

Phillips Exeter Academy Music Department



Tommy Gallant Memorial Jazz Concert

Featuring the PEA Faculty Jazz Ensemble

Marcus Rabb, *trumpet*
Eric Klaxton, *tenor sax*
Eric Schultz, *bari sax*
Michael Mele, *guitar*
Tim Ray, *piano*
Les Harris Jr., *drums*
Jerome Walker, *vocals*
Keala Kaumeheiwa, *bass*

Sunday, May 12, 2024
1:00 PM

“the Bowld”
Forrestal Bowld Music Center
29 Tan Lane
Exeter, NH

Program

Rollin'

Aubrey Harris

Blues for Herb

Emily Remler

Precious

Esperanza Spalding

Blue Nile

Alice Coltrane

Since Tommy's Gone

Les Harris Sr.

The Funky Fox

Shirley Scott

Read My Mind

Lianne La Havas, Matt Hales, Bruno Major
arr. by Kenyon Duncan

Lonely Moments

Mary Lou Williams

Remembering Tommy Gallant



Born July 14, 1935, in Exeter, NH, he was the only son of Thomas and Doris Gallant. By the time he was in high school, Tommy played piano with several local Jazz bands. On his own and often with his trombone-playing friend Phil Wilson, Tommy spent many hours learning new tunes and beginning the process of mastering his craft on the piano in his parents' living room.

After high school and his service with the United States Marine Corp, Tommy studied piano and music theory at the University of New Hampshire and the Berklee School of Music in Boston. Settling down in the New Hampshire seacoast, he proceeded to build a life-long career

as a performer, a teacher (at UNH, Berklee and Phillips Exeter Academy), and as a dedicated promoter of Jazz. But it was the two decades during which he presided over the Sunday night jazz scene upstairs at The Press Room in Portsmouth for which he is perhaps best remembered on the Seacoast.

The Sunday night jazz tradition began early in The Press Room's history, back in the late '70s, when the musician in charge was another Seacoast jazz legend, namely pianist Larry Garland. But, as Larry tells it, "These kids were coming in from Berklee with charts!" So Larry, being a self-taught player who doesn't read music, had some advice for owner Jay Smith. His advice: "Get Tommy Gallant!"

Larry, of course, went on to establish the Tuesday night jazz tradition downstairs at The Press Room, where for more than 30 years he has led River City Jazz, the host quartet for this popular and influential jam session. And Tommy Gallant continued the Sunday night tradition upstairs until he died in 1998. It was Tommy's bassist, Jim Howe, who took over the trio's leadership at that time. Then, when Jim passed on in 2007, Jim was succeeded by pianist Ryan Parker, who continues as the group's leader to this day.

Tommy Gallant will long be remembered for his commitment to promoting jazz on the Seacoast, for the scope of his musical activities, his personal integrity, enthusiasm, along with his love of humor and his ability to tell a good joke well. At the time of his death, the annual Portsmouth Summer Jazz Festival was renamed in his honor the Tommy Gallant Jazz Festival, the event we celebrate this week in Prescott Park.

Concert Series Information

Visit www.exeter.edu/music-department-concerts for livestream links and program details for all performances

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