



## **THE BETSY HOTEL ANNOUNCES STELLAR LINE UP FOR NATIONAL JAZZ APPRECIATION MONTH WITH SIX AWARD-WINNING PIANISTS APPEARING IN 38 PERFORMANCES THROUGHOUT APRIL 2021**

**MIAMI BEACH** – (For Immediate Release) The Betsy Hotel ([thebetsyhotel.com](http://thebetsyhotel.com)) announces a stellar line up for National Jazz Appreciation Month, featuring Jim Gasior, Tal Cohen, Wilkie Ferguson, David Attelan, Ryan Ellis, Beau Cornelius, Trenton Klaz. Marc Irwin (based in NYC and Baltimore) is The Hotel's visiting jazz artist for 2021. The Betsy's Jazz program is the longest continually running series of its kind in the region, featuring live performances 9 times a week – from 6 to 11 PM nightly, and from 11 AM to 4 PM on weekends during brunch at LT Steak and Seafood. All performances are in the Lobby of The Betsy Hotel located at 1440 Ocean Drive, Miami Beach. <https://www.thebetsyhotel.com/calendar>

Jazz Appreciation Month (fondly known as "JAM") was created in 2001 at the Smithsonian to recognize and celebrate the extraordinary heritage and history of jazz for the entire month of April. The Betsy's Jazz program connects to a rich legacy that links South Florida to the National historic Jazz circuit which brought musicians who played in both Harlems (*the one in NY and the one in Overtown a.k.a. The Harlem of the South*), as they made their way from club to club across the USA. Back in the day in Overtown and Miami Beach, stars like Count Basie, Ella Fitzgerald, Billie Holiday, Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, McCoy Tyner, and Josephine Baker performed jazz standards that will be performed live at The Betsy Hotel during Jazz Appreciation Month (JAM) 2021 but now with a contemporary twist brought to bear by six exemplary players.

The Betsy's jazz schedule for April 2021 is listed here: <https://www.thebetsyhotel.com/calendar>

### **PERFORMER BIOS – APRIL JAZZ PIANISTS AT THE BETSY HOTEL FOR JAZZ APPRECIATION MONTH 2021**

**Jim GASIOR** has performed with Ricky Martin, Kelly Clarkson, Alih Jey, Chayanne, Little Richard, Michael Bolton, Jose Feliciano, Smokey Robinson, Benny Golson, Slide Hampton, Freddie Hubbard, Terell Stafford, Patti Austin, John Fedchock, Duffy Jackson, Jason Marsalis, Donald Harrison, Robin Eubanks, Jeremy Pelt, Jay Leonhart, and the Jaco Pastorius Reunion Big Band. Jim holds a Bachelor's degree in Studio Music and Jazz Performance and a Master's degree in Jazz Pedagogy – both from University of Miami's Frost School of Music, where he is in the final stages of his Doctorate in Jazz.

**Allen C. PAUL's** early years were filled with discoveries of jazz, blues, funk, gospel – all kinds of musical puzzle pieces that would begin to weave their way into his playing. He capped off this start by winning the Florida State Music Teachers Association Concerto Competition at age 17 and performing with the Tampa Bay Symphony. A graduate of the University of Miami School of Music in Jazz Piano, he currently performs, writes, and teaches privately in South Florida – and is both a sought-after soloist and side man for the best and brightest jazz musicians in the region.

**Tal COHEN** is a Grammy Award winning jazz pianist currently located in Miami, whose unique style owes its roots to the Jewish folk songs and classical music he played in his formative years growing up in Israel. He has received much acclaim, winning the Barry Harris National Piano Competition as well as the prestigious Freedman Fellowship, which saw him perform to a sold-out crowd at the Sydney Opera House. Recently, Tal Cohen has been playing around the globe with Terence Blanchard, Greg Osby, Ignacio Berroa, Joe Lovano, and others. He currently leads his own ensemble which has performed at iconic jazz festivals and venues, including the Jazzbez Jazz Festival (Ukraine), Detroit Jazz Festival, Melbourne Jazz Festival (Australia), and a three-week residency at the Black Cat (San Francisco). His most recent album, *Gentle Giants*, has received international critical acclaim and earned him many positive reviews including a 4-star review from *Downbeat*.

**Wilkie FERGUSON** is a native of Miami and a graduate of New World School of the Arts. He studied music and mathematics at Morehouse College and majored in classical piano performance at the Eastman School of Music. Wilkie's first job out of college was with the faculty of the Boys' Choir of Harlem as assistant director, piano accompanist, and music theory instructor. As a performer, he was a part of the original Broadway casts of the Tony Award winning *The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess*, *Motown: the Musical*, and *Wonderland* and has toured with *In the Heights*, *Hairspray*, and *Dreamgirls*. Off-Broadway and regional shows include *Cotton Club Parade* at City Center and the world premieres of *Sister Act* and *Ray Charles Live* at Pasadena Playhouse. As a composer-arranger, some of his work can be heard in *Parrotheads*, currently the

#1 ranked documentary on iTunes; *Congo Cabaret* by Shoga Films; and his original musical, *Take On Me*, featuring big band arrangements of 80s pop hits.

