Sylvia Adalman Chamber Series
Music from *First Glance*

**RICHARD D. JOHNSON QUARTET**

Vincent Herring, alto saxophone  
Richard D. Johnson, piano  
Alex Claffy, acoustic bass  
Mark Whitfield, Jr., drums and cymbals

**Monday, November 1, 2021 • 7:30 pm**  
Cohen-Davison Family Theatre

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**Cyrus Chestnut**  
**Minor Swing**  
Baltimore native Cyrus Chestnut is an American jazz pianist, composer, and producer. In 2006, Josh Tyrangiel, music critic for *Time*, wrote: “What makes Chestnut the best jazz pianist of his generation is a willingness to abandon notes and play space.”

**Richard D. Johnson**  
**No Wi Fi**  
How many times have you ever been in need of the internet and there is none? We have all heard this phrase numerous times: “No Wi Fi.”

**Burton Lane**  
**Old Devil Moon**  
Composed by Burton Lane and lyrics by Yip Harburg for the 1947 musical *Finian’s Rainbow*, this piece was introduced by Ella Logan and Donald Richards in the Broadway show. The song takes its title from a phrase in “Fun to Be Fooled,” a song Harburg wrote with Harold Arlen and Ira Gershwin for the 1934 musical *Life Begins at 8:40*.

**Jack Strachey**  
**These Foolish Things**  
“These Foolish Things” is a standard with lyrics by Eric Maschwitz, writing under the pseudonym Holt Marvell, and music by Jack Strachey, both Englishmen.

**Cedar Walton**  
**Ojos de Rojo**  
This song is a hidden gem on the album entitled *Roots* recorded by Cedar Walton.

**Richard D. Johnson**  
**The Cut Off**  
I wrote this song after living in the Middle East for four years. This song reflects the turmoil right before Doha was forced to become self-sufficient. This song reflects the driving spirit of the country to survive at all costs.

**First Glance**  
This song evokes the feeling one has when they see a beautiful sight for the first time — overwhelming but calm and ready to take it all in.

**Last Minute**  
The great Mulgrew Miller wrote a song called “The Eleventh Hour.” In tribute to him my composition, which highlights several things he taught me, focuses on “The Last Minute” of “The Eleventh Hour.” Both songs are blues, both are fast, but one is a major blues and the other is a minor blues.

Visit [peabody.jhu.edu](http://peabody.jhu.edu) for faculty biographies and upcoming performances and events.
BIOGRAPHIES

Alex Claffy
Alex Claffy was raised in a musical household (his father is a pianist, his mother, a vocalist), and had many of his earliest lessons on bandstands in the heart of Philadelphia. As a teenager, Claffy was fortunate enough to find a mentor in many Philly natives, and has continued his study of the double bass with some of the world’s finest musicians, including Ron Carter, Dwayne Burno, and Orin O’Brien. Since moving to New York City in 2011, he has had the honor of working with many of his living heroes, including Jimmy Cobb, Louis Hayes, Harold Mabern, Kurt Rosenwinkel, Christian Scott, Joey Alexander, Wallace Roney, and many more. In the past three years he has recorded for the Verve, HighNote, Positone, RopeADope, and LaReserve record labels.

Vincent Herring
Considered one of the premier saxophonists of his generation, Vincent Herring is a saxophone virtuoso with a uniquely intense and vigorous musical voice. He first toured Europe and the United States with Lionel Hampton’s big band in the early 1980s. As he developed his musicianship working with Nat Adderley, a partnership blossomed that continued for nine years. Along the way he has worked and/or recorded with Cedar Walton, Freddie Hubbard, Dizzy Gillespie, Louis Hayes, Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers, the Horace Silver Quintet, Jack DeJohnette’s Special Edition, Larry Coryell, Steve Turre, the Mingus Big Band, Kenny Barron, Nancy Wilson, Dr. Billy Taylor, Carla Bley, and John Hicks. Herring has appeared as guest soloist with many artists and ensembles, including Wynton Marsalis at Lincoln Center and John Faddis with the Carnegie Hall Big Band. While amassing these impressive credentials, he continued to develop his own voice and style. Inspired by diverse musical influences, Herring is also involved in jazz education and is currently on the faculty of William Patterson University. He conducts master classes and jazz workshops at conservatories and universities around the world.

