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**MINTON'S PLAYHOUSE ANNOUNCES EXPANSIONS IN  
JAZZ PROGRAMMING AND JAZZ EDUCATION**

**NEWLY FOUNDED EDUCATION FOUNDATION MINTON'S MENTORS WILL LEAD ALL  
NEW EFFORTS IN COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND JAZZ EDUCATION**

**New Programming in Minton's Includes Two Artistic Residency Posts,  
Held by Onaje Allan Gumbs and Buster Williams**

**International Partnership with South Africa's Fort Hare University Will  
Create Study Abroad Jazz Exchange Programs**

**Expanded Multimedia Approaches Include a  
Streaming Video and Ongoing Podcast Series, As Well As a Record Label**

**Kicking Off Its Fundraising, Minton's Playhouse Will Hold a World Record-Breaking  
48-Hour Nonstop Jazz Marathon July 4-July 6, 2008**

**NEW YORK, NY -- Minton's Playhouse** announced today a massive expansion in its jazz programming and community outreach through the formation of the non-profit foundation **Minton's Mentors** as well as through an international partnership with South Africa's **Fort Hare University** and the director of its burgeoning Jazz Studies Department, **Hotep Idris Galeta**. New developments to Minton's include two year-long Artist in Residence positions, held by **Onaje Allan Gumbs** and **Buster Williams**; family-oriented concerts with established jazz legends; jazz internships and jazz camps for developing musicians; as well as new technology initiatives such as streaming video of concerts, a podcast series, and the formation of a record label. The new programming will commence fall 2008. Fundraising for these initiatives kicks off summer 2008, when Minton's Playhouse hosts a world record-breaking event, programming 48 consecutive hours of jazz performances from July 4-July 6, 2008.

"Through our new upcoming educational and artistic programming we are excited to emphasize Minton's historic place within jazz history, and also prepare it to be a leader in jazz for years to come," said Celeste Sapp, manager of Minton's Playhouse. "As we move ahead, we look forward to making Minton's a place for families, to training the next generation of jazz musicians, and to using new technologies to expand beyond the walls of Minton's."

Central to all of Minton's Playhouse's upcoming activities is the non-profit organization **Minton's Mentors**, which is dedicated to contributing to residents of the Harlem community through educating, informing, and supporting community members, particularly youth. This organization will work closely with the club to develop family-oriented concerts, lecture series, neighborhood concerts, and jazz education programs that will maximize Minton's positive impact on the community.

Expanding its outreach even farther, Minton's will develop a number of multimedia outlets for artists, including streaming video of performances, an ongoing podcast series, and also a label for creating and selling CDs and DVDs of performances at the club.

## Jazz Expansion

As part of the effort to restore Minton's Playhouse to its position as a leader in jazz programming, the club will undergo full interior and exterior renovations. Renovations include a gift shop as well as a Walk of Fame outside that honors jazz musicians vital to Minton's history. Additionally, jazz artists will be honored with a series of artist renderings and bronze busts of the musicians.

Minton's forthcoming jazz programming will reflect its importance to the jazz tradition as well as its ongoing commitment to presenting performances ranging from established jazz legends to dynamic up-and-coming musicians. Minton's will also feature Meet the Artist series—intimate performances with seminal jazz figures that includes Q&A with the artists to complement performances—as well as lectures by jazz journalists, writers, and educators.

In a further effort to showcase vital jazz artists, Minton's will select two artists to participate in 12-month artistic residency posts. For their first artists, Minton's has selected the pianist **Onaje Allan Gumbs** and the bassist **Buster Williams**. Both artists will be actively involved in both performance opportunities and educational outreach.

## Minton's Mentors

Central to all forthcoming activities is the non-profit foundation **Minton's Mentors**. The organization, dedicated to contributing to the Harlem community, will enhance knowledge and share awareness of the role of jazz as the major indigenous musical genre of the United States through a variety of community-oriented and educational programs.

Minton's Mentors aims to achieve these goals through outreach programs that include free jazz performances throughout Harlem, free lectures at Minton's about the history of jazz, and providing internships within jazz and the recording industry for aspiring professionals. Minton's Mentors will also work closely with the club in developing family-oriented jazz shows, as well as free outdoor concerts for the public.

