



MIDDLEBURY
PERFORMING ARTS SERIES

P R E S E N T S

Bria Skonberg Quintet

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2024

7:30 PM

ROBISON HALL, MAHANEY ARTS CENTER



Bria Skonberg Quintet

Bria Skonberg, Trumpet/Voice/Composition

Birsa Chatterjee, Saxophone

Darrian Douglas, Drums

Chris Pattishall, Piano

Barry Stephenson, Bass

The “Jingle Bell Swing” program will be announced from the stage.

∞ *There will be no intermission.* ∞

*This performance is made possible with generous support
from the Paul Nelson Performance Endowment and the Rothrock Family Residency Fund.*

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Photography and the use of audio or video equipment are prohibited.*



Biographies

Bria Skonberg, Trumpet/Voice/Composition

Bria Skonberg is a Juno-award winning artist, 10x Downbeat Rising Star, Jazz at Lincoln Center Swing! Awardee, and the 2022 recipient of the “Legend” Award by the Society for the Preservation of the Great American Songbook. The trumpeter, vocalist, and composer has been called the “shining hope of hot jazz” (*NY Times*) and is considered “one of the most versatile and imposing musicians of her generation.” (*Wall Street Journal*) She has been a featured artist at hundreds of festivals and stages the world over, including New Orleans Jazz & Heritage, Monterey, Newport, and Montreal Jazz Festivals. A three-time Juno Award Nominee, Bria’s debut LP on Sony Masterworks won for Best Jazz Vocal Album and made the Top 5 on *Billboard* jazz charts. Her upcoming seventh studio album *What it Means* was recorded in New Orleans with the Crescent City’s finest and released in July 2024. She tours constantly, bringing her own signature sounds of fiery trumpet playing, smoky vocals, and story-telling together with adventurous concoctions of classic and new.

The daughter of teachers, Bria is passionate about education and the learning experience. She was introduced to jazz by a spirited public school band program and local festival in her hometown of Chilliwack, British Columbia. She earned her degree in Jazz Trumpet Performance from Capilano University in Vancouver, where she studied with Kevin Elaschuk, Alan Matheson, and independently with Australian cornetist Simon Stribling—all while balancing a full road schedule and managing two bands. Following graduation, she performed for four years with Canada’s King of Swing, Dal Richards, and was taken under the wing of music producer Paul Airey, who cultivated her love of songwriting. A featured performance at the opening ceremony of the Vancouver Paralympic Games capped off this exciting chapter.

She traveled extensively, performing in China, Japan, and throughout Europe as a featured artist in traditional jazz circles. Seeking new challenges, Bria moved to New York in 2010. She has studied privately with renowned trumpeters Warren Vache and Jon Faddis, and performed with the likes of Wyclife Gordon, Jon Batiste, Stephane Wrembel, and Steven Bernstein. She released two more solo records with Random Act Records, *So Is The Day* (2012) and *Into Your Own* (2014), highlighting her songwriting and sound explorations. At this point, she met renowned record producer Matt Pierson and started a musical collaboration that would see her award-winning albums *Bria* (2016) and *With a Twist* (2017) released on Okeh Records (Sony). Her 2019 independent release *Nothing Never Happens* features predominantly original compositions.

Since arriving in New York, Bria has been at the forefront of a revival of classic American music as both a performer and educator, programming concerts and workshops for students of all ages on behalf of Jazz at Lincoln Center, the Louis Armstrong House Museum, Jazz House Kids, and more. Bria is a co-producer of the NY Hot Jazz Camp, an annual immersive learning experience for adults in the heart of Greenwich Village, as well as the annual Gotham Jazz Festival. She has served as faculty at the Teagarden Jazz Camp (Sacramento Jazz Education Foundation), Centrum Jazz Camp, Geri Allen Jazz Camp, and Junior Jazz Academy (JALC). She now appears often giving masterclasses and private instruction—as well as directing and performing—with student ensembles at all levels. In 2018 Lincoln Center sought out her leadership for a tribute to the first integrated all-female big band, the International Sweethearts of Rhythm, which marked the debut of her “Sisterhood of Swing” ensemble. She has been musical director for two further concerts of this material featuring Grammy award-winning vocalist Catherine Russell, who is the daughter of International Sweethearts of Rhythm guitarist Carline Ray.

