

The 10 Best Jazz Shows in NYC This Month, June 2014

by DAVID R. ADLER
June 2, 2014



Charles Gayle

LUCIANO ROSSETTI

These are the best jazz shows in NYC in June.

Vision Festival 19

The Vision Festival (June 11-15) has made a custom of honoring a particular avant-garde jazz musician for Lifetime Achievement each year. Now it's the turn of uncompromising saxophonist (and pianist, and bassist) Charles Gayle, 75, who'll fill the entire first night with a trio, quartet and an 11-piece unit called the Vision Artist Orchestra. Sets also on tap from Peter Brötzmann, James "Blood" Ulmer, Matthew Shipp, Nicole Mitchell, TarBaby and more, plus a promising slate of duos (Mary Halvorson/Susan Alcorn, Fay Victor/Tyshawn Sorey, Angelica Sanchez/Omar Tamez). There'll also be a film tribute to Jeff Schlanger, whose "MusicWitness" paintings, created in real time during every Vision Festival set, have come to be inseparable from the event itself.

Blue Note Jazz Festival

When a jazz festival books Aretha Franklin, Michael Bolton and Michael McDonald, one can understand jazz purists getting a slight case of the willies. But the [Blue Note Jazz Festival](#) (June 1-30) deserves props for balancing mega-names with [probing](#) artists along the lines of José James, Kris Bowers, Jon Batiste and Marcus Strickland. Bouncing between well over a dozen venues all month long, the fest can definitely point to some coups, including a night of Questlove with Bobby McFerrin (June 13) and the U.S. premiere of the Children of the Light Trio, i.e., Wayne Shorter's trailblazing quartet without Shorter (June 17-22).

Jack DeJohnette Trio

Drummer-composer Jack DeJohnette, 71, has played unabashed swing around the world for three decades with Keith Jarrett, the pianist he came up with in the '60s in bands led by Charles Lloyd and Miles Davis. But DeJohnette's own music with Special Edition and other units may be his greatest gift — an elusive and absorbing catalog often drawing on the venturesome spirit of Chicago's AACM where he got his start. At ShapeShifter Lab on June 2, DeJohnette takes another turn, joining saxophone marvel Tilt Coltrane and electric bass shredder Matthew Garrison for a trio gig that could tilt Earth's axis (or at least Brooklyn's). That Ravi is the son of John Coltrane, and Matthew the son of Coltrane's bassist Jimmy Garrison, adds a certain historical weight.

Helen Sung Quartet

Houston native [Helen Sung](#) can outswing just about any pianist working today, as she'll demonstrate at Smoke (June 6-7) with a formidable quintet (trumpeter Alex Norris, saxophonist John Ellis, bassist Boris Kozlov, drummer Donald Edwards). After several solid releases for Fresh Sound, Sunnyside and SteepleChase, Sung landed at Concord this year and brought forward *Anthem for a New Day*, her most vibrant effort to date — splashed with Fender Rhodes, propelled by lyrical discovery, showcasing Sung's own tunes as well as readings of Monk, Ellington, Chick Corea and Stanley Cowell. On the bandstand this material can go in any and all directions.

Red Hook Jazz Festival

The lineup seems to get better every year at the Red Hook Jazz Festival, held on two successive Sundays (June 8 & 15) at the Urban Meadow from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. These bands have widely varying instrumentation but a shared independent spirit, an ethic as purposeful and rigorous as it is experimental. Day one belongs to Azares (featuring vocalist Jean Carla Rodea and drummer Gerald Cleaver), plus ensembles led by Ralph Alessi, Amanda Monaco, Harris Eisenstadt and Ted Daniel. Day two features a quartet called the Museum Band of Teeth and Respect, along with Tim Berne's DECAF, the Welf Dorr Unit, George Coleman's Rivington Project and Gene Ess's Fractal Attraction.



Michael Formanek

ELISEO CARDONA

Michael Formanek

The veteran bassist, a linchpin of Tim Berne's Bloodcount and many other bands, has shown tremendous versatility over the years, favoring a fairly experimental sound in his own projects. In 2010 he gained new visibility as a leader with the ECM release *The Rub and Small Change*, followed in 2012 by *Small Places*. Formanek builds on that momentum in a three-night stint at Cornelia Street Café (June 12-14), covering a wide range: first the Elusion Trio with pianist Kris Davis and drummer Ches Smith, then a quartet featuring Berne (alto sax), Craig Taborn (piano) and Dan Weiss (drums), and finally the Resonator Sextet with altoist Loren Stillman, multi-reedist Andrew Bishop, cornetist Kirk Knuffke, pianist Angelica Sanchez and drummer Tyshawn Sorey. (Stillman's quartet plays the Café on June 21.)

