

Jaimeo Brown Transcendence featuring Chris Sholar and Jaleel Shaw



NORTH ADAMS, MASSACHUSETTS — Musician **Jaimeo Brown**, performing with his ensemble, Transcendence, fuses jazz, hip-hop, and blues. Presented in confluence with Allison Janae Hamilton’s exhibition, *Pitch*, the evening will include Brown’s provocative piece *Work Songs* which samples the sounds and music of unknown laborers. With songs of the jailhouse, the coal mine, and the gandy dancer, Brown argues that through music we can transcend oppression and the traditional constraints of creativity. Preferred ticket buyers are invited to a gallery tour and recital at 3pm, before the main event on **Saturday, August 18, at 8pm.**

Jaimeo Brown grew up in the 1980s Bay Area as West Coast hip-hop took over the radio waves, and gang culture sprouted in his neighborhood. He found shelter in music, equally inspired by the beats and samples of J Dilla, Dr. Dre, and DJ Premier, and the raw eloquence of Coltrane, Miles Davis, and Art Blakey. With the guidance of his musical family and drum teacher, Sly Randolph — himself a Bernard Purdie protégé — Brown’s multifaceted interest has become a 20-year music-making career, during which he’s worked with a range of musicians including Stevie Wonder, Carlos Santana, A Tribe Called Quest, Bobby Hutcherson, and more.

The origins of Jaimeo Brown Transcendence lie in recordings of the Gee’s Bend quilters. The songs of this isolated African-American community on the Alabama River found their way into Jaimeo’s life over a decade ago. It was only recently, however, that he started to experiment with weaving samples of the Gee’s Bend into his own music. When he realized the potential there, Brown reached out to longtime friend Chris Sholar — a Grammy-winning producer and guitarist who has worked with Stevie Wonder, Kanye West, Beyoncé, and Whitney Houston — to collaborate on the project. Together they uncovered a tapestry in which a digital future meets a hand-stitched past, blending early recordings of blues, jazz, and folk songs with live hip-hop, jazz, and electronic elements.

Transcendence’s eponymously titled 2013 debut elicited glowing reviews from the *Los Angeles Times*, *JazzTimes*, *DownBeat*, and *The Guardian*, which noted that the album is “as powerful as it is ambitious...the resulting soundscapes are a dialogue between the present and a collective past of suffering and salvation, with echoes of Coltrane.” Their follow-up album, *Work Songs*, looks beyond

Gee's Bend but continues to center historical field recordings of laborers. Joined by saxophonists Jaleel Shaw and others, the album weaves music that rose from America's cotton fields and rural Japan with blissed-out free jazz, distorted blues rock, and electronic riffs to create "one of the most exciting, experimental, and important albums set to drop this year" (*Vice*).

Before the ensemble's large concert in the evening, Jaimeo Brown Transcendence will perform an innovative set for Preferred Ticket Buyers in the museum galleries at 3pm in response to Allison Janae Hamilton's exhibition *Pitch*. The exhibition conjures the rich landscape of the South — from its sights and smells to its unmistakable sounds. Both artists engage with the legacy of labor and the music it has inspired, sharing an interest in how music defines both place and its inhabitants, while transcending specifics.

On **Saturday, August 18, at 8pm** Jaimeo Brown Transcendence brings the sounds of work, labor, and humanity to the Dré Pavilion. Joining Jaimeo Brown and Chris Sholar is saxophonist Jaleel Shaw who won the DownBeat Critics Poll's for *Rising Star Alto Saxophonist* in 2014. A longtime member of the Roy Haynes Quartet and Tom Harrell's "Colors Of A Dream," Shaw has performed with Jason Moran, the Mingus Big Band, Pat Metheny, and Chick Corea, among others.

Lickety Split, MASS MoCA's in-house café, serves up fresh salads, homemade soup, and lip-smacking pub fare. The MASS MoCA bar is always well-stocked with local beer from Bright Ideas Brewing and Berkshire Mountain Distillery spirits. Tickets are \$14 students, \$14 in advance, \$24 day of, and \$38. Preferred ticket buyers are invited to a gallery tour and recital at 3pm, before the main event. Tickets for all events are available through the MASS MoCA box office located at the museum, open seven days a week — from 10am to 6pm Sundays through Wednesdays and from 10am to 7pm Thursdays through Saturdays. Tickets can also be charged by phone by calling 413.662.2111 x1 during box office hours or purchased online at massmoca.org. All events are held rain or shine.

Images

High-resolution images of MASS MoCA's summer 2018 events are available through this link: bit.ly/2J3V0oU.

About MASS MoCA

MASS MoCA is one of the world's liveliest (and largest) centers for making, displaying, and enjoying today's most important art, music, dance, theater, film, and video. MASS MoCA's 250,000 sq. ft. of gallery space includes partnerships with Laurie Anderson, the Louise Bourgeois Trust, Jenny Holzer, Anselm Kiefer with the Hall Art Foundation, Sol LeWitt, and James Turrell.

Gallery admission is \$20 for adults, \$18 for veterans and seniors, \$12 for students, \$8 for children 6 to 16, and free for children 5 and under. Members are admitted free year-round. The Hall Art Foundation's Anselm Kiefer exhibition is seasonal and currently on view. For additional information: [413.662.2111 x1](tel:413.662.2111) or visit massmoca.org.

Hours

From June 23 through September 3, MASS MoCA's galleries are open seven days a week — from 10am to 6pm Sundays through Wednesdays and from 10am to 7pm Thursdays through Saturdays. MASS MoCA is open from 11am to 5pm, closed Tuesdays from September 4 through the end of June.

About ArtCountry

ArtCountry is nestled in the Berkshire hills of western Massachusetts and at the foot of the Green Mountains of southern Vermont, with art and music all year round from four incredible museums — MASS MoCA, The Clark Art Institute, Williams College Museum of Art, and Bennington Museum — and the unparalleled Williamstown Theatre Festival, all less than three hours from New York and Boston.