

# THE DARIUS BRUBECK QUARTET



## **DARIUS BRUBECK** **Piano**

Born in San Francisco, jazz pianist and composer Darius Brubeck grew up in the artistic milieu of his famous father Dave and has enjoyed a lifetime of varied international experience as band leader, composer, teacher and broadcaster. The Brubeck family moved to Connecticut where Darius attended high school and graduated cum laude from Wesleyan University where he studied ethnomusicology and history of religion. Much later he was awarded an M. Phil. by Nottingham University where he was a Visiting Fellow in Music.

### **EARLY CAREER**

After university Darius led his own groups, played with Don McLean, Larry Coryell and was ushered into the international jazz scene in the Seventies as a member of Two Generations of Brubeck and The New Brubeck Quartet (Dave, Darius, Chris and Dan Brubeck) under his father's leadership. He moved to South Africa in 1983, where he initiated the first degree course in Jazz Studies offered by an African university, eventually founding the Centre for Jazz and Popular Music, at the University of KwaZulu-Natal where, as Professor of Jazz Studies, he taught until 2005. He has also served as a Fulbright visiting professor in Romania and Turkey.

In South Africa, Darius Brubeck and Afro Cool Concept, which featured some of the country's premier musicians, played throughout southern Africa, Europe, and the USA. Brubeck also led other groups – representing his university and South Africa – and gave workshops and concerts in Europe and the UK, Turkey, Peru, Thailand and the USA. Using the band name, Gathering Forces for 'world-music' oriented concerts, Brubeck collaborated with virtuoso bansuri player, Deepak Ram.

### **CURRENT**

Moving to the United Kingdom in 2006, Darius now leads the London based Darius Brubeck Quartet, which has become a successful and popular group in the UK and beyond. Since 2010 he has also toured with Brubecks Play Brubeck, appearing annually at Ronnie Scott's.

### **COMPOSER**

In addition to writing for his own bands, Darius has composed and arranged across a range of styles from string trio to full orchestra. Concerts, in the Nineties and subsequently, with the London Symphony Orchestra celebrating his father's birthdays featured his orchestral arrangements. The Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra commissioned Darius and Zim Ngqawana, to set extracts from speeches by Nelson Mandela and Desmond Tutu to music. These were read by Morgan Freeman with music performed by Wynton Marsalis and the LCJO at the New York premiere in 2004. In 2005, the Rockefeller Foundation awarded him a residency as a composer at the Bellagio Study and Conference Center in Italy. One of his pieces, 'For Lydia' was selected for the 2013-2014 Grade 5 Piano Syllabus by the Associated Board of Royal Schools of Music.

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## **DAVE O'HIGGINS** **Saxophones**

Dave O'Higgins has been playing various instruments since childhood and is known primarily for his jazz playing on tenor and soprano saxophones, writing, arranging and band leading. He has honed his jazz chops through 17 albums as leader, years on the road and in the studio with the likes of Joe Locke, Martin Taylor, Joey Calderazzo, Ray Charles, Jim Mullen, BBC Big Band, Itchy Fingers, Ronnie Scott's Allstars, Jimmy Smith, Frank Sinatra, Jason Rebello, Phil Dwyer, Stan Tracey, Eric Alexander, Brubecks Play Brubeck, Darius Brubeck Quartet, Kyle Eastwood Band and Jamie Cullum.

As well as his regular working group, The Dave O'Higgins Quartet, he also co-leads Barnes / O'Higgins and the Sax Section and the Abstract Truth Big Band, teaches saxophone, harmony and improvisation at the London Centre For Contemporary Music and runs a specialist jazz recording studio where he records, engineers, mixes and masters work by some of the finest jazz musicians on the planet.

[www.daveohiggins.com](http://www.daveohiggins.com)

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## **MATT RIDLEY** **Bass**

Since graduating from Trinity College of Music in 2005, Matt has established himself as one of the most versatile, creative and hard-working bass players in the UK. Based in London, he has performed worldwide and at many of the UK's most prestigious venues such as the Purcell Room, Cadogan Hall, Ronnie Scott's, King's Place, the Barbican and the O2 Arena.

As a band leader, Matt released his debut album 'Thymos' on Whirlwind Recordings in 2013. Featuring the talents of award-winning pianist John Turville, drummer George Hart and guest appearances from saxophone superstar Jason Yarde, oud maestro Attab Haddad and percussionist Vasilis Sirikis, the album represents a substantial artistic statement of both compositional and improvisational chutzpah. The release was followed by an extensive UK tour, both of which were lauded by critics. The group continue to perform as a quartet and a 2nd album, titled 'Mettā' was released in 2016 on Whirlwind Recordings.

[www.mattridleybass.com](http://www.mattridleybass.com)

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## **WESLEY GIBBENS** **Drums**

Wesley Gibbens moved to London from South Africa in 2005 and has played drums with the Darius Brubeck Quartet since its inception. Wesley's South African roots earned him a place as drummer for UK based African musicians Net-sayi, SA Gospel Singers, Lucky Ranku, Pinise Saul and Afla Sackey and he has gained an international profile in Jazz and African music through extensive touring and recording with these artists.

Wesley studied Brazilian and African music under Barak Schmool as part of the F-ire collective where he worked with bands including Rhythms of the City and The Irreverents specializing in rhythmic composition and form. Alongside the above-mentioned projects Wesley also tours internationally with acclaimed British New Orleans and Blues piano player TJ Johnson. Wesley is the drum teacher at The North London Music Academy.