

VIRGINIA MAYHEW BIOGRAPHY

Saxophonist-composer-arranger Virginia Mayhew has been an active participant in the New York jazz scene since 1987. In the course of her career, Virginia has worked with such renowned artists as Earl "Fatha" Hines, Cab Calloway, Frank Zappa, James Brown, Norman Simmons, Al Grey, Junior Mance, Toshiko Akiyoshi, Doc Cheatham, Joe Williams, Leon Parker, Clark Terry, Kenny Barron, Chico O'Farrill, Ingrid Jensen, Claudio Roditi, Nnenna Freelon, and many, many others.

Virginia has appeared in most of New York City's jazz venues, as well as performed throughout the United States, Europe, the Newly Independent States (Russia), the Caribbean, Bermuda, Australia, and Southeast Asia. Virginia has performed at many jazz festivals as a leader, including the Monterey Jazz Festival, JVC Jazz Festival, Floating Jazz Festival, Mary Lou Williams Jazz Festival at the Kennedy Center, San Francisco Jazz Festival, San Jose Jazz Festival, Guinness Cork (Ireland) Jazz Festival, Perth International Arts Festival, Melbourne Jazz Festival, Llangollen International Music Festival, Jazz At Sea, and others.

Early in her career, Virginia worked with veteran trombonist Al Grey for several years. She is featured on his 1992 release, FAB (Capri), and contributed several arrangements to his 1995 CD, "Centerpiece" (Telarc). Her arrangements were also performed during the "Battle Royale: Trombones and Alto Saxophones" concert, which was part of Jazz At Lincoln Center.

Virginia has traveled twice as a representative of the United States as a Jazz Ambassador, a non-political, government-sponsored program which unites people of the world through Jazz music, and with a special focus on countries which may not have had an opportunity to hear this style of music. The program features performances, residencies/master classes, interviews, and radio and television appearances. Virginia's first tour, in 2001, to the Newly Independent States, formerly the USSR, (Kazakhstan,

Moldova, Armenia, Belarus, Ukraine) featured the music of Louis Armstrong. Her second tour, in 2003, to Southeast Asia (Thailand, Laos, Viet Nam, Malaysia, India and Bangladesh) demonstrated the Latin and Brazilian influence on Jazz Music.

For several years, Virginia worked with Brazilian trumpet and flugelhorn player/composer/arranger Claudio Roditi, and has been a long-time member of the Howard Williams Big Band, Carl Thompson and Friends, the Lou Caputo "Not So Big Band". Virginia also freelances with many other bands and players in the NYC area.

Virginia was recently part of an exciting project, "Dreamin' the Duke", arranged by pianist Mike Garson and featuring Nnenna Freelon, classical soprano Harolyn Blackwell, rhythm section, 3 horns and a string quartet. "Dreamin' the Duke" had its debut at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. and appeared at Tanglewood, in addition to other venues around the U.S.

Virginia is the Musical Director and saxophonist of the Duke Ellington Legacy, a 9-piece group led by Ellington's grandson, Edward Kennedy Ellington II. The Ellington Legacy is dedicated to keeping Ellington's music through performances in clubs, performing arts centers, schools, retirement communities, and prisons. The group features piano great, Norman Simmons. The Legacy's debut recording, "Thank You Uncle Edward", featuring special guests Joe Temperley and Wycliffe Gordon, was very well received. The Legacy is releasing their second CD, "Single Petal of a Rose" (Renma Recordings), featuring tenor great Houston Person, in early 2012.

In addition to her septet ("A Simple Thank You" 2008), Virginia's current projects include a tribute to pianist/composer/arranger/mentor/educator Mary Lou Williams. Extensively researched, "Mary Lou Williams - The Next 100 Years" (Renma Recordings), includes new arrangements of eight MLW compositions and two Virginia Mayhew originals. The group includes

guitarist Ed Cherry, bassist Harvie S, and drummer Andy Watson, with special guest Wycliffe Gordon. This group has been featured at the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C., in Italy and in NYC.

Another special current project is a quartet with tap and modern dance/choreographer Katherine Kramer. This project utilizes tap dancing in place of drumset. It is a fresh, fun and interesting project, which has performed around the U.S. Video clips are available on YouTube.

In addition to Virginia's weekly performances around the City as a leader and as a sideperson, she and pianist Roberta Piket are currently developing a duo project, which recently had it's first performance. "...(two of the most) incisive minds in contemporary jazz..." Tim Wilkins, New Jersey Star Ledger.

In addition, Virginia has established her credentials in the field of jazz education, both as a teacher of private students, as faculty at numerous jazz camps, (including Stanford Jazz Workshop, Monterey Jazz Festival summer camp, Litchfield Jazz Camp, and Jazz Camp West), and as an experienced clinician and Artist-In-Residence, (including Univ. of Mass, Univ. of Louisville, Bloomington Univ., Williams College, and others). She has worked with Don Braden's exceptional program in Newark, NJ, "Jazz For Teens", and Melissa Walker's innovative, "Jazz House Kids". She has traveled around the U.S.A. working as an adjudicator, teaching master classes, and working with school ensembles large and small. In addition, Virginia founded the very successful Jazz Workshop at the Greenwich House Music School in NYC.

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DISCOGRAPHY

2012 – "Single Petal of A Rose" - Duke Ellington Legacy - Renma Recordings
2011 – "Mary Lou Williams - The Next 100 Years" – Virginia Mayhew Quartet
2008 – "Thank You Uncle Edward" – Duke Ellington Legacy – Renma Recordings
2008 – "A Simple Thank You" – Virginia Mayhew Septet – Renma Recordings

- 2006 – “Sandan Shuffle” – Virginia Mayhew Group – Renma Recordings
- 2003 – “Phantoms” – Virginia Mayhew Group – Renma Recordings
- 2003 – “New York Still Life” – Lou Caputo Not-So-Big Band
- 2002 – “Live At The Garage” – Howard Williams Big Band
- 2000 – “No Walls” – Virginia Mayhew Group – Foxhaven Records
- 1999 – “Intersect” – Sharp Five - Consensus Records
- 1999 – “Jazz Nativity” – All-Star Jazz Christmas Extravaganza
- 1998 – “Deadlines and Commitments” – Ursel Schlicht/Tony Romano Group
- 1997 – “Leave It To Diva” – Diva Big Band featuring Sherrie Maricle – Diva Ltd.
- 1997 – “Nini Green” – Virginia Mayhew Group – Chiaroscuro Records
- 1995 – “Centerpiece” (arrangements only) – Al Grey Group – Telarc
- 1994 – “No Man's Band” – Diva Big Band featuring Sherrie Maricle
- 1992 – “Fab” - Al Grey Group (Capri)
- 1991 – “Lady Bird” – Sahib Shihab Big Band
- 1990 – “It's About Time” – Virginia Mayhew/Rebecca Franks – Philology Records

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PUBLICATIONS

Virginia has been featured in numerous books and magazines. Below are a few:

- "Practice Like the Pros" by Sue Terry
- "Madame Jazz" by Leslie Gourse
- "Jazzwomen" by Wayne Enstice and Janice Stockhouse
- "Gigs: Jazz and the Cabaret Laws In New York City" by Paul Chevigny
- "Get Out There and Live", Down Beat Magazine, March 2009, feature by Eric Fine.

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Please visit www.VirginiaMayhew.com for more information.

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