



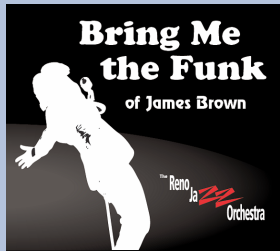
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## Music of the Masters

*featuring*

Jamie Davis and Clairdee  
with the *Reno Jazz Orchestra*

September 2, 2016 at Hawkins Amphitheater, Reno  
September 3, 2016 at Sand Harbor, Lake Tahoe



## New Music from the RJO! *Bring Me the Funk of James Brown*

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### Our Mission

To build a greater appreciation of jazz in Northern Nevada by providing outstanding big band performances, promoting the artistry of Reno Jazz Orchestra musicians through a variety of ensembles, and supporting jazz education through a mentorship program in middle schools, high schools, and colleges.

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THE  
**Reno Jazz Orchestra**  
Chuck Reider, Music Director



## SUCH SWEET THUNDER

The music of Duke Ellington  
The words of William Shakespeare

THE  
**Reno Jazz Orchestra**

Chuck Reider, Music Director

Monday, August 1, 2016  
Warren Edward Trepp Stage  
Sand Harbor State Park  
7:30 PM

This program has been funded, in part, by the Nevada Arts Council, a state agency,  
and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.

## Beyond Category:

### *The Life and Genius of Duke Ellington* [excerpt] **John Edward Hasse**

**T**he Bard and the Duke . . . had a number of commonalities. Shakespeare was an actor as well as a dramatist; Ellington was a performer as well as a composer. Shakespeare wrote about a range of human experiences; so did Ellington.

**S**hakespeare had a keen understanding of human nature, led a fertile and productive artistic life, and expressed a range of emotions and values; so did Ellington.

**O**ne of Shakespeare's greatest strengths was the richness of his characterizations; one of Ellington's was the richness of the musical characters he hired and the way he enhanced their individuality. Shakespeare wrote for all levels of society, from royalty to pauper; so did Ellington.

**S**hakespeare wrote not for publication but for performance: only half of his writings were published during his lifetime, and then mostly in "corrupt" quarto editions. Likewise, Ellington never wrote for publication, but rather for performance—whether live, on record, or on film. Few of his pieces were published during his lifetime, and those that were bore poor resemblance to the originals.

**A**s did Shakespeare, Ellington deployed his players like great actors on a stage. For nineteen years, Shakespeare was part owner of a repertory company (Lord Chamberlain's Men, which became The King's Men) and wrote only for that company, in fact, for particular thespians—like Richard Burbage (who played Hamlet, Richard III, Lear, and Othello), Will Kempe, and John Heminges. Likewise, Ellington had his own repertory company—for fifty years—and wrote almost exclusively for its players—Hodges, Nanton, and Bigard, and the others. Shakespeare's plays have outlived the actors for whom they were conceived. Ellington's music may, as the centuries pass, attain the same achievement.

Source: John Edward Hasse, *Beyond Category: The Life and Genius of Duke Ellington* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993), pp. 331-32.

## We would like to thank all of our sponsors for making this event possible...

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## With a very special thanks to:

Matt and Suzanne Booher  
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James and Mary Ann Kidder  
Chuck and Candy Reider



*Thank you for supporting the Reno Jazz Orchestra! Upcoming RJO events will be August 21st at Capital Amphitheater in Carson City, September 2nd at Robert Z. Hawkins Amphitheater, and September 3rd at Sand Harbor State Park. For more information, visit the RJO website ([www.renojazzorchestra.org](http://www.renojazzorchestra.org)).*

*Get VIP treatment - join the Band of 100!*

THE  
**Reno Jazz**   
**Orchestra**

<b>Music Director</b>	Chuck Reider
<b>Alto Saxophone</b>	Peter Epstein Karl Busch
<b>Tenor Saxophone</b>	Doug Coomler Jim Garaventa
<b>Baritone Saxophone</b>	Mauro Di Gioia
<b>Trombone</b>	Dean Carter Joe Cadena Davis Corl
<b>Trumpet</b>	Mark Curry John Beckman Terry Burns Andrew Woodard
<b>Piano</b>	Bill Hecht
<b>Guitar</b>	Joey Berger
<b>Bass</b>	Hans Halt
<b>Drums</b>	Andy Heglund
<b>Sound</b>	James Cavanaugh



**The Actors** Oge Agulué  
 --part of the Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Company's production of "Comedy of Errors" Jeffrey C. Hawkins  
 Mic Matarrese  
 Erin Partin

*This message brings greetings from the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History to the Reno Jazz Orchestra and members of the audience. Our museum is the proud home to the 200,000-page Duke Ellington archive. We are delighted that the Reno Jazz Orchestra, using scores from our museum, is about to perform this singular work of Duke Ellington's. Bravo.*

*John Edward Hasse  
 Curator of American Music  
 Smithsonian Institution*



**Such  
 Sweet  
 Thunder**



Duke Ellington's desire to create a work based upon Shakespeare's characters was his successful appearance at the Stratford Shakespearean Festival in Stratford, Ontario, in the mid-1950's. In Act IV, Scene 1, of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* appear the lines: "I never heard so musical a discord, such sweet thunder." Be it Ellington or Shakespeare who leads you to listen to what Duke described as his "attempt to parallel the vignettes of some of the Shakespearean characters in miniature—sometimes to the point of caricature," such sweet thunder it most certainly is.



