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Contact: Michael Sundermann, MSU College of Music Communications Office, 517-353-2043, sunderm7@msu.edu

Jazz Legend John Clayton Inspires at MSU

MSUFCU Jazz Artist in Residence program continues with Grammy-winning bassist

EAST LANSING, Mich. – The Michigan State University College of Music is delighted to welcome Grammy-winning bassist, arranger, and composer [John Clayton](#) as the second featured artist in this season’s [MSU Federal Credit Union Jazz Artist in Residence program](#). Now in its 12th year, the residency program brings world-renowned jazz musicians to MSU and communities across Michigan for an inspiring blend of concerts, workshops, and mentorship. Clayton will be in residence from **December 3–8, 2024**, offering MSU students and aspiring young jazz musicians a rare chance to learn from one of the genre’s finest.

Renowned for his warm, resonant tone and extraordinary versatility, Clayton’s career has flourished across both jazz and classical music. His gift for collaboration and his ability to elevate performances with thoughtful support have made him one of jazz’s most sought-after musicians. During his residency, Clayton will join the **MSU Jazz Orchestras** for a public performance on [Sunday, December 8, at 3 p.m. in Fairchild Theatre](#).

As co-leader of the acclaimed [Clayton-Hamilton Jazz Orchestra](#), alongside his brother, saxophonist Jeff Clayton, and drummer Jeff Hamilton, John Clayton has redefined big band music, merging respect for tradition with bold creativity. His remarkable career also includes collaborations as a conductor and arranger with ensembles like the Amsterdam Philharmonic and Metropole Orchestra, further showcasing his broad musical influence.

“John Clayton’s artistry and collaborative spirit set him apart as one of jazz’s true masters,” said [Rodney Whitaker](#), Distinguished Professor of Jazz Bass and Director of Jazz Studies at MSU. “Our students and community are incredibly fortunate to have the chance to learn from someone whose passion for music and generosity as an educator are unparalleled.”

Clayton’s residency is part of a dynamic season that includes residencies by trombonist [Ryan Keberle](#), who opened the series in October, and pianist [Rick Roe](#), who will be in residence February 10–16, 2025. During his week at MSU, Clayton will mentor students in the MSU Jazz Studies program, perform in multiple public concerts, and engage with schools and community organizations throughout Michigan—continuing the program’s mission to inspire the next generation of jazz musicians.

About the MSUFCU Jazz Artist in Residence Program

Established in 2013 with a \$1 million endowment from MSU Federal Credit Union, the MSUFCU Jazz Artist in Residence program represents the largest single investment in the College of Music’s jazz program. Each year, the program hosts three leading jazz artists, who collaborate with students in rehearsals, masterclasses, and performances while traveling with MSU jazz ensembles to schools and nonprofit organizations across the state.

Reserved seating tickets for John Clayton’s public performance with the MSU Jazz Orchestras are \$17 for adults, \$15 for seniors (age 60 and older), and \$7 for students and individuals under 18. Tickets are available online at music.msu.edu, by calling (517) 353-5340, or at the door.

This artist residency is made possible through the generous support of the MSU Federal Credit Union, with additional concert sponsorship provided by Robert Last and Jill Canny.

Jazz Artists in Residence Schedule

John Clayton, bass, December 3-8, 2024

For a full bio, visit: www.johnclaytonjazz.com

- Monday, Dec. 2, Blue Mondays, MSU Federal Credit Union
- Tuesday, Dec. 3, Rehearsals and workshops MSU
- Wednesday, Dec. 4, CMS Detroit, Professors of Jazz, 6:30 p.m. workshop & showtime
- Thursday, Dec. 5, Hackett Catholic Prep JO1, 7:00 p.m. showtime
- Friday, Dec. 6, Ann Arbor Huron/Pioneer/Community High Schools, Jazz Orchestra 1, 8:00 pm showtime
- Saturday, Dec. 7, Oxford High School, Jazz Orchestra 1, 7:00 p.m. showtime
- Sunday, Dec. 8, MSU Performance, Jazz Orchestras, 3:00 p.m. showtime

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