

Jacoby Arts Center Showcases SIUE Jazz Greats

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Great music! Great artists! Great jazz comes to Jacoby Arts Center on Saturday, February 23. Jazz enthusiasts don't want to miss this one – the Jason Swagler Trio!

Jason Swagler makes his second appearance at the Jacoby Arts Center, this time heading the Jason Swagler Trio. Last year he appeared with Ralph Butler and Gigi Darr in another LIVE at Jacoby: Saturday Nights concert, thrilling the audience with his smooth and creative improvisation, which was not lost on Jean King of Jacoby's Performing Arts Committee. "Jason plays saxophone that is truly music to the ears," King says.

This year, the Jason Swagler Trio will take stage with Jason on alto saxophone, Rick Haydon, guitar, and Adaron "Pops" Jackson, piano. The Trio is a fixture of the St. Louis jazz scene, thrilling audiences with their collective improvisation, all within the bounds of music that will make you bob your head and tap your foot.

Swagler, an Assistant Professor of Jazz Saxophone at SIUE, began playing the saxophone in 1983 at the age of nine. At first, he did not take to the instrument. "I really wanted to be a guitarist. Guitars weren't allowed in band, the director didn't want any more drummers, so that left no cool instruments to play," as he tells it. The band director said that Jason had "saxophonist lips." Jason didn't buy it but his mother persuaded him to sign up for elementary band anyway. It turned out that a couple saxophones were already in the family. The alto saxophone that Jason started out on was his uncle's, a 1963 Selmer Mark VI. It is still his primary instrument. Since then, Jason has toured throughout the United States and the world with his uncle's horn. He also gets much use out of his great uncle's 1920s Holton soprano sax. He performs between 100 to 150 dates a year under his own name and as a freelance musician. His latest album, *Rough Stuff* (2012), is available on iTunes.

Rick Haydon is a Professor of Music at SIUE where he is head of the Guitar Program and manages the recording studio. Professor Haydon has been performing professionally for over 35 years. In 1996 he performed with Herb Ellis and Mundell Lowe during the Guitar Foundation of America International Guitar Convention. In 1998 he played with Bucky Pizzarelli (7-string guitar) before a sold out concert at the Sheldon Concert Hall in St. Louis. In 2004 Haydon received the Woody Herman Award from the Birch Creek Music Performance Center in Door County, WI. His most recent recording with John Pizzarelli titled "Just Friends" for Mel Bay records recently reached 19 on the Jazz Week Top 100 charts.

Pianist, arranger and composer Adaron Jackson, Adjunct Professor at SIUE, has performed as a sideman as well as with his own ensembles throughout the U.S. and Europe. "Pops," as he is known locally as well as nationally, has performed and worked with such diverse artists as Ron Carter, Conrad Herwig, John Riley, Harry Allen, Frank Morgan, Victor Mendoza, Steve Houghton, Clay Jenkins, Tom Kennedy, Kim Richmond, LaVerne Butler, Red Holliway, Ellis Marsalis, Arturo Sandoval, Greg Tardy, Slide Hampton, Wallace Roney, and Dave Scott.

Adaron also has toured throughout the U. S. with Grammy award winning Motown legend The Temptations and with I Get A Kick Out Of Cole a Live Onstage Production. The St. Louis Symphony Orchestra has featured Adaron on its Powell On Stage Series concerts as well as through Out-Reach performances. Adaron has performed at the Chicago Jazz Festival, the St. Louis Blues and Heritage Festival, the Smoky Hill River Festival, and the Kansas City Blues and Jazz Festival.

“I am totally excited about this concert,” King says, “and look forward to hosting an enthusiastic audience that evening as well.”

Jacoby’s doors will open at 6 p.m., and the music begins at 7. Admission costs \$10 or \$8 for seniors and students, and a beverage cash bar is available. Tickets may be purchased at Jacoby Arts Center, Halpin Music, Jerseyville Public Library, Wood River Public Library, or by phone at 618-462-5222. LIVE at Jacoby: Saturday Nights is sponsored in part by WBGZ Radio 1570 AM of Alton.

Located at 627 East Broadway in Alton, Illinois, Jacoby Arts Center is open Tuesdays through Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., late on Thursdays until 8 p.m., and closed on Sundays and Mondays. For more information, visit www.jacobyartscenter.org or call 618-462-5222. Jacoby Arts Center is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to foster the artistic development and economic success of artists, and to expand accessibility to the arts through programs that promote education, participation and exploration.

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