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## **National Endowment for the Arts Announces 2021 NEA Jazz Masters**

*Recipients to be Honored at a Virtual Concert in Collaboration with  
SFJAZZ on April 22, 2021*

Washington, DC—Three musicians and one jazz advocate are the 2021 recipients of a National Endowment for the Arts Jazz Masters Fellowship, the nation’s highest honor in jazz. For their contributions to the advancement of this art form, the National Endowment for the Arts is honoring **Terri Lyne Carrington**, **Albert “Tootie” Heath**, **Henry Threadgill**, and **Phil Schaap**, who is the recipient of the 2021 A.B. Spellman NEA Jazz Masters Fellowship for Jazz Advocacy.

In addition to receiving a \$25,000 award, the 2021 NEA Jazz Masters will be honored through a tribute concert, which due to COVID-19 will be available in an online-only broadcast on April 22, 2021. The National Endowment for the Arts will again collaborate with SFJAZZ on this virtual event, which will be free to watch, and no registration or tickets are required. More information will be available in early 2021. The archive of last August’s 2020 virtual tribute concert is available to watch at [arts.gov](https://www.arts.gov).

“Congratulations to the 2021 National Endowment for the Arts Jazz Masters who help to ensure jazz continues to grow, innovate, and find new audiences,” said Mary Anne Carter, chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts. “Following up on 2020’s joyful and inspiring virtual concert, we look forward to working with SFJAZZ to celebrate these honorees next April in an evening that will showcase their incredible contributions to jazz.”

Three-time Grammy award winner, **Terri Lyne Carrington** has remained a powerhouse drummer in jazz for four decades but has also vigorously turned her attention over the last 15 years to empowering the next generation. With outstanding versatility, she excels as a composer, bandleader, producer, and educator.

Drummer and educator **Albert “Tootie” Heath** has played with jazz musicians from John Coltrane to Ethan Iverson and performed on more than a hundred recordings. Well-versed in various styles of jazz, he has also delved into R&B, studied improvisation in North Indian classical music, and has been praised for his ability to imbue his personality into any repertoire.

**Phil Schaap** is an archivist, educator, historian, and host of jazz programs on Columbia University’s WKCR station in New York since 1970. He has won six Grammy Awards for his liner notes, audio engineering, and production. As curator at Jazz at Lincoln Center in New York City he created the Swing University educational program.

**Embargoed until: October 21, 2020, 9:30am ET**

Saxophonist, flautist, and composer **Henry Threadgill** has been on the leading edge of avant-garde jazz with his original compositions. He was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Music in 2016, one of only three jazz artists to win the prestigious award.

“SFJAZZ is honored, for the second consecutive year, to host the awards ceremony for our nation's highest honor for jazz, the 2021 NEA Jazz Masters,” said SFJAZZ Founder and Executive Artistic Director Randall Kline. “Congratulations to the 2021 recipients for your well-deserved recognition. The National Endowment for the Arts’ impact on jazz is immeasurable and, for over 30 years, they have been an integral supporter of SFJAZZ. We are proud to again be a part of a virtual concert to bring the global jazz community together.”

Visit [arts.gov](https://www.arts.gov) for longer bios and selected discographies. Email [Liz Auclair](mailto:Liz.Auclair@neajazz.org) for high-resolution photos of the 2021 NEA Jazz Masters for media use.

### **About the NEA Jazz Masters**

Since 1982, the National Endowment for the Arts has awarded [161 fellowships](#) to great figures in jazz, including Ella Fitzgerald, Sonny Rollins, Dianne Reeves, Miles Davis, Chick Corea, and George Wein. The Arts Endowment’s [website](#) features resources and content about the NEA Jazz Masters, including archived concerts, video tributes, podcasts, and more than 350 NEA Jazz Moments audio clips. The National Endowment for the Arts has also supported the [Smithsonian Jazz Oral History Program](#), an effort to document the lives and careers of nearly 100 NEA Jazz Masters.

### **Nominate an NEA Jazz Master:**

NEA Jazz Masters Fellows are nominated by the public, including the jazz community. Nominations are judged by an advisory panel of jazz experts, including administrators, performers, producers, and a knowledgeable layperson. The panel’s recommendations are reviewed by the National Council on the Arts, which sends its recommendations to the chairman, who makes the final decision. The Arts Endowment encourages nominations of a broad range of individuals who have been significant to the field of jazz, through vocals, instrumental performance, creative leadership, and education. NEA Jazz Masters Fellowships are up to \$25,000 and can be received once in a lifetime. Visit the Arts Endowment’s [website](#) for detailed information and to submit nominations. The next deadline is **October 30, 2020**.

### **About the National Endowment for the Arts**

Established by Congress in 1965, the National Endowment for the Arts is the independent federal agency whose funding and support gives Americans the opportunity to participate in the arts, exercise their imaginations, and develop their creative capacities. Through partnerships with state arts agencies, local leaders, other federal agencies, and the philanthropic sector, the Arts Endowment supports arts learning, affirms and celebrates America’s rich and diverse cultural heritage, and extends its work to promote equal access to the arts in every community across America. Visit [arts.gov](https://www.arts.gov) to learn more.

### **About SFJAZZ**

Founded in 1983, SFJAZZ is a recognized international leader in jazz creation, presentation, and education. SFJAZZ explores the full spectrum of jazz—from the music’s origins in the African American community, to its diverse present-day expressions around the world. SFJAZZ works to develop the audience for jazz in the San Francisco Bay Area and beyond. SFJAZZ celebrates jazz as a living art form, built on a constantly evolving tradition. The West Coast’s biggest jazz presenter serves over 200,000 fans and students every year and has several award-winning resident jazz ensembles - the world renowned

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SFJAZZ Collective and the SFJAZZ High School All-Stars. SFJAZZ Center opened in 2013 in the vibrant performing arts district of San Francisco. The luminous SFJAZZ Center was designed by San Francisco architect Mark Cavagnero and the LEED-Gold certified center offers the superb acoustics of a great concert hall and the relaxed intimacy of a jazz club.

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