

New Black Eagle Jazz Band Bios

Billy Novick – Leader, Alto Sax, Clarinet, Vocals

Billy has been a member of the Black Eagles since 1986 and became the leader of the band in 2018. In addition to playing with the band, he has had his own whirlwind career in music for over 45 years as a performing artist, studio musician, arranger and composer. As a performer, he has impressed audiences throughout North America, Europe and Asia with his soulful, lyrical jazz clarinet and sax. His musical collaboration with guitar wizard Guy Van Duser has resulted in frequent appearances on the Prairie Home Companion radio show and a feature-length interview on NPR's "All Things Considered." He has recorded seventeen albums under his own name, and, as a studio musician, has been featured as a sideman on more than 250 recordings and over 150 film and television soundtracks. His many film credits as arranger or composer include Eight Men Out, Music of the Heart, and The Opposite of Sex. Novick's jug band adaptation of Peter and the Wolf, with Dave Van Ronk narrating, premiered in New York's Lincoln Center. He has composed extensively for modern dance, and his two full-length ballet scores, The Great Gatsby and The Sun Also Rises, debuted at the Kennedy Center to sold-out houses and rave reviews.

Stan Vincent – Trombone

The sole "original" member of the band at this point, Stan put together his first jazz band as a junior high school student and took lessons from the principal trombonist of the Boston Symphony. At Brown University, played with the Brunotes, a Condon-style band. Stan was a member of Jean and Doc Kittrell's Chicago Stompers, Tex Wyndham's Red Lion Jazz Band, the Jazz Doctors and Exit Jazz Band that featured banjoist Gil Roberts.

Jeff Hughes – Cornet

The Black Eagles welcome Jeff Hughes to the band. Jeff's melodic style has made him one of New England's most in-demand cornet players. He has played and recorded with many bands including The Wolverine Jazz Band, The Paramount Jazz Band, the New Yankee Rhythm Kings^[5] and the Blue Horizon Jazz Band.

Herb Gardner – Piano

Soon after moving to New York in 1963, Herb began touring with Wild Bill Davison, Kenny Davern and Dick Wellstood as well as becoming a regular at the Metropole, Jimmy Ryan's and Eddie Condon's nightclubs. During the '60's and 70's he appeared with virtually all of the classic jazz musicians in the New York City area, including Roy Eldridge, Gene Krupa, Henry "Red" Allen, Bobby Hackett, Jimmy Rushing, Doc Cheatham, Max Kaminsky and even Wingy Manone. For many years he served as co-leader of Vince Giordano's Nighthawks, playing for the inauguration of George Bush, Bill Clinton's victory party and countless other society affairs.

Bill Reynolds – Drums

Bill is a walking encyclopedia of drum styles. Equally talented in all genres, he is as likely to be found playing 1920's New Orleans jazz as he is playing post-Coltrane jazz with tenor titan Jerry Bergonzi. He is an alumnus of Berklee and the Navy School of Music where he was percussion teacher and drummer for the renowned Faculty Lab Band. Bill has performed all over the world with varied artists and recorded extensively. A sampling of his more than 100 movie-TV soundtrack and jingle performances as a studio musician include Seabiscuit, Honeydripper, Eight Men Out and Sex in the City. Bill taught at the University of Connecticut for 22 years.

Jesse Williams - Bass

Jesse Williams prides himself on his musical depth AND breadth! He was introduced to the rhythmic counterpoint of tradition New Orleans jazz by his parents as he was growing up. At age 14, was attracted to Ray Brown which led him to Oscar Pettiford, Jimmy Blanton and finally Pops Foster. Jesse learned how to solo by transcribing Satchmo's singing to the bass. He has recorded two Grammy and six W.C. Handy-nominated albums, performed at Lincoln Center, and appeared on the Sesame Street TV show. He has performed with Bucky Pizzarelli, Howard Alden, Duke Robillard, Jay

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McShann, Al Kooper, Jay Giels, John Hammond, Karin Allyson, Harry Allen, Ruth Brown, and Charles Neville, among many others.