

Immanuel Wilkins

Club 750

DEC 8 / Jackson Lounge

Immanuel Wilkins, alto sax
Micah Thomas, piano
Rick Rosato, bass
Kweku Sumbry, drums

Program will be announced from stage.

Run time is approximately 80 minutes, with no intermission.



View the digital program at
whartoncenter.com/program

IMMANUEL WILKINS

Alto saxophonist and composer Immanuel Wilkins burst onto the musical scene in 2020 with the release of his Blue Note recording debut, *Omega*, featuring his longstanding quartet of Micah Thomas, Daryl Johns, and Kweku Sumbry. Although just 22 years old at the time of its release, his quartet had already been together for over four years and their cohesiveness and musicality is reflected in both the maturity of Wilkins' sound and the sophistication and depth of his compositions. Accolades and press soon followed, including *Omega* being named the best new jazz release of 2020 by *The New York Times*, the best debut jazz album by *NPR* and being nominated for an NAACP Image Award for Best Jazz recording of 2020. The year ended on an even higher note, with Wilkins winning the prestigious Letter One Rising Stars Award.

Being a bandleader with a working group has allowed Wilkins to grow both as a composer and as an arranger and has led to him receiving numerous commissions and grants, including The National Jazz Museum in Harlem Commission (2020); The Jazz Gallery Artist Residency Commission (in collaboration with Sidra Bell Dance NY, 2020); The Kimmel Center Artist in Residence Commission Program (in collaboration with photographer Rog Walker and videographer David Dempewolf, 2020); The Roulette Emerging Artist Commission Program (2021); The South Arts Creativity

Residency Grant (with fellow saxophonist and mentor, Odean Pope, 2022), and the Pew Center for Arts & Heritage Grant (in collaboration with saxophonist Odean Pope and poet Herman Beavers, 2023).

Wilkins constantly seeks out opportunities for creative connections with artists both within and outside the world of jazz. The realm of visual arts is of particular interest to Wilkins. He has worked with the filmmakers Cauleen Smith and Ja'Tovia Gary; the sculptor Kennedy Yanko; the painter Leslie Hewitt; and the interdisciplinary artist Theaster Gates. These collaborations have played a decisive role in his ever-expanding aesthetic vision.

Wilkins' interest and passion for sharing and preserving jazz musical traditions has led him to continue to give back to his community and to present clinics and master classes at various educational institutions, including The Philadelphia Clef Club of Jazz and Performing Arts, Yale University, The Conservatorium van Amsterdam, Basel Jazz Schule, The Faculty of Music in Belgrade, The Royal Conservatory of Antwerp, and Oberlin, to name just a few. He also teaches regularly at NYU and the School of Jazz at the New School in New York City.

In 2022, Wilkins released his sophomore album on Blue Note, *The 7th Hand*. Like his debut release, *The 7th Hand*

topped numerous year-end lists, including *Jazzwise*, *NPR*, *The New York Times*, *The Financial Times*, and *Jazz Times*. Wilkin's Quartet received many new touring opportunities, including touring extensively throughout the U.S., Canada, and Europe, including notable performances at the Montreal Jazz Festival, The Monterey Jazz Festival, Umbria, the Northsea, Pori Jazz, Newport, The Kennedy Center, The Library of Congress, SFJazz, and the Elb Philharmonie. In addition to touring as a leader, Wilkins continues to record and share the bandstand with both his peers and his longtime mentors including Jason Moran, Kenny Barron, Wynton Marsalis, Bob Dylan, Solange, Joel Ross, Gerald Clayton, and Lalah Hathaway, to name just a handful.

In 2023, Wilkins was awarded three Downbeat Critics Poll Awards: Best Alto Saxophonist, Best Rising Star Composer, and Best Rising Star Group. Wilkins has a bachelor's degree in Jazz Studies from The Julliard School.