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SFJAZZ Collective Announces New Members to explore the music of Joni Mitchell

New Members include saxophonist Chris Potter, vocalist Lizz Wright, bassist Aneesa Strings, and drummer Kendrick A.D. Scott

New Recording in Fall 2021
2022 International Tour Planned

(San Francisco, CA, March 25, 2021) - SFJAZZ announces new members of the award-winning SFJAZZ Collective – saxophonist and music director Chris Potter, vocalist Lizz Wright, bassist Aneesa Strings, and drummer Kendrick A.D. Scott. This lineup will explore the music of Joni Mitchell in 2021 and is planning tours in 2022. Formed in 2004, SFJAZZ Collective lineup also includes tenor saxophonist David Sánchez, trumpeter Etienne Charles, vibraphonist Warren Wolf, and pianist Edward Simon.

During the Spring of 2021, the SFJAZZ Collective will explore the music of iconic singer and songwriter **Joni Mitchell** who received the 2015 SFJAZZ Lifetime Achievement Award. Mitchell is a singular artist with deep connections to the jazz continuum whose work continues to have an extraordinary impact on popular culture. The SFJAZZ Collective is currently in the studio, virtually, recording innovative versions of her classic songs as well as new compositions inspired by her legacy. This material will be the basis for the band's upcoming album to be released in Fall 2021. The group is making plans to present this material in 2022 on US and international tours.

Currently, SIRIUSXM Real Jazz Channel 67 presents the weekly "SFJAZZ Collective Radio" and "Live From The SFJAZZ Center" programs featuring concerts, thematic selections from the SFJAZZ Collective's vast archive.

Chris Potter is among the most prominent, influential, and visionary artists in jazz, fronting multiple ensembles and collaborating with a staggering list of major artists including Paul Motian, Pat Metheny, Dave Holland, Zakir Hussain, Herbie Hancock, Jim Hall, Steely Dan and the Mingus Big Band. He has topped numerous *DownBeat* Critics Polls, received GRAMMY nominations, and has led or co-led 21 albums. Potter also assumes the role of Music Director and this is the first time the SFJAZZ Collective has had a member in a music director position in over a decade.

Acclaimed vocalist Lizz Wright is a steward of American music bringing brilliant color and vibrancy to singular original works and compositions by some of the greatest

songwriters of our time. Wright has garnered widespread attention as one of the most venerable popular singers of her generation through the release of six critically acclaimed albums. From her breakout Verve debut album *Salt* to gospel-inflected 2017 Concord release *Grace*, Wright lives a life filled with beautiful possibilities centered on the power of song. An artist inspired by Joni Mitchell's legacy, she performed on Herbie Hancock's GRAMMY-winning *River: The Joni Letters*.

Oakland, CA-born songstress, musician, producer and influencer Aneesa Strings is an alumni of the SFJAZZ High School All-Stars program. While laying down roots in Oakland, LA, Michigan and New York City she went on to become a high demand artist touring globally and working with the likes of José James, Duckwrth, Kandace Springs and many more. She's released two critically-acclaimed independent albums *A Shift in Paradigm* and *Ways* featuring her hit single "Simpin" and is currently working on her next mixtape and album. It's a full circle moment for us to have her join the SFJAZZ collective this season as a representation of the endless possibilities of SFJAZZ culture.

Named "Rising Star - Drums" by *DownBeat* magazine and a "Drummer Whose Time is Now" by *The New York Times*, Kendrick A.D. Scott is a premier drummer and composer of his generation. The Houston-born Scott has toured worldwide and recorded with artists including Herbie Hancock, Terence Blanchard, Marcus Miller, Charles Lloyd, Wayne Shorter, The Crusaders, Joshua Redman, Robert Glasper, Kurt Rosenwinkel, Dianne Reeves, Kurt Elling, Gretchen Parlato, and the Blue Note All-Stars. Kendrick's compositions have been recorded on GRAMMY-winning records, and he won a 2017 Chamber Music of America New Works Grant funded by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. He has released five albums as a bandleader with his band Oracle, *The Source* (2007) *Reverence* (2011) *Conviction* (2013) *We Are The Drum* (2015), and *A Wall Becomes A Bridge* on Blue Note records. Scott lives in New York where he is on faculty at the Manhattan School Of Music.

The SFJAZZ Collective's mission is to perform fresh arrangements of works by a modern master and newly commissioned pieces by each SFJAZZ Collective member. Through this pioneering approach, simultaneously honoring music's greatest figures while championing jazz's up-to-the-minute directions, the SFJAZZ Collective embodies SFJAZZ's commitment to jazz as a living, ever-relevant art form. Over their fifteen-year existence, the SFJAZZ Collective has included 27 members who have penned 110 original compositions and 115 arrangements.

The group has honored the music of John Coltrane, Ornette Coleman, Herbie Hancock, Thelonious Monk, Wayne Shorter, McCoy Tyner, Horace Silver, Stevie Wonder, Chick Corea, Joe Henderson, Michael Jackson, Antonio Carlos Jobim, and most recently, the 50th Anniversary of Miles Davis's *In A Silent Way* and, Sly & The Family Stone's *Stand!*

A democratic composer's workshop that represents what's happening now in jazz. Past SFJAZZ Collective members include Bobby Hutcherson, Joshua Redman, Miguel Zenón, Robin Eubanks, Eric Harland, Mark Turner, Matt Penman, Avishai Cohen, Sean Jones, Andre Hayward, Stefon Harris, Dave Douglas, Nicholas Payton, Joe Lovano, Josh Roseman, Renee Rosnes, Jeff Ballard, Robert Hurst, Brian Blade and others.

SFJAZZ Collective members are also foundation faculty and resident artists at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music's Roots, Jazz, and American Music Program where they mentor young artists through a unique curriculum towards a pre-professional college degree.

For more information, visit SFJAZZ.org.

Media Contact: Marshall Lamm, mlamm@sfjazz.org, 510-928-1410.

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