



Alton Amphitheater Commission Announces Lineup For 2022 Alton Jazz & Wine Festival

by Alton Amphitheater Commission
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ALTON - Enjoy the sounds of smooth jazz and the taste of great wine as the successful Alton Jazz & Wine Festival returns to Liberty Bank Alton Amphitheater on Saturday, September 3, 2022 with gates opening at 6pm.

The Alton Jazz Confluence, featuring up and coming Alton/Godfrey student musicians, will again kick off this year's festival. Following this exciting group of future jazz stars will be The Kendrick Smith Trio.

The headliners for this year's Alton Jazz & Wine Festival will be Mardra and Reggie Thomas.

"The Alton Amphitheater Commission is excited to again bring great jazz to Liberty Bank Amphitheater with this popular and growing event," said Dan Herkert, Amphitheater Commission Chair. "We're particularly proud to again feature some of our local student musicians at the beginning of the festival."

"We are also thrilled to bring back the intimate jazz club setting where tables will be on the stage surrounding the artists as they perform," continued Herkert. "This set-up, first utilized at last year's festival, proved to be extremely popular and sold out quickly."

This year's festival will again feature the popular charcuterie trays from Brown Bag Bistro as well as other food options. A wide variety of wines will be available for purchase by the bottle or glass, and beer and non-alcoholic beverage options will also be available.

Tickets for the Alton Jazz & Wine Festival are, including fees, \$99.50 for a 4-top table, \$49.50 for a 2-top table, and \$8.50 for general admission lawn seating. VIP parking is also available for \$8.50. All tickets are on sale now at www.LibertyBankAmphitheater.com and at www.MetroTix.com.

For more information about this and other events at Liberty Bank Alton Amphitheater, please visit www.LibertyBankAmphitheater.com.



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About Kendrick Smith

Saxophonist, composer and educator Kendrick Smith was born and raised in East St. Louis, Illinois. Smith began playing in grade school, developing his skills much earlier than many musicians. His talents would be further shaped in high school by studying with legendary baritone saxophonist and founding member of the World Saxophone Quartet Hamiet Bluiett. Following his study at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville under the tutelage of pianist Reggie Thomas, Smith would secure a residency at St. Louis's Premier Lounge. As his star began to climb, The St. Louis American billed him as "Baby Bird," a reference to iconic saxophonist Charlie Parker and a New York Times review stated, "Kendrick Smith was playing the alto saxophone like his life depended on it!" One of the emerging pillars of the St. Louis music scene, Smith puts it best in that his vision is to "strive for excellence, show forth professionalism on and off the bandstand, to touch people, and to keep jazz music alive and moving forward."



About Mardra Thomas

You'll see Mardra Thomas in theatres, concert halls and premier clubs such as Kansas City's Blue Room and St. Louis' Jazz at the Bistro. She has shared the stage with diversified greats including: Bobby Watson, Bill Pierce, Clay Jenkins, Dennis Mackrel, Don Vappie, Ernie Adams, Harold Jones, Jeff Campbell, Kim Richmond, Will Matthews, Lou Marini, Randy Brecker, Rodney Whitaker, Victor Goines, and on many occasions with her husband pianist/organist Reggie Thomas in their ensembles. Mardra has presented voice workshops for schools throughout the country, including Monterey's Next Generation Jazz Festival, Berklee College of Music-Boston, Birch Creek Music Academy-Egg Harbor, Eastern Washington University-Spokane, International Association of Jazz Educators-Toronto, Jazz at Lincoln Center's Essentially Ellington Educational Festival-New York, and Michigan State University-East Lansing. You will find Mardra's voice center stage at music festivals all around the world. Whether you

see her in Washington or Wisconsin, Atlanta or Amsterdam, expect to be allured by her acting and mesmerized by her music.



About Reggie Thomas

Reggie Thomas can be seen fronting his own groups (Mardra/Reggie Thomas Ensemble; OGD) on both piano and Hammond organ and as a sideman with great artists including Hamiett Blueit, Ann Hampton Callaway, and the Carl Allen/Rodney Whitaker Ensemble. He is often seen performing with the Legendary Count Basie Band as an accompanist for the Thelonious Monk International Jazz Competition at the Kennedy Center in Washington DC. and Los Angeles. Reggie continues to appear as guest artist at collegiate jazz festivals around the country including Lawrence University, the University of South Florida, and Texas Tech University. He has also performed internationally in Tokyo, Japan, Bangkok, Thailand, Macau, China; Jakarta, Indonesia; Calgary, Alberta, Canada; Milan, Italy; Warsaw and Poznan, Poland; Senegal, West Africa; and London, England. Recordings include work with Clay Jenkins, Kim Richmond, and Clark Terry/Mike Vax. His latest recording “Matters Of The Heart” (MRTJazz) was released in March of 2015 with his wife Mardra and their previous recordings together are “Fade to Blue”(MaxJazz) and “Standard Time” (Victoria). He can be heard playing organ on the record “4” (Jazz Compass) and “Better Than Alright” with the MSU’s Professors of Jazz. Reggie has been awarded the Excellence in the Arts award from the Greater St. Louis Arts and Education Council and was named in the Riverfront Times 2005 “Best of St. Louis” issue as Best Jazz Artist.