Notable touring includes being a featured member of the 2019 Monterey Jazz Festival on Tour for 26 dates alongside Cecile McLorin Salvant, Christian Sands, Melissa Aldana, and Jamison Ross. Since the start of 2024, she has toured 45 cities in the U.S. and Canada with “Sing & Swing: Our Great American Songbook” alongside fellow trumpeter and vocalist Benny Benack III, presented by Jazz at Lincoln Center and IMG Artists.

Bria is an active mentor in the Women in Jazz Organization, a Bach Conn-Selmer artist, a board member of the International Trumpet Guild, and she became a mother in 2020.

Birsa Chatterjee, Saxophone

Birsa Chatterjee’s career began as a young participant in nationally recognized and award-winning jazz education programs such as Jazz House Kids and Jazz at Lincoln Center and he was the first recipient of the James Moody scholarship. Birsa graduated from The Oberlin Conservatory of Music in 2019 with degrees in saxophone and vocal performance and received his master’s degree in jazz saxophone performance from The Juilliard School.

Birsa has played at Carnegie Hall, the Blue Note, Dizzy’s Club, NJPAC, and across the U.S., Peru, and India. He has forged new ground as a composer, blending authentic elements of Indian classical music and jazz. He has performed as a guest soloist with the Dominick Farinacci Big Band, appeared alongside Terence Blanchard at the Tri-C Jazz Festival, and played with many other jazz greats. In 2020, he debuted the Birsa Chatterjee Quartet virtually to global audiences, and gives regular performances combining influences of Jazz as well as his Indian classical musical roots.

In addition to his role as education coordinator for Jazz House Kids in Montclair, NJ, Birsa works with students at Jazz at Lincoln Center, Juilliard youth programs, and privately in New York City.

Darrian Douglas, Drums

Darrian Douglas—a dynamic drummer, composer, and educator—has forged a remarkable career that spans from his roots in Jackson, Mississippi to the vibrant music scenes of New Orleans and New York City.

Following mentorship by renowned music educators Dr. Perry Combs, Alvin Fielder, and Chad Anderson, Darrian made a pivotal move to New Orleans in 2007, stepping into the prestigious role of drummer for Ellis Marsalis’s quartet. This experience, which lasted until 2012, proved transformative, allowing Darrian to expand his musical horizons without constraints.

As a co-leader, Darrian helms *The Session*, a collaborative ensemble featuring musicians he has worked with during his time in Jason Marsalis’ vibe quartet. This co-led band allows Darrian to showcase not only his drumming skills, but also his compositional talents and leadership abilities, sharing creative direction with his fellow musicians. His virtuosity has graced over 30 international festivals and iconic venues such as The Kennedy Center, Dizzy’s Club Coca-Cola, and Smoke Jazz Club. Darrian’s rhythmic prowess has earned him performances alongside jazz luminaries including Wynton Marsalis, Victor Goines, and Jazzmeia Horn. Douglas’ discography showcases his versatility, with notable recordings featuring Ellis Marsalis, Gregory Agid, and Bria Skonberg.

Passionate about nurturing the next generation of musicians, Darrian previously served as a percussion instructor at the New Orleans Center for Creative Arts. Currently, he’s Executive Director of the Second Line Arts Collective—a non-profit organization bridging critical gaps in music education—offering comprehensive programming from early instruction to professional development.

Now based in New York City, Darrian continues to push the boundaries of jazz drumming while fostering a community of artists and industry professionals.

