



A Not-For-Profit Organization

“We Always Swing”[®] Jazz Series

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**“We Always Swing”[®] Jazz Series Set To Participate In
Columbia’s Special Bicentennial July 4 Weekend Celebration.
Organization Announces Double-Bill Concert At Rose Music Hall
WITH
Sam Griffith Tentet & Ben Colagiavanni Quartet
Event Produced in Association with CoMo200 Task Force.
THURSDAY, JULY 1, 6 P.M.
Tickets Now On Sale.**

COLUMBIA, Mo. – The “We Always Swing”[®] Jazz Series, in association with CoMo200, Columbia’s Bicentennial Committee, gets the special Fourth of July Weekend celebration underway with a bang that features a musically strong co-double-bill concert at **Rose Music Hall**, 1013 Park Ave., **Thursday, July 1, with doors at 6 p.m.** The music starts at 7 p.m.

TICKETS, went on sale June 2. Priced modestly, they are \$10 in advance and, if any remain, \$12 at the door. People can purchase tickets in advance through [the Rose Music Hal website](#). In case of inclement weather, the event will move to the Blue Note, 17 N. Ninth St. With social distancing and capacity limitations lifted, and weather hopefully a non-factor, the Jazz Series expects the event to be well-attended and suggest people purchase tickets in advance.

“With the program we’ve planned, featuring two very, very talented ensembles, we look for a lot of people – not just jazz fans – to come out and enjoy the music given the occasion marks the start of Columbia’s long-weekend Bicentennial and Fourth of July Celebrations,” said Jon Poses, Jazz Series Executive & Artistic Director. For those wondering, Rose Music Hall allows concertgoers to bring chairs and/or blankets with them. “The Rose staff has been very helpful and accommodating,” said Poses, adding, “They’re very easy to work with.”

Not surprisingly, with Jazz Series Assistant Director Josh Chittum organizing and taking the lead with the program, the double-bill affair features some of Columbia’s best jazz musicians. Still other participating musicians return to mid-Missouri to perform at the special event.

Trombonist Sam Griffith, who arrived in 2019 from UC-Davis in Sacramento to take over the reins of MU's Jazz Studies Department, leads a recently formed 10-piece modern-leaning band; the July 1 performance marks the debut of the namesake **Sam Griffith Tentet**, described by the leader as "a new collaboration between veterans of the CoMo jazz scene and performers from across Missouri." Added Griffith: "Our goal is to present new and engaging music that showcases many of the great performers in the group."

In addition to Griffith, some band members' names that may be familiar to Columbians include multi-instrumentalist **Greg Aker**; saxophonist **Jamie Canepa**, who is the Jefferson Middle School Band Director; and saxophonist **Rob McGrath**, who runs the band program at the Mexico Military Academy. There's also a three-person trumpet section; **Joanna Griffith**, a member of MU School of Music staff, forms the other half of the trombone section while the rhythm section includes pianist **Ken Kehner**, the Jefferson City native who has enjoyed a long-standing presence and success throughout mid-Missouri.

Meanwhile, **Ben Colagiovanni**, yet another accomplished pianist leads the other ensemble. Colagiovanni, who also happens to be an MU graduate, moved to Southern California two years ago to advance his jazz studies and foster an already-bourgeoning professional career; Colagiovanni arrives from his native St. Louis, where he has been holed up due to the pandemic. "I'm very excited to be having a bit of a Mizzou reunion in Columbia to celebrate the city's Bicentennial," said the pianist. "I started playing with saxophonist **Mike Neu** and bassist **Sam Copeland** in the MU Concert Jazz Band. This event marks the first time we've played together in something like five years," said an enthusiastic Colagiovanni, adding that rounding out the quartet is **Jim Lower**, "a wonderful drummer from Kansas City who will be on board as well." The pianist says the quartet will play a mix of originals and "standards with some twists... We want to encourage people to come on out and be ready to groove with us."

Each group performs for approximately an hour with an intermission in between. "Given that we're celebrating Columbia, we wanted this event to showcase some of the great local and area jazz talent," says Poses.

"We're excited to be part of – and to have these two ensembles get the weekend's arts-and-culture presentations underway," said Chittum. He went on to praise the CoMo200 Committee, complementing the task force group on its effort to highlight and draw attention to Columbia's 200th Birthday.