold out headlining concerts around the world. She has performed in venues like Madison Square Garden, Carnegie Hall, The Kennedy Center, Birdland and the Cafe Carlyle. In 2023, she toured the United States, Australia and New Zealand with Scott Bradlee's Postmodern Jukebox. She released a stylish, swinging rendition of Miley Cyrus' "Flowers" with the group in 2023 to mass acclaim, racking up more than 6 million views.

Stella's enduring influence as a viral artist and live performer lays a promising foundation — and gives her an eager built-in audience — for her highly anticipated self-titled debut album, an exquisite collection produced by Matt Pierson. Among Pierson's hundreds of credits in the pop and jazz worlds is Samara Joy's Linger Awhile, a 2023 Grammy winner for Best New Artist and Best Jazz Vocal Album. A testament to Stella's vast artistry, the singer worked on the project with some of the top studio talent in the industry, including multiple Grammy-winning arranger/pianist Alan Broadbent, Brazilian guitar master Chico Pinheiro, pianist/keyboardist Ben Paterson and bassist Neal Miner. The first half of the album features a lushly orchestrated string section arranged by Broadbent, while Stella is backed on the latter half by the trio of Paterson (on piano or Hammond B-3 organ), Miner on double bass and Keith Balla on drums.

True to her eclectic tastes, Stella Cole features both very familiar and delightfully obscure Songbook tunes including "Over the Rainbow," "(Love Is) The Tender Trap," the Judy Garland classic "The Boy Next Door," the Streisand-inspired "When the Sun Comes Out," "Detour Ahead" and "Moon River," the iconic Henry Mancini/Johnny Mercer tune she has chosen as the album's lead single.

"We picked 'Moon River' because it's a very important song for me," Stella says. "When I started posting on social media, the first well known musician to notice me was James Taylor, reposting a video of me singing 'Moon River'. That was a big moment!" Stella also cites the song as symbolic of her goal for the entire album. "What I've been trying to do with this music is comfort people. To me, 'Moon River' always feels like a deep breath; hopeful, calming and nostalgic. There's so much negativity and chaos in the world and I want people to stop, listen and feel they can breathe again."

Among Pierson's suggestions to the track list were "P.S. I Love You" and one of the album's greatest surprises, Billie Eilish's Top Ten hit "My Future." Performed as a vocal-acoustic guitar duet with Pinheiro, the Billie Eilish song serves as a uniquely contemporary love story in an album of songs from the midcentury. The track list also includes the ballads "My Foolish Heart" and "Blame it On My Youth" and a spirited, swinging rendition of "On the Street Where You Live" featuring Jerry Weldon on tenor sax.

"So many people of my generation aren't familiar with these songs, and I'm excited about the opportunity to introduce this timeless music to a new audience," says Stella. "Often when people hear my voice, they tell me that I was born in the wrong decade. I definitely feel an artistic connection to those earlier time periods, but I don't want to overly romanticize the past. Right now is the perfect time for me to be singing because the world needs this soothing and joyful music now just as much as they needed it in the 40s and 50s."

Stella's musical story began when, at three years old, her mom pressed play on a VHS tape of *The Wizard of Oz*. Stella was immediately obsessed with the film, watching it at every opportunity. By kindergarten, her VHS collection had grown to a large stack of classic movie musicals, setting the stage for a remarkable journey.

"I've been singing since I could talk and began voice lessons really early," says Stella. "Throughout middle school and high school, I was in musicals both in school

and local community theatre, sometimes two shows at the same time. I remember when I was a teenager, I didn't listen to pop music, instead I loved singing along with Judy Garland and Barbra Streisand, slowly realizing my range or tone sounded a bit like them. But I lacked confidence when I was starting out. I had no idea if there was an audience for the kind of songs I loved."

Enrolled at Northwestern University with a double major of theater and international relations, Stella continued to look for spaces for her voice. Fortunately, towards the end of college, she took a Great American Songbook class, an important step in rediscovering her passion for her first musical love, eventually allowing her to grow in skill and confidence.

The pandemic caused a temporary move back home, and her dad came up with a wild idea, encouraging her to post singing videos on social media. Fresh out of the shower and wearing a bathrobe and green clay face mask, she posted "Over the Rainbow." Quickly encouraged by the growing number of viewers, she made it her daily job. Stella knew she was on to something after her clip of Stephen Sondheim's "Everybody Says Don't" hit 40,000 views. Amidst her burgeoning viral success, she graduated from Northwestern and moved to New York, where she began singing at clubs and restaurants (starting with a regular weekend gig at Giovanni's in Brooklyn), developing her repertoire and becoming part of a local creative community of singers and actors.