# P r o g r a m

## **Such Sweet Thunder**

The title selection which opens the suite was inspired by Othello and is, to quote Duke again, “the sweet and swinging, very convincing story Othello told Desdemona. It must have been the most, because when her father complained and tried to have the marriage annulled, the Duke of Venice said that if Othello has said this to his daughter, she would have gone for it too.” The piece itself features brass in plungers and the sweet-talking trumpet of Andrew Woodard.

## **Sonnet for Caesar**

This is the first of four sonnets Duke has included in the suite, scored to coincide with the fourteen-line sonnet form. In this one, Peter Epstein is featured in a slow, imperial piece notable for Andy Heglund’s hand drumming. The final measures foretell of tragedy.

## **Sonnet to Hank Cing**

Ellington uses a second sonnet to pay tribute to Shakespeare’s preoccupation with history. In it Dean Carter is featured in a lip-shattering trombone solo. Duke notes that, “the changes of tempo have to do with the changes of pace and the map as a result of wars.”

## **Lady Mac**

This is the first of a number of selections dedicated to single characters, in this case, of course, Lady Macbeth. “Though she was a lady of noble birth,” Ellington said, “we suspect there was a little ragtime in her soul.” And so, a jazz waltz that begins with a Bill Hecht piano solo, continues with a sax ensemble and a pretty interlude by Peter Epstein on alto, and then features Andrew Woodard in three-quarter time. The ominous last chords hint at what else Lady Mac had in her soul.

## **Sonnet in Search of a Moor**

This sonnet features Han Halt on bass and opens with what Duke called a “Hi Fi” introduction on piano. Clarinets accompany the bass throughout the delicate, rhythmic glimpse of the Moor.

## **The Telecasters**

This number exercises typical Ellington musical license. “We took the liberty,” he noted, “of combining characters from two plays. It seems that the three witches and Iago had something in common in that they all had something to say, so we call them the Telecasters.” The three girls are played here by the three trombones, and Iago is Mauro Di Gioia’s baritone sax. And just to emphasize the loquacity, there are a few moments of very pregnant silence.

## **Up and Down, Up and Down (*I Will Lead Them Up and Down*)**

A piece describing Puck’s maneuvers in A Midsummer Night’s Dream. Demetrius and Helena, Lysander and Hermia, and Oberon and Titania, the king and queen of the fairies, were constantly being maneuvered into awkward positions by Puck who just stood on the side and laughed and said: “Lord, what fools these mortals be.” The couples you hear are Joe Berry and Bill Hecht, clarinet and piano, Karl Busch and Jim Garaventa, clarinet and tenor saxophone, and Dallas Smith and Joe Cadena, alto and trombone. Puck is Mark Curry who plays the famous quotation.

## **Sonnet for Sister Kate**

Another sonnet follows, this one dedicated to a lady who needs no introduction. It is played by Dean Carter, whose trombone-with-plunger reading is in perfect sonnet form.

## **Madness in Great Ones**

Here is an Ellingtonian parallel to Hamlet’s character during the time he was deceiving his stepfather. (“Madness in great ones must not unwatched go.”) Hamlet was trying to make him believe he was crazy and, as Duke noted, “in those days crazy didn’t mean the same thing it means now.” At any rate, crazy this is with the orchestra playing a scene that does justice to Shakespeare. John Beckman is the featured, stratospheric trumpeter who all but disappears into outer space at the end.

## **The Star-Crossed Lovers**

Romeo and Juliet, of course, and a most beautiful melody to describe their love. “This is the sad story of two beautiful people,” Duke said, and Peter Epstein’s alto as Juliet gives fresh and very moving conviction to their story.

## **Half the Fun**

Duke’s one-line introduction to this number is: “The generally accepted theory is that the mood was specific.” The music matches it as the Ellington flair for an exotic setting and a sensuous musical feeling provide the Nile, the barge, an ostrich fan and altoist Peter Epstein.

## **Circle of Fourths**

The final part of the suite is inspired by Shakespeare himself and the four major parts of his artistic contribution: tragedy, comedy, history, and the sonnets. Jim Garaventa is featured throughout a piece that exemplifies musically the scope of the Bard, progressing by the musical interval of a fourth through every musical key. It is a wild and ingenious conclusion to the Shakespearean Suite.

From Irving Townsend’s liner notes to the Columbia recording of “Such Sweet Thunder” by Duke Ellington and His Orchestra (1957).