

Staten Island's Own Dr. Darrell Smith Curates a Stellar Lineup for UTA's Staten Island JAZZ Festival 36

STATEN ISLAND, NY, UNITED STATES, October 16, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Universal Temple of the Arts (UTA) is thrilled to announce that the 36th annual Staten Island JAZZ Festival will be curated by Staten Island native and acclaimed drummer, Dr. Darrell Smith. This year's festival, themed "Joyful Women of Jazz," takes place on Friday, December 20, 2024, at the historic St. George Theatre, promising an electrifying evening of world-class jazz.



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Darrell Smith, a highly respected figure in the New York City jazz scene, brings a wealth of experience and passion to his role as curator. His impressive career has seen him perform alongside renowned musicians on stages across the globe, from intimate jazz clubs to grand concert halls. Smith's dedication to jazz education and his deep roots in the Staten Island community make him the ideal curator to assemble a lineup that showcases both established stars and rising talents.

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This festival holds a special place in my heart, and I'm excited to bring together an extraordinary group of female artists who are pushing the boundaries of jazz and inspiring audiences worldwide.”

Dr. Darrell Smith

“I am incredibly honored to curate this year's Staten Island JAZZ Festival,” says Smith. “This festival holds a special place in my heart, and I'm excited to bring together an extraordinary group of female artists who are pushing the boundaries of jazz and inspiring audiences worldwide.”

The festival will feature captivating performances by:

Camille Thurman with the Darrell Green Quartet: Esteemed saxophonist, composer, and vocalist known for her captivating stage presence and innovative approach to jazz.

Brandee Younger: A groundbreaking harpist who is redefining the role of the harp in contemporary music.

Alicia Olatuja: A mesmerizing vocalist with a powerful voice and a wide-ranging repertoire.

Lakecia Benjamin: A three-time Grammy-nominated saxophonist celebrated for her fiery performances and unique blend of traditional and modern jazz.

"This year's festival is a testament to the power and artistry of women in jazz," adds Dr. Smith. "I am particularly proud to honor Tracy Hyter-Suffern and Robin Bell-Stevens, two extraordinary women who have made invaluable contributions to the jazz world."

The Staten Island JAZZ Festival is a cherished tradition that celebrates the rich legacy of jazz while embracing its vibrant future. With Dr. Darrell Smith at the helm, this year's event promises to be an unforgettable experience for jazz enthusiasts and music lovers of all ages.

Don't miss this opportunity to experience a joyful, hip, and eclectic night of jazz in the heart of Staten Island!

Tickets are on sale now at utasi.org and Ticketmaster: ticketmaster.com.

About Darrell Smith:

Darrell Smith DMA (jazz percussion, music director, band leader, composer, producer) is a jazz percussionist and composer endorsed by Canopus Drums. He has performed in numerous festivals both nationally and internationally including the Montclair Jazz Festival, the Newport Jazz Festival, the Bern Jazz Festival (Switzerland), the Mumbai NCPA Jazz Festival (India). As a band leader, he has led his original trio (Dal Segno Trio) in local performances at Jazz at Lincoln Center, Smoke Jazz and Supper Club, The Jazz Standard and Gotham. As a composer, Dr. Smith co-wrote an original off-broadway show entitled "Interludes" that features New Orleans themed music. "Interludes" was featured in the San Diego International Fringe Festival and the New York Fringe Festival. Dr. Smith has also performed in off-broadway productions of "West Side Story", "The King and I", "Pearl", and "Magdalene". Since 2018 Dr. Smith has been the music director of the Staten Island Jazz Festival (via Universal Temple of the Arts). Dr. Smith is a board member of The Jazz Loft in Stony Brook, Long Island. He has just started his own non-profit organization "3 Degrees" to build an arts center on Staten Island. He is currently the Director of Education for Jazz House Kids under the artistic direction of bassist Christian McBride. Dr. Smith serves on the faculties of the New School University and the College of Staten Island, CUNY.

About Universal Temple of the Arts (UTA):

Founded in 1967, Universal Temple of the Arts (UTA) is a non-profit organization dedicated to nurturing creativity and fostering community through the arts. UTA presents high-quality performances and programs that engage and inspire audiences of all ages.

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