**Ryan ELLIS** received his Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Miami in 2000. As a professional jazz pianist, Ellis has worked extensively in the Caribbean, Florida, and Hawaii performing pop and jazz with many great musicians, most notably Eddie Jones, Bobby Dukoff, Paul Brown, Leon Foster Thomas, Bobby Ramirez, and Ira Sullivan. Ellis received his Master's Degree in Music from Florida International University on a fellowship from the Johnny Mercer Foundation.

**Trenton KLAZ** is a pianist and keyboardist based in Miami, Florida. Classically trained from the age of 3, he went on to pursue a music degree at the University of Florida. He currently studies graduate jazz performance at the Frost School of Music at University of Miami. Trent's desire to pursue music stems from the belief that music transcends our physical reality and is a way for all humans to share a spiritual connection with one another. His influences range from Chick Corea and Michel Camilo, to Monty Alexander and Bill Evans. Trent has had the privilege of playing with artists such as Wycliffe Gordon, Bobby Shew, Rex Richardson, Maria Schneider and the Glenn Miller Orchestra. His current projects include his jazz group "The Trenton Klaz Trio" and his jazz fusion cover band "The Outliers."

**David ATTELAN** is an award-winning pianist and composer who has composed, arranged, and produced music for films, TV shows, fashion shows, brands, and artists (hip hop, pop, electro) and produced dance-floor remixes. Among the famous brands, film directors, productions, and TV channels that have trusted him and continue to collaborate with him are Renault, L'Oréal, La Fnac, EMI, Sony BMG, Eric Toledano and Olivier Nakache (Tellement Proches), Alexandre Arcady (Mariage Mixte), Diane Kurys (L'Anniversaire) Stéphane Guenin (L'Engagement - Killing Uncle Roman), Philippe Poulard (Warcraft), TF1, France TV, M6, W9, MTV, ARTE, etc. A passionate artist with an entrepreneurial spirit, he has created a record label and a publishing company in Paris and has produced, composed, or arranged for musicals such as *Le Sel et le Miel*, *Fiddler on The Roof*, *Piaf*, *Grease*, and *Salt & Honey*, and has been for 10 years the conductor and musical director of the dance and song company ADAMA, with whom he performed throughout Europe.

**Beau Matthew CORNELIUS** is a jazz pianist, producer, and teacher based out of Miami and Los Angeles who graduated from USC in 2020 with a Masters in Jazz Studies, just completed a gig with the prestigious All American College Band at Disney, and is currently pursuing a DMA in Jazz at University of Miami Frost School of Music.

**Marc IRWIN** (The Betsy's 2021 Jazz Artist in Residence) Marc Irwin is a pianist, composer, arranger, and recording artist, using his diverse talents as a musician within the fields of contemporary, jazz, classical, theater, and world music. A native New Yorker, Marc's performing credits include twenty years as a pianist and conductor for Broadway theatre, five years as a sound designer and keyboardist with Harry Belafonte and ten years as an assistant conductor at the Kennedy Center for the Performing arts in Washington, D.C. Marc received a Doctorate in Music Composition from the Peabody Institute, Johns Hopkins University, in 2000. Marc's portfolio includes string quartets, woodwind and brass ensembles, over thirty arrangements for the Peabody Children's Chorus, and over fifty jazz compositions. Marc has released six jazz albums with labels that include Iris Records and Arabesque Recordings. Marc leads a New York based jazz quintet, MIQ, and performs, produces, records and teaches out of his home studio in Baltimore, Maryland and New York. Marc is thrilled to return for his fifth annual jazz piano performing arts residency at The Betsy Hotel playing classical, jazz, and original compositions.

## **ABOUT THE BETSY HOTEL**

**The Betsy-South Beach** ([thebetsyhotel.com](http://thebetsyhotel.com)) is a luxury boutique hotel located on Ocean Drive, boasting a globally regarded arts and culture program and The Betsy Writers Room ([thebetsywritersroom.com](http://thebetsywritersroom.com)) – a capstone project that has hosted 1000 artists in residence. Over the past ten years, the hotel has become a catalyst for energized discourse, innovative thinking, and charitable community conscience, and is the home of the Miami Classical Music Festival, O, Miami Poetry Festival, and Supporting Women Writers in Miami (SWWIM). The Betsy's 130 luxury rooms and suites combine elegant design with the simple beauty of a tropical hideout, finished with marble bathrooms, luxury furnishings, and walnut floors, as well as delights like artwork from the owners' collection and your own library. Whether gourmet fare at LT Steak & Seafood, updated trattoria classics at The Alley, or catering that feels like an artisanal feast, acclaimed Chef Laurent Tourondel and his team deliver culinary excellence every time. The Betsy is located at 1440 Ocean Drive, Miami Beach, and is owned and operated by the Plutzik Goldwasser family.