Richard D. Johnson
Born in Pittsburgh, home to jazz greats Art Blakey, Ray Brown, Jeff “Tain” Watts, and Ahmad Jamal, Richard D. Johnson has strong territorial jazz roots. He was introduced to the piano at the age of 5 by his father, a gospel pianist from Baltimore. After receiving a scholarship and graduating from the Berklee School of Music in just two years, Johnson entered the Boston Conservatory where he earned a master’s degree in jazz pedagogy. He then went on to receive an Artist Performance Diploma at the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz Performance at New England Conservatory under the direction of the influential Ron Carter.

Johnson was a member of Wynton Marsalis’ Septet and the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra, from 2000 to 2003. He also played as part of the Russell Malone Quartet, Delfeayo Marsalis Quintet, and The Bobby Watson Quartet. His Reach Afar program educates young people about elements of jazz in Hip-Hop.

Johnson has traveled extensively, sharing the gift of jazz to audiences around the world. As a United States Musical Ambassador, he did six State Department tours that took him to Central and South America, Africa, and the Middle East, affording him the opportunity to perform in more than 76 countries. Johnson has also accompanied such jazz icons as Wayne Shorter, Herbie Hancock, and Arturo Sandoval.

In 2005 Johnson became the musical director for the Atlanta Spirit LLC, creating a live instrumental five-member band for the NBA and performing at all 46 home games and outside activities. In 2013 he began as artist-in-residence at Eau Claire University in Wisconsin. After two years there he relocated to Doha, Qatar, and lived in the Middle East for four years managing venues for the St. Regis Hotel brand.

Currently Johnson is the Jazz Piano instructor at the Peabody Conservatory. He also serves as the piano instructor for the Ravinia Jazz Program in Chicago. He is an accomplished Musical Ambassador, composer, arranger, producer, and engineer with six musical releases as a leader. Johnson is endorsed by Yamaha.

Mark Whitfield, Jr.
Mark Whitfield, Jr. was born in Brooklyn, NY, and raised in Baton Rouge, LA. He was introduced into the world of music by his father, guitarist Mark Whitfield, who could tell from an early age Whitfield was a drummer in the making. After graduating from Berklee College of Music in 2011, Whitfield moved back to the NYC area and attended Manhattan School of Music for a semester until joining alto saxophonists Myron Walden and Kenny Garrett’s respective bands, while still playing around the New York jazz scene. In February 2013, Mark had the pleasure of recording with Kenny Garrett on his Grammy nominated album, Pushing the World Away. While still playing with Walden, and subbing with countless other names in the jazz world, Whitfield filled in on a gig with Sean Jones in the Summer of 2014. He soon joined Jones’ band and has since been fortunate enough to play with the likes of Orrin Evans, Christian Scott, Wallace Roney, Kurt Rosenwinkel, Aaron Goldberg, Tia Fuller, Charnett Moffett, Brian Jackson, Nicholas Payton, Chico Freeman, Manuel Valera, Wayne Escoffrey, Jeremy Pelt, Samora Pinderhughes, and Peter Martin amongst many others in jazz. In 2016, Whitfield and his family released their first album as a family entitled Grace (Whitfield Family Band). He also was a part of Sean Jones’ Mack Avenue release Live From Jazz At the Bistro. Whitfield still plays in the NYC area from time to time while traveling around the world with Sean Jones, Mark Whitfield, Brian Jackson, Black Art Jazz Collective, Tia Fuller, Kurt Rosenwinkel, Orrin Evans, Chico Freeman, Theo Hill, Nicholas Payton, and other names in jazz. Whitfield is an endorser of Canopus drums and Meinl cymbals.