Chris Pattishall, Piano

Chris Pattishall is a pianist and composer known for his wide stylistic breadth, meticulous sense of detail, empathy, and an inclination towards the surreal. An in-demand pianist and musical collaborator, Chris has established himself over the last decade as “an expert at using the jazz tradition as a jumping-off point for experimentation” (*JazzTimes*). His 2021 release *Zodiac*—a reimagining of the Zodiac Suite by pioneering yet under-appreciated pianist and composer Mary Lou Williams—was called “a startling achievement” (*NY Times*) and “a hell of a debut album” (*Stereogum*).

Chris is a featured performer on a wide range of recordings, from the GRAMMY-nominated debut album of Jamison Ross to the film scores of *Knives Out*, *Nightmare Alley*, and the indie sensation *Everything Everywhere All At Once*. He co-composed the score to *Going To Mars: The Nikki Giovanni Project* (directed by Joe Brewster and Michele Stephenson) with Samora Pinderhughes. The film won the Grand Jury Prize at the 2023 Sundance Film Festival.

He has collaborated with artists across multiple disciplines, including theater directors Shariffa Ali and Kamilah Long, tap dancer Michela Marino-Lerman, writer Simeon Marsalis, and visual artists Najja Moon and Kambui Olujimi. He contributed music to Kambui Olujimi’s installation *In The Dark We Lose Our Edges* for the Sharjah Biennial 15, as well as Samora Pinderhughes’s multimedia installation/exhibit *The Healing Project*. He has performed at world-renowned venues including Carnegie Hall, Jazz at Lincoln Center, and the Whitney Museum, and toured internationally as a leader as well as with artists such as Wycliffe Gordon, Jamison Ross, Bria Skonberg, and Vuyo Sotashe.

Chris is a NY Voices Fellow at Joe’s Pub alongside vocalist Vuyo Sotashe—together they are working on a duo album that ranges from Duke Ellington to Xhosa hymns to Randy Newman. Chris was an Artist-In-Residence at Duke University (2021–2022), focusing on the musical and community impact of Mary Lou Williams. His original suite *Fictions*, based on the short stories of Jorge Luis Borges, received a 2019 Recording Grant from the Aaron Copland Fund.

Barry Stephenson, Bass

New York City-based acoustic/electric bassist and composer Barry Stephenson has been acclaimed as “one of the most sought-after bassists on the scene today.” Released in 2020, Barry’s *The Iconoclast* was nominated for the NAACP Image Award® for Outstanding Jazz Album (Instrumental) and was notably the only independently produced album in a category that included works by Jon Batiste, George Burton, Christian Sands, and Immanuel Wilkins. *The Iconoclast* was also named by *Offbeat* magazine as one of the Top 50 Albums of 2020.

As with his debut album, 2015’s *Basic Truths*, *The Iconoclast* was entirely original music (excepting a new arrangement of Thelonious Monk’s *Bemsha Swing*)— a showcase of Barry’s work as a composer that has earned him the Ernest O. and Shirley N. Svenson Jazz Composition Award, and the ASCAP Foundation’s Louis Armstrong Award. Barry has also composed for film, most recently the score for the award-winning short, *Truth, Inc.*

Barry has performed and toured extensively with TV personality, musician, and bandleader Jon Batiste and Stay Human, including regular appearances on *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*, and performances at a variety of festivals, including the Monterey, Montreaux, Montreal, Newport, North Sea, and Umbria Jazz festivals. He has also performed at Bonnaroo and Lollapalooza. Barry has been featured on episodes of *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel* and *Godfather of Harlem*.

Barry has performed with many internationally recognized jazz, blues, and soul artists, including Nicholas Payton, David Sanborn, Seal, the late Freddie Cole, Diane Schuur, Marc Cary, Jamison Ross, Sullivan Fortner, Jazzmeia Horn, Herlin Riley, the late Henry Butler, Mark Whitfield, Tim Warfield, Russell Gunn, Christian Sands, Cyrille Aimée, Etienne Charles, Marcus Printup, Davell Crawford, Rodney Green, and Theo Croker.



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Greta Costello '26
Vanessa Dator '25
Rohan Davies '27
Juliette Delgado '27
Chandni Desai '25
Emma Dobson '27
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Charles Dye '26
Menen Ebrahim '26
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