



Sullivan Fortner, Jazz Piano

I Loves You Porgy

Anxiety

Minute Waltz

Alone Together

Desafinado

Elegy Sullivan

You Must Believe in Spring

Dusky 'n' Sandy

Newport

Con Alma

Blues

Melody in F

George Gershwin

Sullivan Fortner

Frédéric Chopin/Sullivan Fortner

Arthur Schwartz

Antônio Carlos Jobim

Sullivan Fortner

Michel Legrand

Bud Powell

Sullivan Fortner

Dizzy Gillespie

Sullivan Fortner

Anton Rubinstein/Sullivan Fortner

Sullivan Fortner's broadcast will be available through Friday, March 19 on our [Digital Stages page](#).

Composer Profiles

George Gershwin

September 26, 1898 (Brooklyn, NY)–July 11, 1937 (Hollywood, CA)

American composer, pianist, and conductor.

Gershwin began his career as a song plugger—a piano player employed by music stores to promote new sheet music before good quality recordings were widely available—in New York’s Tin Pan Alley. By the time he was 20, Gershwin had recorded more than 140 player piano rolls, and had established himself as a composer of Broadway show. In his 30s he was America’s most famous and widely accepted composer of concert music, as well as a leading songwriter. Among his best-known works are the orchestral compositions *Rhapsody in Blue* (1924) and *An American in Paris* (1928); the songs *Swanee* (1919) and *Fascinating Rhythm* (1924); the jazz standard *I Got Rhythm* (1930); and the opera *Porgy and Bess* (1935), which gave birth to the hit *Summertime*.

Sullivan Fortner (see full biography at the end)

Frédéric Chopin

March 1, 1810 (Żelazowa Wola, Poland)–October 17, 1849 (Paris, France)

Polish composer and pianist.

Chopin combined a gift for melody, an adventurous harmonic sense, an intuitive and inventive understanding of formal design, and a brilliant piano technique in composing a major corpus of piano music. Although he wrote little but piano works, Chopin ranks as one of music’s greatest tone poets by reason of his superfine imagination and fastidious craftsmanship. One of the leading 19th-century composers who began a career as a pianist, he abandoned concert life early; but his music represents the quintessence of the Romantic piano tradition and the expressive and technical characteristics of the instrument more fully than any other composer.

Arthur Schwartz

November 25, 1900 (Brooklyn, NY)–September 3, 1984 (Kintnersville, PA)

American composer.

The son of a prosperous lawyer, Schwartz was groomed for the legal profession, but he loved music and wrote songs during his law studies at New York University and Columbia University Law School. He began practicing law in 1924, but with encouragement from lyricist Lorenz Hart, he left the bar in 1928 and teamed up with lyricist Howard Dietz. Their first success together, the revue *The Little Show* (1929), led the team to a series of Broadway revues that were among the finest of the 1930s. By the

end of the decade, Schwartz settled in Hollywood where he scored some dozen film musicals with various lyricists and with uneven success. By the 1950s, he had returned to Broadway, writing stage musicals with Ira Gershwin, among others. His music ranges from the broodingly romantic, such as *Dancing in the Dark*, to the bright and sophisticated, as in his signature song *That's Entertainment*.

Antônio Carlos Jobim

January 25, 1927 (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)—December 8, 1994 (New York, NY)

Brazilian composer, pianist, guitarist, and arranger.

In the mid-1940s, Jobim began to work as a pianist in the bars and nightclubs of Rio's beach areas of Copacabana and Ipanema. In 1952, he worked as an arranger for the recording firm Continental and later became the artistic director for the Odeon label in 1956. Around this time, Jobim began a lifelong association with the poet Vinicius de Moraes, and together they helped forward the bossa nova movement, with works such as *Desafinado*, *Orfeu da Conceição*, and most famously 1962's *Garota de Ipanema* (*The Girl from Ipanema*). From 1964 onwards, his success in the U.S. grew rapidly, with various Grammy awards, several LP releases, and television and film soundtrack contracts. By the late 1960s, his music had become part of the repertory of leading international pop and jazz artists. During the last 25 years of his life, the worldwide recognition of his talents was unprecedented for a Brazilian popular musician. His 250-title output reveals his talents as a profoundly creative composer whose innovative and inspiring melodies, harmonies, rhythms, and inventive orchestration always expressed his passionate love for his native city and its people with simplicity and honest emotion.

