

Larry Barker, Jazz Pianist



Gainesville, Georgia's own **Larry Barker** is a jazz pianist with an eclectic musical background. Originally from St. Louis, Missouri, Mr. Barker has earned a Bachelors degree in Music Education and a Masters degree in Jazz Performance. He is a veteran educator, currently teaching elementary music in the Gwinnett County Public Schools. He has performed and/or recorded with Charles Glenn, the U. S. Army Band, the Glenn Miller Band, Tom Kennedy, Theo Peoples, Peter Mayer, The Drifters, and numerous others. For years, Mr. Barker has collaborated most often with vocalist Charles Glenn, resulting in one CD release (Offerings) and countless memorable jazz club performances.

Since moving to Georgia in 2006, Larry Barker has performed with Atlanta Acoustic Jazz, Atlanta Beat, Sam Skelton, Ken Watters, the Sweet Lu Quartet, FootLights, and regularly plays solo piano at Grapes & Hops Bistro in Flowery Branch.

Mr. Barker's influences on jazz piano include Oscar Peterson, Gene Harris, Michel Petrucciani, Bill Evans, Fred Hersch, George Shearing, Dave McKenna, Nat King Cole, Ray Kennedy, and Kenny Barron. His piano style is also shaped to a great degree by listening to the great vocalists such as Mel Torme', Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, Frank Sinatra, Nat King Cole, John Pizzarelli, Kurt Elling, and instrumentalists such as Stan Getz Ray Brown, Tom Kennedy, Clark Terry, Paul Desmond, and Jeff Hamilton. He prefers not to play "outside" in the manner of many jazz musicians, rather Mr. Barker finds ways to explore his way "inside" the music. His approach keeps audiences engaged with each song.

Ken Watters, Jazz Trumpeter



Trumpeter Ken Watters is a [Summit Records](#) Recording Artist (with four CDs to date released internationally on the label), Jupiter Performing Artist/ Clinician & SESAC & SACEM (dual-affiliated) jazz composer.

Ken left his hometown of Huntsville, Alabama at 17 years of age to attend Interlochen Arts Academy for his final year of high school, immediately after which he began attending the University of North Texas. He later continued his formal studies at Manhattan School of Music.

Ken regularly performs all over North, Central & South America, Italy, France, Holland, Switzerland, Spain, Morocco, Japan, and throughout the Caribbean. He has performed, toured, or recorded with Frank Sinatra, Natalie Cole, Marc Anthony, Chris Potter, Mingus Big Band, Kelis, Gregg Allman, TLC, Bonnie Bramlett, Bobby "Blue" Bland, Fred Wesley, Richie Cole, Dave Valentin, Mike Stern, Bill Goodwin, Little Milton, Dan Penn, Gene Perla, Peter Bernstein, Russell Malone, Herbie Mann, Clarence Carter, Tabou Combo, Steel Pulse, Kassav, Larry Goldings & many other icons of the music world.

In addition to receiving formal education from Interlochen, North Texas & Manhattan School of Music, Watters spent a summer working with Kenny Wheeler at The Banff Centre & has studied privately with Wynton Marsalis, Joe Lovano, David Liebman & Jack Walrath (among others).

Ken's newest musical venture is his Haitian / Caribbean "folklore" inspired jazz group called RIYEL (pronounced *ree-YELL*). Their self-titled debut CD will be released internationally on Summit Records in March 2010.

Neal Starkey, Jazz Bassist



Neal Starkey is an American jazz bassist residing in Atlanta, Georgia. He has had a long and varied career, performing with many of the most notable names in jazz, including Kenny Barron, Eddie Harris, Sonny Stitt, Duke Pearson, Al Cohn, Charlie Rouse, Barney Kessel and many others. He is a regular featured performer at the W. C. Handy Music Festival, and a member of the W. C. Handy Jazz All-Stars. Originally from New York, he has made Atlanta his home for the past 25 years.

Starkey has recorded with Herbie Hancock, Tony Williams and Freddie Hubbard with the CBS Jazz All-Stars, and has served as bass instructor in the jazz program at Georgia State University. He has also had extensive studio recording experience and is one of the most in-demand bassists in the Southeastern region, often working with notable Southeastern regional jazz musicians such as Rick Bell (saxophone), Ken Watters (trumpet), Bill Anschell (piano), Gary Motley (piano) and Ray Reach (piano and vocal).