Seeking to firmly establish jazz as integral to the community, Minton's mentors will also develop a range of programs dedicated to education and personal development for children, as well as organizing free sporting teams and events.

Each summer, Minton's Mentors will host two jazz camps in partnership with Camp Seneca Lake in Honsdale, PA. The camps will feature seminars, performances, master classes, and intensive one-on-one attention for students. These jazz camps will function in conjunction with Minton's artist residencies and with its partnership with Fort Hare University. The first camp takes place in April 2009.

## Fort Hare University

Minton's Playhouse and Minton's Mentors are proud to announce an international partnership with the burgeoning jazz studies department at South Africa's Fort Hare University. Led by Onaje Allan Gumbs and South African jazz pianist and professor at Fort Hare Hotep Idris Galeta, Minton's and Fort Hare will collaborate on a variety of projects, most notably an exchange program for jazz students, giving South African jazz students an opportunity to study in the United States and participate in internships in jazz through Minton's Mentors, and giving American jazz students the opportunity to experience South Africa's jazz culture and study with its musicians.

Concerts, lectures, and master classes at both locations will be available on both websites, allowing students from both countries to learn a wide range of jazz history and jazz styles. Students at Fort Hare will also be eligible for scholarships to participate in the Minton's Mentors Jazz Camps.

Hotep will also collaborate with Minton's in bringing South African jazz and South African jazz artists to greater attention within the United States. The two organizations will cooperate in arranging United States performances by South African musicians, and Hotep also will arrange for South African artists' performances to be featured as streaming video on Minton's website, and also as audio on Minton's podcast series.

### **Artists-in-Residence**

In order to showcase the wide-ranging skills of some of jazz's most talented artists, Minton's Playhouse has appointed its first two artists-in-residence, **Onaje Allan Gumbs** and **Buster Williams**, to curate concerts, assist in jazz education, and advise in further music programming and outreach. Each musician will hold his respective position, beginning 2009, for one year.

Pianist, composer, and arranger **Onaje Allan Gumbs** will oversee a wide range of programs at Minton's by advising Minton's Mentors on jazz education, coordinating the New York activities of the Minton's-Fort Hare partnership, as well as acting as a curator for numerous performance events at Minton's featuring both himself and major jazz figures.

Central to Onaje's residency will be Sunday afternoon "Legend Concerts." These events, designed for families will showcase seminal jazz artists and will feature both performances and Question & Answer sessions with the audience members. All performances will be available for viewing online.

Additionally, Onaje will curate a series of monthly performances at Minton's. These performances include tributes to legendary jazz figures such as Woody Shaw and Horace Silver, and will also serve as an opportunity to showcase not only Onaje's versatility as an artist, but also to bring to the spotlight a wide range of New York-based jazz artists including Avery Sharpe, TK Blue, and Lonny Plaxico.

The final portion of Onaje's residency will include the assembly of a house band, thus forging a link between the Minton's Playhouse of today with the legendary Minton's Playhouse of the 1940s. This group will perform at Minton's on a monthly basis.

Bassist and composer **Buster Williams** will also take part in a residency at Minton's. As part of his residency, Buster will conduct a series of educational videos in which he discusses aspect of bass pedagogy, as well as lectures on composing. Buster will also run master classes with students and student groups, all of which will be available online for viewing.

Comprising the performative aspect of his residency, Buster will organize monthly concerts that showcase his range as a bassist and bandleader, ranging from his classic "Something More" Quartet to performing classical music with a string quartet. Buster will also be commissioned to compose works for performance at Minton's by his own ensembles and by youth jazz bands in cooperation with Minton's Mentors.

### **Technology**

In an effort to expand its programming and education and also to bring jazz to the widest audience possible, Minton's Playhouse will install new audio/visual equipment in order to capture all performances with high-quality video and audio documentation. Selected concerts will be available for free as streaming videos online, and selected performances will also be included in the Minton's Playhouse podcast. The podcast, entitled *Minton's Playhouse: Birth of Bebop, Home of Jazz*, will showcase major jazz performances at Minton's, performances curated by Artistic Residents Onaje Allan Gumbs and Buster Williams, and also South African jazz artists selected by Hotep Idris Galeta. These podcasts, along with streaming video, will allow audiences worldwide to experience the jazz at Minton's and will serve as a vital outreach tool.

