



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Los Angeles Jazz Society announces alto saxophonist and composer Nicole McCabe as the 2022 recipient of the Jeff Clayton Memorial New Note Award

LOS ANGELES (Feb. 10, 2022) – “We are delighted to announce that Nicole McCabe, a brilliant young alto saxophonist and composer has been chosen to receive this year’s Jeff Clayton Memorial New Note Award,” stated Lois Saffian, President, and Max Wrightson, New Note Program Chair, of the Los Angeles Jazz Society. “The Award is given annually to a stellar young jazz composer to compose a new work which will be performed in the fall at the Angel City Jazz Festival.” Nicole was unanimously chosen by the Awards Committee who believe she is a rising star in the jazz world.

A quartet leader, a music educator, a regular collaborator in George Colligan’s **Theoretical Planets**, and a member of many groups, Nicole quickly established herself as a freelance saxophonist in Portland while studying at Portland State University’s Jazz Studies program. Nicole’s uninhibited dynamism and ear-turning musical prowess have already earned her the attentive audience she deserves throughout the Portland music community and beyond.

Since moving to Los Angeles, she continues to preserve the warm buzz of early bebop while bravely exploring the jazz fusion of her contemporaries. Nicole is reaching beyond traditional jazz to blend a broad range of styles, making her one of the most compelling young composers and players in today’s West Coast jazz scene. Nicole has shared the stage with musicians such as George Colligan, Peter Erskine, Chuck Israels, Terri Lyne Carrington, Patrice Rushen, Bob Shepard, Jacob Mann, and Doug Webb. Nicole explains: “The most effective way to learn is to play with people who are better than you, which is why mentorship is such an important tradition in jazz,” In creating my own voice as a player, I’ve had to accept that I like all kinds of music. You have to listen to the tradition and bend to the contemporaries. I think it adds a lot to my own sound and my own approach to writing.” Nicole has been accepted into USC’s Thornton School of Music in Los Angeles, where she is currently pursuing her Master’s in Music.

New Note was created by the Los Angeles Jazz Society in 2013 to support and promote the talents of young emerging jazz composers by providing commissions for new works which will be premiered at local jazz venues. This project adds another component in the organization’s mission to help preserve the future of jazz by identifying and nurturing young jazz musicians of tomorrow.

In early 2021, the award was renamed in honor of a dear friend and supporter, saxophonist extraordinaire Jeff Clayton, who lost his battle with cancer in December 2020. The Grammy-nominated saxophonist performed and toured with a litany of music greats throughout his career including Stevie Wonder, Gladys Knight, Michael Jackson, Patti Labelle, and Madonna, as well as Frank Sinatra, Sammy Davis Jr., Ella Fitzgerald, Woody Herman, and Lena Horne. Jeff also played in the Count Basie Orchestra and was a member of the Phillip Morris Superband. In 1986, he and his brother, bassist John Clayton, and drummer Jeff Hamilton formed the Clayton-Hamilton Jazz Orchestra. His second long-standing group with John, The Clayton Brothers Quintet, went on to receive two GRAMMY nominations.

A steering committee headed up by longtime supporter Jim Barrall, established an endowment, to maintain this annual award in Jeff's honor. Founding members of the endowment already include James & Carole Barrall, Howard & Cathy Stone, Barbara Abell, Laurie Saffian & David Strauss, Patrisha Thompson, John Clayton, Lois Saffian and Flip Manne. Anyone wishing to join the founders and help raise the Award endowment, may contact Jim Barrall at jbarrall@gmail.com or the LAJS office at **818-994-JAZZ**.

The Los Angeles Jazz Society (a 501(c)(3) non-profit) was founded in 1983 by a group of musicians & jazz lovers committed to elevating the image of jazz & its artists in the community. The primary focus of the organization is on jazz education for young people; to identify & nurture emerging jazz musicians and to help create future audiences by stimulating an appreciation for jazz through its education programs. LAJS also promotes & honors the legacy of jazz through their annual Jazz Tribute Awards; & ensure its future by identifying & nurturing the emerging jazz musicians of tomorrow.

For more information, visit www.lajazz.org or contact the society at 818-994-JAZZ.