Michel Legrand

February 24, 1932 (Paris, France)—January 26, 2019 (Paris, France)

French composer, pianist, and arranger; son of the composer Raymond Legrand, and brother of the singer Christiane Legrand.

A musical prodigy, Legrand enrolled at the Paris Conservatoire at the age of 11. He attended from 1943 to 1950, studied conducting with Nadia Boulanger and harmony with Henri Chaland, and graduated as a first-prize winner in composition. A Dizzy Gillespie concert in Paris in 1947 awakened his passion for jazz. In the 1950s, he became a popular bandleader, singer, and songwriter, and wrote and conducted ballets for Roland Petit. In the late 1950s, his arrangements for the album *Legrand Jazz* (1958) featured the playing of Miles Davis, Bill Evans, John Coltrane, and more. He also began writing film music, and is indelibly linked with the emergence of the French New Wave, writing scores for directors such as Jean-Luc, Agnès Varda, and Jacques Demy. He achieved his greatest success with Demy's *Les parapluies de Cherbourg* (1964), which brought worldwide recognition including the Palme d'Or at the 1964 Cannes Film Festival. Hollywood took notice and in 1968 he had his biggest American success with his score for Norman Jewison's *The Thomas Crown Affair*, which included the hit song *The Windmills of your Mind*.

Subsequent achievements include the Barbra Streisand film *Yentl* (1983), the jazz score for *Dingo* (1992) co-written with Miles Davis, and the sweeping, dark music of *Les Misérables* (1996). In 1997, Legrand scored his first musical, *Le passe muraille*, which then became the Tony Award-nominated Broadway show *Amour* in 2002. Legrand composed more than 220 film and television scores and recorded more than 100 jazz, classical, and popular music albums.

Bud Powell

September 27, 1924 (New York, NY)—August 1, 1966 (New York, NY)

American jazz pianist.

Following classical piano studies, Powell took part in informal jam sessions at New York's Minton's Playhouse in the early 1940s—where he came under the tutelage and protection of Thelonious Monk and Cootie Williams—and contributed to the emerging Black American bebop style. After sustaining a head injury during a racially motivated incident in 1945, he suffered the first of many nervous collapses which were to confine him to sanatoriums for much of his adult life. From the mid-1950s, as his mental health and musical powers deteriorated, he gradually restricted his public appearances. He moved to Paris in 1959, where he led a trio (1959–62) with Kenny Clarke, usually with bassist Pierre Michelot as the third member, and enjoyed a certain celebrity status. In August 1964, he returned to the USA and made a disastrous appearance at Carnegie Hall (1965) and was soon obliged to abandon music altogether. Despite these challenges, Powell was the most important pianist in the early bebop style, and his innovations transformed the jazz pianism of his time. A prodigious technician, he greatly extended the range of jazz harmony by reducing his chordal underpinning to compounds of 2nds and 7ths, and achieved an extraordinary variety in his phrase lengths, which range from brief flurries to seemingly inexhaustible lines that ignore the structure of the original.

Dizzy Gillespie

October 21, 1917 (Cheraw, SC)—January 6, 1993 (Englewood, NJ)

American jazz trumpeter, bandleader, singer, and composer.

Gillespie was one of the principal innovators in jazz—pioneering the harmonic and rhythmic advances of the early 1940s that became known as bebop—along with Charlie Parker, Thelonious Monk, and Kenny Clarke. His exceptional talent for playing higher, faster, and more accurately than anyone who preceded him set a new standard for jazz musicians, and his style of playing was widely imitated, especially by trumpeters. Gillespie wrote such early bebop compositions as *Woody 'n' You*, *Groovin' High*, *Salt Peanuts*, and his most enduring piece, *A Night in Tunisia*, one of the most frequently recorded in jazz. Along with his music, Gillespie's exuberant personality and individual style made him one of the few jazz musicians recognizable to the general public. In the late 1940s, he codified a distinctive appearance wearing a beret, horn-rimmed glasses, and goatee—a style that was adopted by

advertisers as an iconic representation of the jazz modernist or beatnik. His clownish stage manner, nimble dancing, tendency to puff out his cheeks and neck while playing, and unusual instrument—a trumpet with the bell turned upward at a 45-degree angle—all left a strong impression on the public. His career spanned almost six decades, and it is difficult to overstate his impact as one of the most influential musicians in jazz history.