Additionally, selected performances will be available for purchase on DVD and CD through Minton's Records. The label, dedicated to preserving and documenting the new generation of great performances at Minton's Playhouse, will make its albums available through its online store, through the club itself, and through selected online vendors for download. As its first release, Minton's Records will release a compilation from its 48-hour jazz marathon, available as a limited edition collector's item. The label will serve to document major appearances at Minton's Playhouse in the future, and will partner with artists in all steps of production in order to ensure musical products of the highest quality.

### **Fundraising Activities**

Minton's kicks off its fundraising activities in summer 2008 with a special jazz marathon. Breaking all previous World Records, Minton's will host a 48-hour non-stop live jazz marathon from Friday, July 4 at 12:00 noon until Sunday, July 6 a 12:00 midnight. Featured artists will include **Cyrus Chestnut, Grady Tate, Melba Moore, Onaje Allan Gumbs, Geri Allen**. During the daytime hours between the hours of 10:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m. Minton's will host a "Community Day Picnic" outside of Minton's Playhouse on West 118 St.

On Sunday, August 10, The Minton's Playhouse Annual Hall of Fame and Stickball Classic hosts a black-tie dinner and dance fundraiser with entertainment provided by the Jack Jeffers' Minton's Playhouse Big Band as well as several special guest artists.

Minton's Playhouse will hold additional fundraisers to celebrate the restoration of both the historic landmark piano of Chris Anderson and the Charles Granum painting that adorns the stage wall of Minton's. Dates will be announced.

Closing out major fundraising events for 2008, Minton's Playhouse and Minton's Mentors Foundation will host a concert and award ceremony at the famed Apollo Theater in early November 2008.

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Minton's Playhouse will be adding updates to its fundraising activities and artist lineups throughout the upcoming months. Updates will be posted at [www.mintonsmentors.org](http://www.mintonsmentors.org), and immediate notification of updates may be obtained via the RSS feed.



## **Mission Statement**

The objective of Minton's Mentors Foundation is to contribute to the residents of the Harlem community by educating, informing, and supporting our youth and community members through the arts.

We intend to enhance knowledge and share awareness of the role of Jazz as the major indigenous musical genre of the United States. Minton's Playhouse was always recognized for acting as a center for the extension and development of Jazz as a cultural format in New York City and nationally.

We will continue to pass on this history to our youth, by providing services and exposure to arts to the underserved community.

We will provide:

- Mentoring for children interested in the arts
- Personal development, life skills, and social interaction skills
- Free musical events and concerts
- Intensive jazz camps
- Social event planning training
- Business operations and opportunities for business experience
- Entertainment technology training
- Free sporting teams and events
- Documentation and archiving of cultural activities in Harlem, saving them for posterity
- Research and study of the legacy and cultural history of this important force at the center of the African American Diaspora in the form of a Jazz Museum and a Jazz Walk of Fame.

Competencies for youth will be developed in the following areas:

- Cooperation – Teamwork – Camaraderie
- Integrity – Principled Behavior – Honesty
- Self-discipline
- Time management
- Appropriate dress
- Appropriate etiquette

## Artist in Residence: Buster Williams

Buster Williams is a prodigious artist whose playing knows no limits. He has played, recorded and collaborated with jazz giants such as Art Blakey, Betty Carter, Carmen McRae, Chet Baker, Chick Corea, Dexter Gordon, Jimmy Heath, Branford Marsalis, Wynton Marsalis, Gene Ammons, Sonny Stitt, Herbie Hancock, Larry Coryell, Lee Konitz, McCoy Tyner, Illinois Jacquet,



Nancy Wilson, Elvin Jones, Miles Davis, the Jazz Crusaders, Ron Carter, Woody Shaw, Sarah Vaughan, Benny Golson, Mary Lou Williams, Hank Jones, Lee Morgan, Jimmy Rowles, Hampton Hawes, Cedar Walton, Bobby Hutcherson, Billy Taylor, Sonny Rollins, Count Basie, Errol Garner, Kenny Barron, Charlie Rouse, Dakota Staton, Kenny Dorham, and Freddie Hubbard, to name a few.

