



[Home](#) >

# JAZZ WORKSHOPS CONTINUE DESPITE PANDEMIC: HUDSON JAZZWORKS @ HUDSON HALL AUGUST 9, 2020



By **Rudy Lu**

ON **AUG 12, 2020**

[MUSIC](#) [PHOTO GALLERY](#)

PreCovid, jazz workshops are very much a part of our summer jazz scene in Nippertown. Skidmore has a long-running two week **Jazz Institute** for promising high school students from all over the country. **All Ears Jazz** is a local workshop that has resided in Proctors and offers coaching for performers of all ages. While, Skidmore canceled their workshop this summer, All Ears decided to offer their instruction online only.

## The Workshop

The Hudson Jazzworks with their international participants had to greatly modify their program. This normally is a three-day workshop offering residential facilities but this year it was a two-day online workshop for composers and a three-day workshop for performers at workshop instructor Armen Donelian's home culminating with a master class on the third day with veteran bassist Jay Anderson. The class was then followed by a live-streamed concert at Hudson Hall of both the instructors and of the students with some of the composers' compositions.

The workshop has been in existence for 14 years and is run by saxophonist Mark Mommaas and pianist Armen Donelian. Master class instructors have included such jazz greats as Joe Locke, Sheila Jordan, Reggie Workman, and the late Claudio Roditi. It usually has over ten students. Workshops are an important way of passing down the art to younger players and are now an integral part of the jazz tradition.

Jay's master class as with the others I attended emphasized the soft skills required to be and thrive as a jazz musician and actually an artist in general. Interaction with other musicians, practice, and attitude. Nothing is absolute. The "Unheard Notes" (Or when not to play). As with many jazz musicians, the original training was not jazz but classical. He has played with artists as varied as Woody Herman, Carmen McRae, Chaka Khan, Dr. John, and Lee Konitz.

I would like to emphasize that these masterclasses and other lessons are not like the popular movie "Whiplash", lessons and actually are taught with humor, dramatic gestures, humanity as well as playing/listening rather than belittling, bullying and intense competitiveness.

## Photo Gallery by Rudy Lu













## The Concert

The concert was held in one of the lower meeting rooms of Hudson Hall due to COVID concerns. It was webcast simultaneously on the Internet. It consisted of 2 sets, the first set was of the instructors. Armen Donelian, Marc Mommas and Jay Anderson formed a drummerless trio to perform 3 standards:

- “Falling Grace” (Steve Swallow)
- “You, the Night and the Music” ( Arthur Schwartz)
- “Evidence” (Monk)

The 3 in person students had local roots as no provision could be made for local housing. They were :

- David – Caldwell Mason (Jersey City, formerly from the Capital District) – piano
- Luke Franco (Copake Falls ) – guitar
- Nick Edwards (Red Hook, Northern Dutchess County) – bass

They performed 3 original compositions from the Composer's online workshop:

- "Daybreak"
- "A Lone Star"
- "Three, Four, Five Eight"

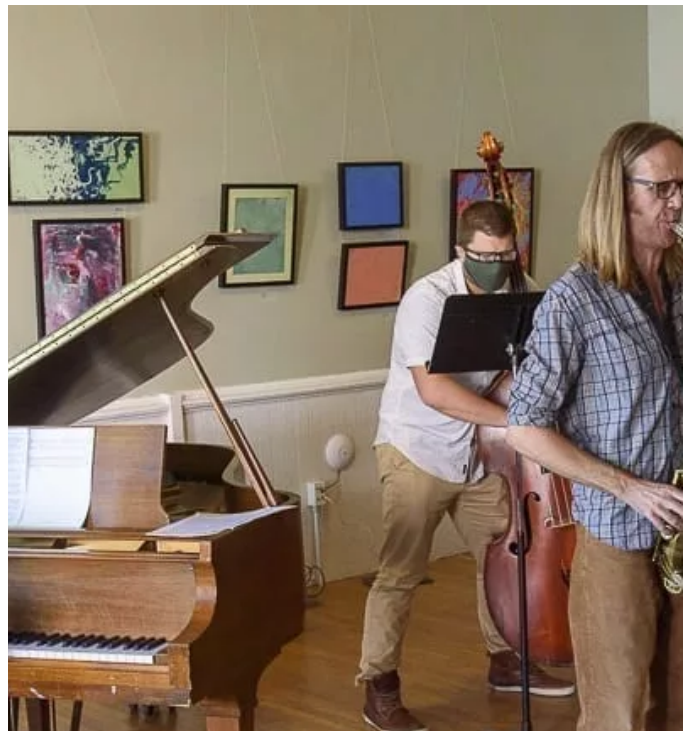
There were glitches in the video, but the audio of the concert was well preserved.

The workshop will continue to survive and next year hopefully will resume with great fanfare as it is the 15th anniversary of the workshop.

## Photo Gallery by Rudy Lu











rudyluphotos2020

**Rudy Lu** 56 Posts



Rudy Lu has photographed and written about the music scene since 2007. He has contributed to [nippertown.com](http://nippertown.com) since 2010. He also photographed and written about musical events from Burlington VT to New York City for [allaboutjazz.com](http://allaboutjazz.com) and was a former contributor to [albanyjazz.com](http://albanyjazz.com). He maintains an extensive gallery of his photographs on his own website [rudyluphotos.com](http://rudyluphotos.com).