"I think what makes me stand out as an artist is that I've learned that being a good singer is more than just having a pretty voice," she says. "It's about effective storytelling, communicating feelings and emotions through lyrical narratives. A few years ago, I was too focused on how my voice sounded, but since I began concentrating on telling a story, I've become a better all-around artist. I love that with the exception of the Billie Eilish tune, these songs were written decades before I was born, yet they feel like they are about my life. The album paints a very full picture of me, allowing me to share these stories in a very honest, vulnerable way. Whether people are longtime fans of my Tiktok or have never heard me before, I hope these songs can bring listeners as much joy as they bring me."

Jabu Graybeal *(Tap Dance)* From Pittsboro, NC, award winning artist Jabu Graybeal first studied with JUBA award winner Gene Medler and was a member for 9 years of the North Carolina Youth Tap Ensemble (NCYTE), one of the most renowned youth tap companies in the world. Jabu is a Jacob's Pillow and YoungArts Foundation alumni who has worked and performed with a diverse group of companies, such as Caleb Teicher & Company, Emmy Nominee Chloe Arnold's Apartment 33, Michelle Dorrance, Riverdance, and American choreographer Justin Peck. He is featured in Apple TV's movie musical "Spirited" with Will Ferrell and Ryan Reynolds. He was the first tap dancer to be accepted into the Berklee Global Jazz Institute Workshop at the Newport Jazz Festival and was included, under a nomination from Michelle Dorrance, in the December 2017 issue of Dance Spirit magazine as one of the dancers to look for in the next generation of tap dance. Jabu Graybeal is a touring star member of Scott Bradlee's Postmodern Jukebox and 1/2 of East Coast based music duo "SUMMERZOVR".

Miki Yamanaka *(Piano, Oct 2–20, and Nov 15, 2024)* 33-year-old Japanese-born pianist Miki Yamanaka has called New York City home since 2012 and in the past decade has wasted no time establishing herself as one of the leading personalities of her generation on the piano and beyond. Critics laud her "light, expressive touch and solidly crafted, mainstream approach" - Mike Jurkovic (All About Jazz), while audiences delight in not only her playing, but her vibrant personality as well. Yamanaka has gained international recognition from her albums as a leader; her most recent and most intimate release, "Stairway to the Stars" (Outside In Music), features jazz masters Mark Turner and Orlando le Fleming. Additionally, Miki has emerged

as a leader of the “New York Scene” via her notable residencies at mainstay West Village sister clubs Smalls and Mezzrow. During the pandemic, she developed a successful in-home live-streaming weekly concert series cleverly titled “Miki’s Mood” where she features a veritable who’s who of NYC talent (including her husband and frequent collaborator/drummer, Jimmy Macbride). The series showcases her vast knowledge of jazz standards and tunes, often featuring themed offerings of various composers from both the Great American Songbook as well as iconic jazz composers.

As a sideman, Yamanaka has worked with jazz luminaries such as alto saxophonist Antonio Hart who posits “Miki will be recognized as one of the most exceptional artists of her generation, as she is already one of the most talented and dedicated musicians from Japan.” Other notable bands she currently works in include the Philip Harper Quintet and the Roxy Coss Quintet. One of her most respected mentors on piano and organ (Yamanaka also performs on organ frequently), Larry Goldings, once mused, “If only I could have Miki Yamanaka comp behind me!” - a compliment of the highest order from one master pianist to another. She has a myriad of glowing reviews from her recorded work and the iconic Downbeat Jazz magazine has repeatedly awarded her albums high marks.

On top of her exciting work as a bandleader in New York and abroad, Miki can often be found out and about most nights, where her infectious smile and gregarious nature engender fast friends in every audience she encounters. She has many hobbies, including cooking, knitting, and perhaps most visibly, her penchant for wearing her vast collection of kimonos on her gigs, proudly representing her heritage and culture night after night as she dazzles audiences around the world.

Liya Grigoryan *(Piano, Oct 23–Nov 14 and Nov 16–17, 2024)* Liya Grigoryan is an Armenian born pianist who started her music career at the very young age of 5. Already then, she was actively participating in music competitions and performing at major music festivals in Russia, Ukraine, and Europe. Liya won her first award when she was 7 in 1998 at the International Jazz Competition for young jazz musicians in St. Petersburg. At 9, Liya took part at the Len- expo (Russia) contest where she won the main prize – a brand new piano – that allowed her to continue her music studies. She was part of a young jazz collective that toured as part of a cultural exchange in Germany, France and Scotland, performing at various prestigious music venues.