Awards include a Grammy in 1979; the Min-On Art Award; the SGI Glory Award the SGI Cultural Award; the RVC Corporation RCA Best Seller Award; NEA recipient; New York Fellowship Grant; 5 Stars from Downbeat magazine for the album *Crystal Reflections* listed in *Who's Who in Black America*; and numerous proclamations.

Charles Anthony Williams, Jr. was born in Camden, New Jersey on April 17, 1942. His mother, Gladys worked as a seamstress and his father, Charles Anthony Williams, Sr., a bassist, worked various day jobs to support his five children. "He would prepare my lessons for me," Buster recalls, "and when I got home from school I was supposed to practice, then he would listen while he was eating his dinner. It was an unwritten law that I had to play it right or hear about it. I was going to be the best. I had no choice. In those days, instead of a two-car family, we were a two bass family. My father was a fan of Slam Stewart, and he strung his basses the way Slam did. Instead of the regular G-D-A-E, he strung a high C. Adding the C string puts the playing of higher-pitched passages at a more comfortable position. He told me, 'If I re-string my bass for you, you'd better be serious!'"

*As part of his residency, Buster will conduct a series of educational videos and podcasts in which he discusses aspect of bass pedagogy, as well as lectures on composing. Buster will also run master classes with students and student groups, all of which will be available online for viewing.*

*Comprising the performative aspect of his residency, Buster will organize monthly concerts that showcase his range as a bassist and bandleader, ranging from his classic "Something More" Quartet, to performing classical music with a string quartet. Buster will also be commissioned to compose works for performance at Minton's by his own ensembles as well as by youth jazz bands in cooperation with Minton's Mentors.*

## Artist in Residence: Onaje Allan Gumbs

Onaje Allan Gumbs is one of the industry's most respected and talented musical collaborators. He has worked for more than 30 years with an illustrious list of jazz, R&B, and pop artists. In 1974, he created a special arrangement of "Stella By Starlight" for the New York Jazz Repertory Company as part of a concert honoring Miles Davis at Carnegie Hall. Onaje followed that with performances on albums by such artists as Woody Shaw (*Moontrane*), Buster Williams (*Pinnacle*), Cecil McBee (*Mutima*) and Betty Carter (*Betty Carter*). In 1975, Onaje joined forces with trumpeter Nat Adderley and his quintet, contributing to the group's releases on Atlantic and Steeplechase Records.



Nils Winter of Steeplechase Records invited the young pianist to record a solo piano album entitled *Onaje* (1976). In 1978, the Woody Shaw Group, to which Onaje contributed as pianist and composer, won the Down Beat Reader's Poll for Jazz Group and for best jazz album, *Rosewood*. The album was later nominated for a Grammy. In 1985, Onaje lent his keyboard work and arrangement to "Lady in My Life" on guitarist Stanley Jordan's enormously successful debut album, *Magic Touch* on Blue Note Records. This was the 1st jazz album in history to maintain the 1 spot atop Billboard Magazine's jazz charts for more than 47 weeks.

In addition to major label releases—*That Special Part of Me* (1988), *Dare to Dream* (1991) and *Return To Form* (2003)—Onaje has an independently financed solo project for the 21st century, *Remember Their Innocence* (2005). Onaje has been featured twice on NPR's *Piano Jazz* with Marian McPartland. He composed, arranged and performed the original score for a Showtime film directed by actor/producer, Danny Glover entitled *Override* (1994) and in 1997, he was conductor and arranger for vocalist Cassandra Wilson's concert *Travelin' Miles*, a tribute to Miles Davis. In 2006, Onaje was nominated for an NAACP Image Award in the Outstanding Jazz category for his independent project *Remember Their Innocence*.

For his residency, Onaje will oversee a wide range of programs at Minton's by acting as an advisor to jazz education with Minton's Mentors, coordinating the New York activities of the Minton's-Fort Hare partnership, as well as acting as a curator for numerous performance events at Minton's featuring both himself and major jazz figures.