Lana Is

Multitalented Croatian singer-songwriter Lana Cencic performs as [Lana Is](#), bringing a theatrical sensibility and a jazz-influenced intricacy to the fore as she partners with musicians as heavy as bassist Eivind Opsvik, who produced her 2013 eye-opener *In Your Head* (Session Work). You can also hear Is with a vocal trio bringing otherworldly sounds to drummer Dan Weiss's epic large ensemble effort *Fourteen* (Pi). On June 11 at SEEDS, a home in Prospect Heights doubling as an improvised music salon, she'll sing and play keyboard alongside Nate Wood on guitar, Jesske Hume on bass and Peter Kronreif on drums. Also catch her at Rockwood Stage 1 on June 26.

Yosvany Terry & Afro-Cuban Roots: Ye-Dé-Gbé

Alto saxophonist [Yosvany Terry](#) has made it a mission to bring musical concepts from his native Cuba into contact with the most advanced and forward-thinking New York jazz (not unlike Miguel Zenón has done with the *jíbaro* and *plena* traditions of Puerto Rico). Terry has outdone himself with *New Throned King* for Gonzalo Rubalcaba's 5Passion label, shining a light on the Arará culture of Matanzas, Cuba. For four nights at the Jazz Standard (June 12-15) he'll conjure this rhythmically intense and hypnotic sound with pianist Osmany Paredes, bassist Yunior Terry, drummer Justin Brown and two incredible singing percussionists: Pedrito Martinez and Román Díaz.

Bill McHenry

Mot saxophonist [Bill McHenry](#) has gained wisdom playing with the likes of Paul Motian and trumpeter John McNeil, though his newer partnership with drum sage Andrew Cyrille, documented on 2012's *Le Peur du Vide* (Sunnyside), seems every bit as fruitful. Cyrille is a sculptor of the beat, ideally suited for McHenry's wry, elliptical phrasemaking. They return to the Village Vanguard from June 24-29: first it's the *Peur du Vide* band with pianist Orrin Evans and bassist Eric Revis; then a McHenry-Cyrille duo night; then two nights with Cyrille, guitarist Ben Monder and bassist Reid Anderson (the lineup from *Roses* and *Ghosts of the Sun*, sans Motian); and finally a quartet with pianist David Bryant and bassist Jonathan Michel.

Sam Newsome & Ethan Iverson

Sam Newsome has brought a rare level of mastery and sonic imagination to the soprano saxophone. Few would dare to record the instrument wholly unaccompanied, as he's done since 2008 on *Monk Abstractions*, *Blue Soliloquy* and *The Art of the Soprano, Vol. 1* (all self-released). For sheer depth of knowledge and improvisational daring, it's hard to think of a better duo match than pianist Ethan Iverson — co-leader of The Bad Plus, must-read blogger and critic, like Newsome one of Monk's most creative present-day disciples. They'll do their magic at Greenwich House's Sound It Out series on June 29. (Iverson also plays [Birdland](#) with the Billy Hart Quartet, June 3-8.)

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by ROSS BARKAN

March 18, 2021

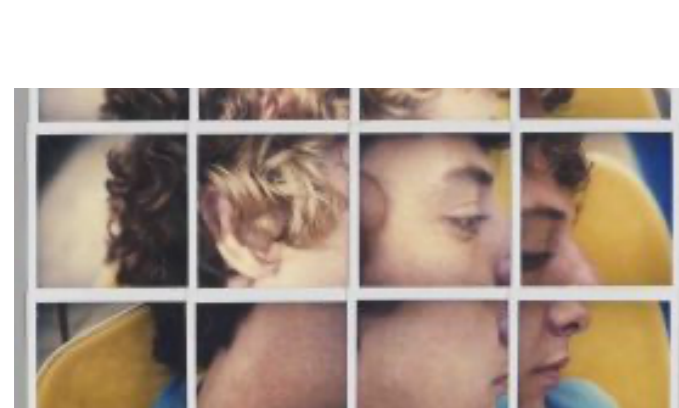


MUSIC 2021

Billy Ray Cyrus Blends His Roots with Rap

by BRETT CALLWOOD

March 19, 2021



ART 2021

Decades of Drawing Reveal a Quieter David Hockney

Hanging over the works is the question of whether Hockney will ever get to draw, or even see, his subjects again

by DANIEL FELSETHAL

March 16, 2021



EQUALITY ARCHIVES

Women on the March: "We're a Movement Now!"

"They were amazed, those young women who had been meeting in small groups or taking part in small actions for months. No one of them would have dared to say before that evening that the women's liberation movement had 20,000 members in New York City alone."

by MARY BREASTED

Originally published September 3, 1970



MORE HUSTLE

Tuning Into The Heart Of The Hustle With Ray J

No matter how successful he's become in his own right, he always credits his family

by TARA FINLEY

March 16, 2021



ART 2021

The 'Truth In Photography' Project is Asking Big Questions

"Photographs are inherently subjective in the ways in which they are made and perceived. There is no absolute truth in the photographic image."

by SHIANA NYS DAMBROT

March 11, 2021