

CELEBRATE 50 YEARS AT THE GRADUATE CENTER

50th
ANNIVERSARY
BENEFIT
CONCERT

Thursday, April 19, 2012

Elbash Recital Hall
The Graduate Center

50th Anniversary Benefit Concert

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List as of 4/11/2012

50th Anniversary Benefit Concert

The Graduate Center's 50th Anniversary Benefit Concert featuring
Vince Giordano and the Nighthawks

Blue Rhythm Fantasy (Teddy Hill and Chappie Willet)

Uptown Rhapsody (Chu Berry, Teddy Hill and Howard Johnson)

Prelude to a Stomp (Chappie Willet)

Jungle Madness (Chappie Willet)

I Know That You Know (Anne Caldwell and Vincent Youmans)

Rhythm Jam (Chappie Willet)

Prelude in C-sharp Minor (Sergei Rachmaninoff)

Apurksody (Gene Krupa and Chappie Willet)

Grandfather's Clock (Henry Work)

Blue Skies (Irving Berlin)

Washington and Lee Swing (Thornton Allen, Clarence Robbins and
Mark Sheafe)

The Flat Foot Floogie (Slim Gaillard, Bud Green and Slam Stewart)

Sonata Pathétique (Ludwig van Beethoven)

All arrangements by Chappie Willet.

All music edited or transcribed by John Wriggle.

**Festive Cocktail Reception Immediately Following
The Dining Commons**

50th Anniversary Benefit Concert

Chappie Willet

Francis “Chappie” Willet (1907–76) enjoyed a reputation during the 1930s and ‘40s as one of New York’s first-call jazz arrangers. Working from his West 44th Street offices, Willet scored stage shows at the Apollo Theater, Cotton Club, and Café Zanzibar, collaborating with iconic dance acts like Coles & Atkins and the Nicholas Brothers. His star clientele ranged from Cab Calloway to Eddie “Cleanhead” Vinson, while songwriting partnerships included renowned lyricists Porter Grainger, Langston Hughes, and Andy Razaf. Celebrated in the black press as “Broadway’s Ace Race Arranger,” Willet also ran a music school, recording studio, talent agency, and publishing company. Yet this commercial versatility and legacy in the theater world has often excluded Willet’s name from mainstream jazz histories.

Tonight’s performance resurrects some of Willet’s most popular arrangements, and unveils a few rarities. You’ll hear songbook standards and original compositions created for the dance orchestras of Louis Armstrong, Teddy Hill, Gene Krupa, and Lucky Millinder, including radio theme songs like “Aurksody” and “Blue Rhythm Fantasy”; theater showstoppers for the virtuosic ensembles of Duke Ellington and Jimmie Lunceford that “jazz the classics” (by way of Beethoven and Rachmaninoff); and unrecorded archival discoveries from the repertoire of xylophonist Red Norvo.

Some of these pieces have not been performed live for over seventy years. We hope that you enjoy this unique and wide-ranging program with Vince Giordano’s Nighthawks.

—John Wriggle

Vince Giordano

Vince Giordano, the Brooklyn-born musician, arranger, and leader of the Nighthawks Orchestra, has loved vintage jazz ever since hearing it for the first time as a five-year-old on his grandmother's hand-cranked Victrola. He is still perhaps its most passionate exponent.

Specializing in the jazz styles of the 1920s and early 1930s, Giordano and the Nighthawks have performed at the Smithsonian Institute, Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and at jazz festivals around the world. He and his eleven-man band have also appeared on Garrison Keillor's *A Prairie Home Companion* and in various films, among them Martin Scorsese's *The Aviator*, Sam Mendes's *Revolutionary Road*, and Gus Van Sant's *Finding Forrester*. Giordano is particularly noted for orchestrations featured in half-a-dozen Woody Allen movies. Recording projects have included soundtracks for Terry Zwigoff's *Ghost World*, Tamara Jenkins's *The Savages*, Robert DeNiro's *The Good Shepherd*, and Michael Mann's *Public Enemies*, along with HBO's *Grey Gardens* and Todd Haynes' HBO mini-series *Mildred Pierce*.

Most recently, Giordano and the Nighthawks won a 2012 Grammy for their soundtrack for the HBO series *Boardwalk Empire*, which also features them onscreen.

John Wriggle

John Wriggle received his Ph.D. in Musicology from the Graduate Center, where he was a recipient of the Martin E. Segal Dissertation Award, the Barry S. Brook Dissertation Award, and a Chancellor's Fellowship. His doctoral dissertation focused on the work of Chappie Willet.

In addition to teaching positions at John Jay College, City College, and Rutgers University, his resume includes credits as music editor for the Oscar and Grammy-winning scores of the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, as founding member of the new music collective Anti-Social Music, and as recording trombonist for Brit-pop icon Tom Jones. His most recent article, which examines Chappie Willet's arrangement of Beethoven's "Sonata Pathétique," will appear in the forthcoming issue of the *Journal of the Society for American Music*.

The Graduate Center at Fifty

In fifty years, the Graduate Center has provided doctoral education to some of the most gifted students from around the world and has grown to become a leading center of graduate education. With 4,500 students, thirty-three doctoral programs, seven master's programs, and thirty-two centers and institutes, the Graduate Center is one of the nation's major doctorate-granting institutions in the humanities and social sciences. The Center is also a primary venue for interdisciplinary scholarship with a growing reputation for innovative research. Some of the world's leading scholars in their fields are part of the Graduate Center's faculty and part of the teaching consortium of the City University system.

Committed to the principle that public education is the lifeblood of civil society, the Graduate Center serves as bridge between the academy and the larger community, providing public access to a world of scholarship and research. Through its rich and dynamic schedule of public programs, the Graduate Center has become a vibrant hub of New York intellectual and cultural life.



PHOTO: JASON FULFORD

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