Anton Rubinstein

November 28, 1829 (Vikhvatintsï, Ukraine)—November 20, 1894 (Peterhof, Russia)

Russian pianist, composer, conductor, and teacher; brother of Nikolay Rubinstein.

Rubinstein was one of the greatest pianists of the 19th century; his playing was compared with Liszt's, to the disadvantage of neither. He was noted for his series of historical recitals—seven extended, consecutive concerts covering the history of piano music. Rubinstein played this series throughout Russia, Eastern Europe, and the United States while touring. He was also an influential, if controversial, figure in Russian musical circles, most notably for founding the St. Petersburg Conservatory. An exceptionally prolific composer, he composed five piano concertos, six symphonies, and many solo piano works, along with a substantial output of works for chamber ensemble.

Artist Biography

Sullivan Fortner, Piano

Born December 29, 1968 (New Orleans, LA)

American jazz pianist, composer, and band leader.

Lauded as one of the top jazz pianists of his generation, Sullivan Fortner is recognized for his virtuosic technique and captivating performances. The winner of three prestigious awards—a Leonore Annenberg Arts Fellowship, the 2015 Cole Porter Fellowship from the American Pianists Association, and the 2016 Lincoln Center Award for Emerging Artists—Sullivan makes music that embodies the essence of the blues and jazz as he connects music of all eras and genres through his improvisation.



As a leader, the Sullivan Fortner Trio has performed on many of the world's most prestigious stages, including Jazz at Lincoln Center, Newport Jazz Festival, Monterey Jazz Festival, Discover Jazz Festival, Tri-C Jazz Festival, Jazz Standard, and the Gilmore Keyboard Festival. Fortner has been heard with other leading musicians around the world including Dianne Reeves, Roy Hargrove, Wynton Marsalis, Paul

Simon, John Scofield, Cecile McLorin Salvant, Fred Hersch, Sean Jones, DeeDee Bridgewater, Roberta Gambarini, Peter Bernstein, Stefon Harris, Nicholas Peyton, Billy Hart, Dave Liebman, Gary Bartz, Etienne Charles, and Christian Scott.

Fortner brings the same sense of musicianship to his recordings as he does to his live performances. His first album *Aria* (Impulse Records) garnered acclaim by *The New York Times* and *Downbeat Magazine*, as it showcased Fortner's mastery at both rendering well-chosen standards and composing memorable melodies. On *Aria*, Fortner led a splendid ensemble, comprised of drummer Joe Dyson, Jr., bassist Aidan Carroll, and tenor and soprano saxophonist Tivon Pennicott. Fortner's highly anticipated sophomore album as a solo recording artist, *Moments Preserved*, was released in 2018. Fortner can also be heard on the recordings of Etienne Charles's *Kaiso* (2011), Donald Harrison's *Quantum Leaps* (2010), and Theo Croker's *Fundamentals* (2007). Most recently, he has recorded with Grammy award-winning artists Roy Hargrove and Cecile McLorin Salvant on their highly anticipated albums.

Fortner's foray into music education led him to lead master classes at today's most formidable music institutions, including Oberlin Conservatory of Music, Manhattan School of Music, New Orleans Center for Creative Arts (NoCCA), Purdue University, Lafayette Summer Music Workshop, and Belmont University (TN).

A native of New Orleans, Fortner began playing the piano at the age of seven and was hailed a virtuoso before he was out of high school. He has a Bachelor of Music degree in Jazz Studies from Oberlin Conservatory and a Master of Music in Jazz Performance from Manhattan School of Music.

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Land Acknowledgement

Middlebury College sits on land which has served as a site of meeting and exchange among indigenous peoples since time immemorial. The Western Abenaki are the traditional caretakers of these Vermont lands and waters, which they call *Ndakinna*, or "homeland." We remember their connection to this region and the hardships they continue to endure. We give thanks for the opportunity to share in the bounty of this place and to protect it.