

Celebrating Jack DeJohnette: Sound Travels

Sunday, August 9, 2026

5pm; doors 4pm

UPAC – Ulster Performing Arts Center, Kingston, NY

A Benefit for Family of Woodstock and The Table at Woodstock

UPAC/BARDAVON MEMBER ON-SALE: Wed. 6/3 @ 10am

(box office only, 4 ticket limit)

PUBLIC ON-SALE: Fri. 6/5 @ 10am

TICKET & EVENT INFORMATION - bardavon.org/performances

Legendary drummer, pianist, composer, arranger, band leader and educator Jack DeJohnette passed away on October 26, 2025.

Presented by Lydia DeJohnette, Pat Metheny, Terri Lyne Carrington and Danny Melnick, this celebration of Jack's life and work will be held on his birth date, August 9, at UPAC, the Ulster Performing Arts Center, 601 Broadway, Kingston, NY at 5pm.

Artists scheduled to perform and/or speak are: Don Byron, Michael Cain, Will Calhoun, Terri Lyne Carrington, Billy Childs, Denardo Coleman, Steve Coleman, George Colligan, Ravi Coltrane, Marc Copland, Dave Fiuczynski, Bill Frisell, David Gilmore, Edsel Gomez, Larry Grenadier, Drew Gress, Jerome Harris, Billy Hart, Dave Holland, Bruce Hornsby, Joe Lovano, Linda May Han Oh, Rudresh Mahanthappa, John Medeski, Roscoe Mitchell, Jason Moran, Ra Kalam Bob Moses, David Murray, Greg Osby, John Patitucci, Danilo Perez, Chris Potter, Luisito Quintero, Rufus Reid, Tim Ries, Wallace Roney Jr., John Scofield, Marvin Sewell, Wadada Leo Smith, esperanza spalding, Bill Stewart, Tani Tabbal, Charles Tolliver, Nasheet Waits and others.

All Artists Subject To Change.

Family of Woodstock

Since 1970, FAMILY has been an anchor for area residents - a place where people are treated respectfully and with care, and where the search for solutions is done with creativity and tireless effort.

FAMILY's shelters, emergency food pantries, domestic violence services, court advocates, counseling and case management services, hotlines, and childcare supports all work together to help people achieve the changes they seek.

Their services are, with few exceptions, free of charge and confidential.

More information can be found at familyofwoodstockinc.org

The Table at Woodstock

The Table at Woodstock, a 501c(3) not for profit, was originally created to address food security and advocacy. Following the challenges of the pandemic, their mission has morphed to better address the needs of the Onteora community.

More information can be found at thetableatwoodstock.org

Media Requests:

Joan Clancy

joanclancy1119@gmail.com

General Information:

Danny Melnick

contactus@absolutelylive.net

Please note – there will be no comp tickets available for this fundraising event.



Photo Credit: Dion Ogust

ABOUT JACK DeJOHNETTE

Jack DeJohnette was born in Chicago on August 9, 1942. He began studying piano at age four and later took piano lessons at the Chicago Conservatory of Music. He started playing drums with his high school concert band, and soon was leading his own groups and becoming in demand as both a pianist and as a drummer with R&B, hard bop, and avant-garde jazz groups around Chicago.

While in junior college he played with such future AACM (Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians) members as Muhal Richard Abrams, Roscoe Mitchell, and Joseph Jarman, and also had an opportunity to play alongside Rashied Ali in John Coltrane's group. He moved to New York in 1966, where he played with Big John Patton and Jackie McLean. DeJohnette then gained widespread exposure during his two years in the Charles Lloyd Quartet, which included pianist Keith Jarrett and released such albums as *Dream Weaver* and *Forest Flower*.

"That was an exciting time in my life," DeJohnette said. "We were one of the pioneering groups of the jazz freedom movement, but we weren't just playing randomly. We were trying to create a balance between abandonment and creative discernment. We were playing free, but always acknowledging the form, even when we were going outside. I had complete freedom to do whatever I wanted to do. My style at that time was a mixture of Elvin [Jones] and Tony [Williams] and some other things. But I played piano, too, so I was very aware of the harmonic and melodic aspects of the music. That determined what I played on the drums."

In late 1968 he joined the Bill Evans Trio, which included bassist Eddie Gomez and

recorded *The Bill Evans Trio Live at the Montreux Jazz Festival*. He also worked briefly with Stan Getz in 1968, and recorded his first album as a leader, *The DeJohnette Complex*, on which he played melodica with Roy Haynes on drums.