Central to Onaje's residency will be Sunday afternoon performances showcasing seminal jazz artists in performance and discussion, aimed at attracting families in order to encourage participation in jazz by youth. Additionally, Onaje will curate a series of monthly performances at Minton's. These performances include tributes to legendary jazz figures such as Woody Shaw and Horace Silver, and will also serve as an opportunity to demonstrate not only Onaje's versatility as an artist, but will also serve to spotlight a range of New York-based jazz artists including Avery Sharpe, TK Blue, and Lonny Plaxico.

The final portion of Onaje's residency will include the assembly of a house band, thus forging a link between the Minton's Playhouse of today with the legendary Minton's Playhouse of the 1940s, during which the in-house band included bebop innovators such as Charlie Christian and Thelonious Monk.



## Fort Hare University and Hotep Idris Galeta

Traditionally recognized as one of the prestigious universities on the continent of Africa, the University of Fort Hare stemmed from the initiatives of the black elite and early twentieth-century white liberals, many of them clergy, and supported by many traditional Southern African leaders.

Fort Hare came into existence in 1916 and is the oldest historically black university in Southern Africa. Throughout its existence, Fort Hare graduates have come from as far North as Kenya, Uganda and Nigeria, and all knew they were as good as the best.

Many enjoyed prominent careers in fields as diverse as politics, medicine, literature and art. Some alumni, like Nelson Mandela, Oliver Tambo Govan Mbeki, Chris Hani, Robert Sobukwe, Mangosuthu Buthelezi, Dennis Brutus, Can Themba, Yusuf Lule of Uganda, Ntsu Mokehle of Lesotho, Seretse Khama of Botswana, Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, Herbert Chitepo, novelist Stanlake Samkange and the first black Zimbabwean medical doctor, Ticofa Parirenyatwa, are well known.

This cosmopolitan university boasts a long-standing tradition of non-racism which is characterized by intellectually enriching and critical debate. There is an almost tangible aspiration towards educational excellence while social life on campus is vibrant.

The model blueprint for the transformation and repositioning of this legendary institution in the twentieth century - the Strategic Plan 2000 and the subsequent Institutional Operating Plan (IOP) - nurtures and builds upon this tradition. The objective of these internationally lauded corporate re-engineering plans is to make this university worthy of its rich inheritance as a reflection of a dynamic institution.

The 26th of April 2005 saw the University of Fort Hare receiving one of the highly celebrated national Orders - The Supreme Order of Baobab (Gold Class) from President Thabo Mbeki. Rich in visual and literary symbolism, the award draws its inspiration from a 3000 year old tree, whose odd hydra-like and upside root structure seems to defy the laws of gravity. Mainly found in the northern parts of southern Africa, the Baobab is known for its resilience, strength and fortitude in the face of drought, pestilence and the erosive passage of time. Citing this symbolism, the State President conferred the Order of Gold Class to Fort Hare in recognition of its role in 'academic training' of legions of men and women in South Africa and Southern Africa, as well as its 'leadership development' contribution.

Hotep Idris Galeta was born in Crawford, Cape Town and grew up exposed to the rich music culture in and around the city. After meeting Abdullah Ibrahim, then known as Dollar Brand, at a high school jazz concert, the two became close friends and Brand became Hotep's mentor. Hotep, or as he was known in the 50's, Cecil Barnard, went on to establish himself as one of the young emerging pianists on the Cape Town Jazz scene. Hotep left South Africa in 1961 for London and then New York, remaining in exile for thirty years, during which he worked with jazz figures such as Jackie McLean, Woody Shaw, Elvin Jones, and Archie Shepp. He was appointed lecturer in Jazz studies to the University of Hartford's Hart College of Music in 1985. This position continued until his return to South Africa in 1991. In 2003, Hotep released the critically acclaimed solo album *Malay Tone Poem*, recorded with some of South Africa's rising jazz stars including Marcus Wyatt and Zim Ngqawana. Hotep currently manages the Resource Centre at Artscape Performing Arts Theatre Complex in Cape Town, South Africa, and also co-ordinates the Jazz Performance and Community Outreach Jazz Education programs there, and also teaches at Fort Hare University.