

Artists Profiles

Jazzmandu 2016

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Rocket Men (Germany)

Hailing from Germany, this five-piece ensemble takes listeners on an extraterrestrial journey through a variety of soundscapes via musical fusion. Combining intergalactic jazz, drum & space, they take you on instrumental voyage into one smooth listening experience. With the recent release of their album *Weightless*, the band is hitting the road both in Europe and Asia, transporting audience to another planet with every show.

Website: www.rocket-men.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/rocketmenofficial

Personnel:

Philipp Püschel – Trumpet / Electronics

Lasse Golz – Tenor saxophone

Valentin Mühlberger – Synth / Keys

Noah Rott – Synth / Keys

Felix Dehmel – Drums

AfuriKo (France/Japan)

World Jazz duo Afuriko features Japanese percussionist Akiko Horii and French pianist and composer Jim Funnell who began playing music together in 2010 when their paths crossed in Paris. The band has released two albums since then, *On the Far Side* (2014) and *Style* (2016). With the release of their latest record, the duo has toured extensively through Asia, Europe, and North America playing alongside notable jazz musicians and collaborating with Grammy nominated artist Bill Sims, Jr. Their artistic expression is a testament to their blend of culture, musical styles, and skill.

“You guys have a special, creative connection and unified voice.” Laszlo Gardony, jazz pianist and composer

Personnel:

Akiko Horii – Percussion

Jim Funnell – Keyboards

Website: www.afuriko.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/afurikomusic

Mn’JAM Experiment (The Netherlands)

“Innovative” is one of the first words that come to mind when you see and hear this band. Australian-Portuguese singer Melissa Oliverira and JAM have created a musical experience that blends together a musical excellence with visual aids. Currently based in the Netherlands, this band is known for its novel take on jazz and colorful, multimedia live performances. Blending sounds from the 21st century with sounds of classic jazz, Mn’JAM’s performance is sure to intrigue and electrifying.

“Jazz is at the base of Mn’JAM experiment, but seldom has any combo synthesized so much history or made use of multiple technology so effectively. Fusion crisscrosses with funk, hip-hop with scat singing, squealing turntables with wailing electric guitars, until the lines disappear.” – Shepherd Express

Website: www.mnjamexperiment.com/#about

Facebook: www.facebook.com/mnjamexperiment

Ange Takats (Australia)

Ange Takats is said to have one of the purest voices on the Australian music scene, able to sing straight to the soul of any song. Former journalist turned singer began her career in Bangkok where she started to collect the stories that would weave in and out of her songs. Having toured all over the world and recorded many successful records, this seasoned performer brings the heart and the soul to every performance.

"Her voice contains so many representations of great female singer/songwriters; but, at the same time bringing herself strongly to your attention" – **Jim MacQuarrie, Folk Alliance Australia**

"Angie's soulful voice evokes the joy of the Andrews Sisters one minuet and the melancholia of Billie Holiday the next." – **Kenny Weisberg, Music Without Boundaries, San Diego.**

Personnel:

Angie Takats – Vocals/Guitar

Website: www.angetakats.com.au

Facebook: www.facebook.com/songsandstories

Lyrics Born (USA)

Born in the vibrant Bay Area of California, Lyrics Born began his music career at UC Davis's college radio station. Years later, he is making music that is raw, fresh, unconventional, and fun. Recently he released *Now Look What You've Done, Lyrics Born! Greatest Hits* a compillation that perfectly exemplifies his strength as a lyricist and musician. His quick-witted lyrics and funk infused hip-hop beats makes it almost impossible to stand still while he performs.

"...if Lyrics Born has one defining strength it's his ability to get structurally and rhythmically adventurous in his flow while still remaining perfectly simple to follow linguistically." – **Pitchfork**

"The Second Album is life-affirming, with a force few artists in any genre can match."
– **NPR**

Personnel:

Tom Shimura – Vocals

Website: www.lyricsborn.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/lyricsborn

Janysett McPherson (Cuba/France)

Born in Guantanamo, Cuba, Janysett McPherson began playing the piano at a young age and found her passion and talent for music. She entered the National Art School of Havana when she was just 14 years old and thrived in the Cuban music scene and eventually took her talents to France where she now lives. Her music brings a blend of Latin American sounds with jazz brought to life with her world-class voice. McPherson has toured the world, recorded many albums, and collaborated with some of the finest musicians in the world and now brings her talents to Kathmandu.