That same year he recorded with Miles Davis, and in 1969 DeJohnette replaced Tony Williams in Davis's group, appearing on the albums *Bitches Brew*, *Live/Evil*, and *Miles Davis at Fillmore*. "Miles, at that point, was looking for kind of a Buddy Miles feel but with my technique," DeJohnette recalled. "He wanted grooves laid down, but I was still free to take liberties within those grooves and make embellishments and permutations, which I did. And when I took a solo, I based it on the drum pattern and then extended it, came back to it, and took it out again.

"I was very fortunate to be with Miles through the transition from the swing and In A Silent Way period to the funk/acid-jazz period," DeJohnette said. "All these influences were coming in, from the Beatles to Jimi Hendrix to Cream. We played some gigs opposite Sly & the Family Stone, which was a great double bill for Miles because he really wanted to reach that audience. The jazz audience just wanted to hear 'My Funny Valentine' and all the old standards. For me it was *deja vu* in a way because I had done the Fillmore circuit with the Charles Lloyd Quartet three years before, and now I was doing the same thing with Miles. So, I was with two bands that were at the crest of a new horizon. It seemed like America was ready to open up to something freer and more creative."

After leaving Davis in 1971, DeJohnette formed the band Compost, with which he primarily played keyboards and Bob Moses played drums. That same year, Jarrett and DeJohnette released the duet recording *Ruta and Datia* on ECM. DeJohnette then worked with Stan Getz for a year before he formed his own group, Directions, which included guitarist John Abercrombie. DeJohnette and bassist Dave Holland also played with Abercrombie in the trio Gateway.

Directions was followed by New Directions, which included Abercrombie, Gomez, and trumpeter Lester Bowie. DeJohnette and Bowie also collaborated on a duo album called *Zebra*, a world-beat influenced video soundtrack and record. DeJohnette's longest-lasting band was Special Edition, which featured a revolving cast of musicians that included at different times Gomez, David Murray, Arthur Blythe, Chico Freeman, John Purcell, Greg Osby, Howard Johnson, Rufus Reid, Mick Goodrick, and Lonnie Plaxico. Directions, New Directions, and Special Edition all recorded extensively for ECM.

Starting in 1983, DeJohnette was a member of the Keith Jarrett Trio, along with bassist Gary Peacock. They were often referred to as the "Standards Trio" from the name of the

group's debut album and their focus on playing classic jazz standards—but not necessarily in standard ways. “We’ll run down the melody at soundcheck, but we don’t know how we’re going to approach it that night, so it always stays fresh,” DeJohnette explained. “That was the whole idea behind doing standards rather than playing tunes that we composed and having arrangements. We wanted to concentrate on improvising.

“We had all been influenced by the Ahmad Jamal Trio with Vernel Fournier on drums,” Jack added. “We had all played in different trios, and I had also played standards as a pianist in trio settings and behind singers. So, after Keith and I played on Gary Peacock’s album *Tales of Another*, Keith decided he wanted to form another trio. We recorded some studio things, and we recorded a lot of things live because some great things happen with us live. We said we would do it until it didn’t feel good, and all these years later it still feels good.”

In 1986, DeJohnette participated in an album called *Song-X* with guitarist Pat Metheny and saxophonist Ornette Coleman. “That project was very exciting and experimental,” DeJohnette said. “We took it on the road, and it was very interesting to see people’s response to it. Some people walked out, but most people were really excited. Pat was able to use his popularity to turn people on to someone as great as Ornette, which I thought was fantastic. I had always wanted to play with Ornette; I’d loved and respected his music for a long time.

“A lot of people would call that music ‘free jazz,’ but a lot of what Pat and Ornette were playing was actually written, and they would keep repeating it in such a way that it created a minimalist, high-energy, repetitive, trance-like thing. The drumming was very intense; in fact, that was physically one of the hardest record dates I’ve ever done. But it was really exciting playing with Ornette, who is a phenomenal pioneer of music, and I thank Pat for bringing it all together.”

In 1990, DeJohnette released the *Parallel Realities* album, which included Herbie Hancock and Metheny. The three players subsequently toured, joined by Dave Holland. Another major collaboration was an album called *Music for the Fifth World*, inspired by DeJohnette’s studies with a Seneca native elder, Grandmother Twylah Nitsch. This project brought together Living Colour members Vernon Reid and Will Calhoun with guitarist John Scofield, Cain, Plaxico, and traditional Native American singers. In addition, DeJohnette performed and recorded with Bobby McFerrin, Don Byron, Danilo Perez, Gonzalo Rubalcaba, and Meshell Ndegeocello.

