

Sherman Irby Duo

Just Friends Jazz Series



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We are pleased to partner with the Lied Center of Kansas to present the *Just Friends Jazz Series*.

**There will be no intermission during this performance.
Selections will be announced from the stage.**

Sherman Irby

Born and raised in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, Sherman began playing saxophone at the age of 12, almost immediately recognizing that it was his life's calling. Upon graduating high school—during which he had the opportunity to play and record with gospel immortal James Cleveland—Sherman attended Clark Atlanta University, graduating with a B.A. in music education. He joined Atlanta-based piano legend Johnny O'Neal's quintet in 1991.

After moving to New York in 1994, Sherman quickly connected with the fertile and vital scene at Smalls, where he was a regular until 1997. Here Sherman caught the attention of Blue Note Records, for which he recorded his first two albums, *Full Circle* and *Big Mama's Biscuits*, released in 1996 and 1998, respectively.

During the time he was at Smalls, Sherman also toured the U.S. and the Caribbean with the Boys Choir of Harlem in 1995; was a member of the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra from 1995 to 1997; recorded and toured with Marcus Roberts; and participated in the incomparable Betty Carter's Jazz Ahead Program. Sherman began his four-year stint with Roy Hargrove in 1997. After departing Roy Hargrove's ensemble, Sherman shifted his primary focus to his own group. Although this was his primary commitment, he took the opportunity to join the final ensemble of the peerless Elvin Jones in 2004, and after Elvin's passing, joined Papo Va'zquez's Pirates Troubadours.

From 2003 to 2011, Sherman was the regional director for JazzMasters Workshop, a mentoring program for young children. He has served as artist-in-residence for Jazz Camp West, Jazz St. Louis, and numerous colleges and universities. He was an instructor for the Monterey Jazz Festival Band Camp and a former board member for the CubaNOLA Collective.

Recognizing the shift in economics of the record industry, Sherman left Blue Note to form Black Warrior Records, releasing *Black Warrior*, *Faith*, *Organ Starter*, *Live at The Otto Club*, *Cerulean Canvas* and Andy Farber's *This Could Be the Start of Something Big*.

Presently, Sherman has rejoined the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis. Sherman, along with most members of the orchestra, has arranged much of the vast library of music that they have performed over the past 16 years. He has also been commissioned to compose new works, including *Twilight Sounds*, his Dante-inspired ballet *Inferno* and his 2022 premiere of *Musings of Cosmic Stuff*. Even with the orchestra's busy schedule, Sherman was a regular member of the McCoy Tyner Quartet, and he continues to perform with his own group, Momentum.