After graduating music school in 2009, Liya decided to continue her music education abroad and in 2010, moved to Amsterdam, Netherlands where she entered the Conservatorium van Amsterdam on a full scholarship and graduated in 2016 with a master’s in jazz performance. During her time there, Liya joined the East West Jazz Orchestra (based in Dortmund, Germany) touring all over Germany, Czech Republic, Belgium, Russia, and the Netherlands. Liya actively performed as a sideman and as a leader of her own project. She’s performed all over Europe in the most prestigious concert halls and venues such as Bimhuis (Netherlands), Concertgebouw Hall (Netherlands), Mariinsky Theatre Hall (St. Petersburg, Russia), Jazz Philharmonic Hall (Russia) to name a few. She’s also had the opportunity to perform and tour with internationally acclaimed artists such as Theo Crocker, Randy Brecker, Chad LB, Dick Oats, John Clayton, Justin Dicoccio, and others.

In 2014, Liya received an award at the Getxo Jazz (Bilbao,Spain) where she had the opportunity to open for jazz legend, Jack DeJohnette. In 2017 she released her first record as a leader, which received high acclaim in the jazz community and gave her opportunities to perform at numerous jazz festivals. In 2019, Liya was selected as of one the finalist of the prestigious Thelonius Monk Jazz Competition.

Russell Hall *(Bass)* Born in Kingston, Jamaica, Russell Hall began his journey as an actor from the tender age of 3.

Performing in Jamaican adaptations of popular musicals to serious prose, he was destined to take the stage. Everything changed when he migrated to the United States in 2007. Under the tutelage of The Commodores, he discovered the bridge between the world of drama and the world of music. He progressed quickly from the electric bass to the double bass through the rigorous programs of The Dillard Center for the Arts and The Juilliard School. Now, he is revered as one of the most in demand artist in New York City, performing with some of the biggest names in music, dance and film. His work is featured on the Grammy nominated album "My Favorite Things" by Joey Alexander, "Motherless Brooklyn", a film by Edward Norton which was nominated for a Golden Globe for Best Score, and HBO's "Masterclass Series" which feature Wynton Marsalis as a master teacher which was nominated for an Emmy. Russell's own work has been acknowledged with prestige in some of the most renowned venues and festivals around the world such as The Appel Room, The St. Lucia Jazz Festival, The Apollo, The Marciac Jazz Festival and many more. His most recent album, "Deep Blue Sea", is available on all platforms with the band he fronts Bessie and the Rainbowkids.

Joe Peri *(Drums)* Drummer, percussionist, and educator Joe Peri is primarily known as a jazz drummer, but he has played with a diverse range of bands and performers all around the world since arriving in New York City in 2009. Joe performs regularly in New York City's most renowned jazz clubs such as Smalls, Dizzy's, the Jazz Gallery, Cellar Dog, Zinc Bar, and Birdland to name a few. Since graduating from the Manhattan School of Music in 2015, Joe has collaborated with numerous notable jazz artists like Kurt Rosenwinkel, Seamus Blake, Ed Cherry, Peter Bernstein, Dave Kikoski, and Aaron Goldberg among many others. In 2018, Joe recorded with Tony Bennett and Lady Gaga on their Grammy Award-winning album "Love For Sale" released in October of 2021. The album, a tribute to Cole Porter, was Bennett's final studio recording. Joe also performs regularly as the percussionist in the band of fashion designer and personality Isaac Mizrahi. Joe has significant ties to Finland, having lived in Helsinki for the years 2020 and 2021. He is married to Finnish jazz bassist, Kaisa Mäensivu, and has played in her band "Kaisa's Machine" since 2021. They currently reside in the Washington Heights neighborhood of Manhattan.

As a passionate proponent of jazz education, Joe has maintained a highly sought-after private lesson studio in Manhattan, and he is currently the private instructor of Jazz Drum Set at the prestigious Manhattan School of Music Pre-College Division. A two-time graduate of the Manhattan School of Music (BM '13 & MM '15), Joe studied under the watchful eye of master drummer John Riley of the Village Vanguard Jazz Orchestra. Joe's first album as a leader, "Perillä", was released February 24th, 2023 on the Turku, Finland-based label Flame Jazz Records.

Jarien Jamanila *(Saxophone)* Jarien Jamanila is a musician born and raised in San Diego, California. He resided there until he moved to pursue a bachelor's degree at the Juilliard School. He settled in New York City after graduating in 2021 and has been freelancing since then. His musical voice ranges from all the common saxophones, clarinets, and flutes. Some of his key influences include Thelonious Monk, Johnny Hodges, and Sarah Vaughan. He stays very consistent in his daily life regarding expanding his craft, his health, and his philosophy. The past few years he's developed an extreme affinity for reading. Some of the books that have recently shaped his thoughts include Marcus Aurelius' "Meditations", Langston Hughes' "Selected Poems", and the Book of Psalms. His faith in God is a constant source of peace in his life. These attributes are fundamental in perpetuating his creativity.