DeJohnette also composed soundtracks for TV and video, including a soundtrack in collaboration with Metheny for a PBS play called *Lemon Sky*; a soundtrack for a

documentary called *City Farmers* by Meryl Joseph; and a video production with percussionist Don Alias on Homespun tapes, *Talking Drummers*. Jack appeared as a member of the Alligator Blues Band in the *Blues Brothers* 2000 movie.

In addition to his work with Jarrett in the Standards Trio, DeJohnette recorded spontaneously improvised music with Jarrett on the albums *Always Let Me Go*, *Inside Out*, and *Changeless*. He also did projects with John Surman - *Invisible Nature*, *The Amazing Adventures of Simon Simon*, and *Free and Equal*; Michael Cain and Steve Gorn - *Dancing With Nature Spirits*, and Cain, Don Alias, and Jerome Harris – *Oneness*.

In 2005, DeJohnette launched and toured with three new projects: the Latin Project with Don Byron, Giovanni Hidalgo, Jerome Harris, Edsel Gomez, and Luisito Quintero; the Jack DeJohnette Quartet featuring Danilo Perez, John Patitucci, and Harris; and the Beyond Trio, a group celebrating the works of Tony Williams, featuring guitarist John Scofield and organist Larry Goldings. In 2006 Trio Beyond released *Saudades*, a live recording of the "Lifetime and Beyond: Celebrating Tony Williams" concert at London's Queen Elizabeth Hall. The 2-album set was nominated for a Grammy for Best Instrumental Jazz Recording.

In April 2005, DeJohnette released two unique projects: a duet with Gambian Kora player Foday Musa Suso called *Music from the Hearts of the Masters*, and a recording for relaxation and meditation titled *Music in the Key of Om*, which was nominated for a Grammy in the Best New Age Album category. In October 2005, Jack released *Hybrids*, which blended African jazz, reggae, and dance music. In February 2006, Golden Beams released *The Elephant Sleeps but Still Remembers*, a live recording featuring DeJohnette and guitarist Bill Frisell.

Jack also appeared on Michael Brecker's final album, *Pilgrimage*, Bruce Hornsby's jazz debut, *Camp Meeting*, and *Peace Time*, an hour-long continuous piece of music composed and performed by DeJohnette, which won a Grammy in 2009 for Best New Age Album. That year he also released *Music We Are*, a trio album with John Patitucci and Danilo Perez. It included a bonus DVD that provided a look at the trio's friendship, their creative relationship, and their approach to the recording process.

In 2011, he performed at the Kennedy Center in tribute to his longtime friend and musical inspiration Sonny Rollins. Marking his 70s birthday in 2012, he received a National Endowment for the Arts Jazz Master Fellowship in recognition of his life achievements, contributions to advancing the jazz art form, and for serving as a mentor for a new generation of aspiring young jazz musicians. The year-long birthday celebration included performances at the Monterey and Newport Jazz Festivals, a tour

of Europe with The Jack DeJohnette Group (a quintet he formed in 2010), and several concerts with Chick Corea and Stanley Clarke. One of his last projects was Hudson, a group with John Scofield, John Medeski, and Larry Grenadier.

DeJohnette performed at the 35th Chicago Jazz Festival on August 29, 2013, with fellow Chicagoan musicians pianist Muhal Richard Abrams, bassist Larry Gray and saxophonists Roscoe Mitchell and Henry Threadgill—a reunion with colleagues from Chicago's Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians. ECM Records released a recording of that performance, *Made in Chicago*, in March 2015.

He collaborated with pianist Gonzalo Rubalcaba and legendary bassist Ron Carter to form the "Skyline" trio. Their celebrated album, *Skyline*, won the 2022 Grammy Award for Best Jazz Instrumental Album.

DeJohnette designed several cymbals for Sabian, signature drumheads for Aquarian, and a drumstick for Vic Firth. In 1981 DeJohnette and Charlie Perry co-authored the instructional book *The Art of Modern Jazz Drumming: Multi-Directional Technique*, published by the Drum Center Publications. He released an instructional video on Homespun Tapes in 1992 called *Musical Expression on the Drum Set*, and in 1997 Hal Leonard Corporation released a book titled *The Jack DeJohnette Collection* featuring 14 of his compositions. DeJohnette was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Music from Berklee College of Music in Boston in 1991, and he was inducted into the Percussive Arts Society Hall of Fame in 2010.