"Sweet and melodious, Janysett McPherson is an outstanding chanteuse equally comfortable singing in French, "Belle Ile en Mer", "Jamais Dormir", "J'ai vu" or Spanish, "Busca tu fe", Tres Almas". McPherson voice captives the listener from the first song "Belle Ile in Mer". Her soulful style shines especially on the pop ballad "Poque tu existes", the jazz ballad "Alby", the bolero "Calla" and the bossa "Jamais Dormir". – **Wilbert Sostre – Jazz Times**

Personnel:

Janysett McPherson – Vocals / Piano

Website: <http://www.jany4jazz.com>

Facebook: www.facebook.com/jany4jazz

Cadenza Collective (Nepal)

One of the most unique and eclectic bands from Kathmandu, Nepal, Cadenza Collective, led by drummer Navin Chettri, seamlessly blends Jazz, Afro-funk, and Nepali folk into an irresistible sound for your ears and booty. The story of jazz in Nepal cannot be told without the story of Cadenza. Cadenza was one of the first bands to experiment with jazz in Kathmandu. It broke the mold, and has evolved into a mature and experienced collective of musicians and music educators. Their music has pumped vitality into the improvised music scene in Nepal and beyond. With five albums to date showcasing their original music, their CDs are often referred to as instant collector's items. Following their five nominations and two awards at Nepal's top music awards for their latest album "Back to the Roots", released in 2014, the band made their first European tour in 2015, with shows at the Elb Jazz Festival in Hamburg, and various shows in Paris, Berlin, Copenhagen and Brussels.

Personnel:

Navin Chettri – Drums / Vocals

Rajat Rai – Guitar

Samir Chettri – Bass

Website: www.cadenzacollective.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/cadenzacollective

KJC & Nepal Army Jazz Orchestra (Nepal)

The Kathmandu Jazz Conservatory & Nepal Army Jazz Orchestra is a recent collaboration between the Nepal Army Band and the Kathmandu Jazz Conservatory with the main purpose of promoting the big jazz orchestra sound, something unique in Nepal. Its directors and conductors, Rajat Rai, Amul Kharki and Mariano Abello, lead this 18-piece orchestra, which play jazz, blues, rock and Latin music arrangements and have received significant feedback and recognition for their talents and unique arrangements. The orchestra has had considerable success, playing for the US Embassy in Nepal, an Asian military function in South Korea and for International Jazz Day on August 25, 2015. This year's Jazzmandu performance will also feature international musicians Charlotte Jacobs (Belgium) on vocals, Lidia Facerias (Spain) on piano, and Mark Howarth and Max O' Hara (UK) on drums and piano.

Personnel:

To be announced

Website: www.katjazz.com (Kathmandu Jazz Conservatory only)

Facebook: www.facebook.com/kathmandujazz (Kathmandu Jazz Conservatory only)

Rabin Lal Shrestha Ensemble

Tabla player Rabin Lal Shrestha is renowned as one of Nepal's leading figures in classical music and as one of the nation's greatest performers, recording artists and educators. He has recorded numerous albums and has many musical awards under his belt. Shrestha worked as a music teacher in the Royal Palace and for over two decades, and has been a lecturer and Head of Department at Nepal's Tribhuvan University Fine Arts Campus. He has toured in Europe, and has also served as Associate Music Lecturer at the University of Agder in Norway. Along with some of his favorite tabla players, Rabin Lal Shrestha will be performing an exclusive set for Jazzmandu as a tribute to the late Pt. Homnath Upadhyay.

Personnel:

Rabin Lal Shrestha – Lead table; accompanied by other tabla players

Umesh Pandit (Nepal)

Umesh Pandit is an eminent Nepali (mountain) flutist who has performed on over 30 Cds and is best known for popularizing Nepali melodies and culture through performances around the world. He started learning eastern classical music on the flute at an early age, and finished his fifth year in Hindustani classical music from Allahabad University. Pandit has performed in Europe, China and Pakistan, to name just a few destinations, and has been widely honored and recognized. He has also performed with the famous Grammy Award-winning Indian classical instrumentalist Pt. Vishwa Mohan Batt. Pandit will be performing alongside a host of visiting Jazzmandu artists at the *Jazz at the Temple House* concert.

Personnel:

Umesh Pandit – Flute

Manmohan Thapaliya (Nepal)

The vocalist Manmohan Thapaliya spent many years pursuing his musical education in India, including under Pt. Amit Mukherjee in Kolkata. He has performed extensively across India and Nepal, while also working as a music educator. He will be performing alongside a host of Jazzmandu artists at the *Jazz at the Temple House* concert.

Personnel:

Manmohan Thapaliya – Vocals

Gandharvas (Nepal)

The Gandharvas are representatives of a long tradition of travelling folk musicians, who roam Nepali villages bringing music and entertainment. They will present a medley of Nepali folk songs, accompanied by sarangi and traditional Nepali percussions. The band is led by Sanu Kancha Gandharva, and works to keep Gandharva music and culture alive in Nepal.

Personnel:

Sanu Kancha Gandharva – Percussion and Vocals; accompanied by other Gandharvas