

THE CHICAGO | JAZZ | ENSEMBLE

in residence at Columbia College Chicago since 1965

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THE CHICAGO JAZZ ENSEMBLE WITH ARTISTIC DIRECTOR DANA HALL JOINED BY BASSISTS CHRISTIAN MCBRIDE AND MESHELL NDEGEOCELLO FOR THE MUSIC OF CHARLES MINGUS

CHICAGO, IL - The Chicago Jazz Ensemble (CJE) with Artistic Director **Dana Hall** welcomes Jazz Journalists Association's *2011 Bassist of the Year* **Christian McBride** and 10-time Grammy nominee **Meshell Ndegeocello** for a performance with the Ensemble at the Harris Theater for Music and Dance. ***Beneath the Underdog: The Musical World of Charles Mingus*** takes place **Friday, January 20** at 7:30 pm.

In this compelling pairing, McBride - jazz bassist at the top of his game - and Ndegeocello - chart-topping genre-hopper who just released her 9th album - collaborate with the CJE on an evening of music by **Charles Mingus**. One of the most important figures in 20th century American music, Mingus was a virtuoso bass player, accomplished pianist, bandleader, and composer. This program takes inspiration from the last album he made before his death at the age of 56 – his 1978 collaboration with pop genius **Joni Mitchell**, the album *Mingus*, which mixes pop, jazz fusion, and Mitchell's vocals.

Bassist, composer, arranger, educator, and curator **Christian McBride** has worked and performed with the likes of jazz greats Freddie Hubbard, Sonny Rollins, J.J. Johnson, McCoy Tyner, Chick Corea, Herbie Hancock, and Pat Metheny. Crossing genres into R&B, Soul, and Pop/Rock, he's worked with everyone from James Brown to Sting, Isaac Hayes, and Bruce Hornsby. In September he released his own big-band recording, *The Good Feeling*, adding to his impressive range of projects – from mainstream jazz to bands that incorporate hip-hop and gospel – that have benefited from his prodigious technique. "He's been on the scene more than 20 years now," Dana Hall says, "and if anyone can exploit the fact that Mingus was such a strong instrumentalist, it's Christian."

Vocalist, rapper, and bassist **Meshell Ndegeocello** has shared the stage with The Rolling Stones, Madonna, Alanis Morissette, Tony Allen, John Medeski, Chaka Khan, and many others. Her distinctive career has crossed many boundaries, incorporating hip-hop, rock, R&B, new wave, go-go, and punk. In November, Ndegeocello released *Weather*, her ninth album in 20 years. In terms of jazz, recently she collaborated with pianist Jason Moran in New York City on a musical tribute to Fats Waller. "Meshell is a great collaborator, just as Mingus was with Joni," explains Dana Hall. "I think there are a lot of ways we can explore the music where Joni reflected her interest in jazz. We'll be re-imagining Mingus for the 21st century, not just replaying the album."

Remaining concerts in the CJE's 2011-12 season include **December 15's *Buhaina's Delight: Art Blakey and the Message of Jazz***, the inaugural program in the CJE's new Small Ensemble Concert series, featuring smaller configurations of Ensemble members and special guests, presented at 7:30 pm at the Cindy Pritzker Auditorium. ***Ornithology: The Music of Charlie "Bird" Parker*** will be presented Friday, **February 24** at 7:30 pm at the Harris Theater, featuring Grammy-nominated Puerto Rican saxophonist **Miguel Zenón** and a guest string ensemble. Friday, **April 6** at 7:30 pm at the Cindy Pritzker Auditorium, the CJE presents ***Jazz and Literature***, the second program in the CJE's Small Ensemble Concert series that explores the intersection of jazz and the spoken and written word.

Two-concert mini subscriptions for this season's Harris Theater series are still available for our Jan. and Feb. concerts and offer an impressive benefit package in addition to 25% savings. Subscriptions must be purchased by

phone via 312.334.7777. **Single Tickets for our Harris Theater** performances are \$18 - \$48 general and \$5 for students (with valid ID). Call 312-334-7777 or visit the Harris Online Box Office.

Single Tickets for our Small Ensemble Concerts at the Cindy Pritzker Auditorium in the Harold Washington Library are \$25 general and \$5 for students (with valid ID), available via Brown Paper Tickets, 800-838-3006. *(At the door at this venue, we're only able to accept cash/check payments. Please buy your tickets online by noon the day of the show if you want to pay by credit card.)*

More information at www.chicagोजazzensemble.com.

CJE ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION

The Chicago Jazz Ensemble is **Dana Hall**, Artistic Director and drums; **Dan Nicholson** and **Jarrard Harris**, alto saxophone; **Pat Mallinger** and **Rob Denty**, tenor saxophone and clarinet; **Tim McNamara**, baritone saxophone; **Andy Baker**, **Tim Coffman**, **Tom Garling**, and **Thomas Matta**, trombone; **Mark Olen**, **Larry Bowen**, **Art Hoyle**, and **Pharez Whitted**, trumpet; **Jeremy Kahn**, piano; **Jeff Parker**, guitar; **Dan Anderson**, bass; and **Bobbi Wilsyn**, vocals.

The CJE is proud to have been in residence at Columbia College Chicago since 1965. Its 2011-12 performance season is made possible in part by grants from the MacArthur Fund for Arts and Culture at Prince, the Fanny R. Wurlitzer Foundation, and the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency. The Chicago Jazz Ensemble's educational programs, including the Louis Armstrong Legacy Program and Celebration, are supported in part by the Louis Armstrong Educational Foundation, Citi Foundation, the Crown Family, the Elizabeth Morse Charitable Trust, and the Polk Bros. Foundation. The CJE is also sponsored by Downbeat Magazine and media sponsor 90.9fm WDCB Public Radio.

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