

2019 Spotlight Jazz Semifinal Panel

Will Brahm was born in Portland Oregon and moved to Los Angeles in 2007. He attended the Cole Conservatory of music at Cal State Long Beach, graduating in 2012 with a BA in jazz guitar performance as a 5 time K-jazz scholar. Having always loved music from different cultures around the world, Brahm formed his world music group Homenaje, which released their debut album *La Mariposa y el Mentiroso* in 2017, featuring his original compositions. He tours internationally with Homenaje and the New West Guitar Group, and has worked with artists including The Big Phat Band, Kim Richmond, Jimmy Branly, Otmaro Ruiz, Gretchen Parlato, Sara Gazarek, and Jane Monheit.

Tom Luer, saxophonist, has performed with Poncho Sanchez, the Gordon Goodwin Big Phat Band, Wayne Bergeron Big Band, and the Toshiko Akiyosi/Lew Tabackan West Coast Renunion Band, among others. He has toured with Queen Latifah and his television appearances include the American Music Awards, the Tonight Show with Jay Leno, and the Ellen DeGeneres show. He recently released his debut recording, and recording appearances include the Mike Barone Big Band "Flight of the Bumblebee", Curt Berg and the Avon St. Quintet "At Stagg St. Studio", and on Paul Tynan and Aaron Lington's "Bicoastal Collective". He serves on the faculty at Cal Poly Pomona where he teaches Jazz Saxophone Jazz Improvisation and Jazz History. His additional teaching experience includes faculty positions at the University of North Texas, Texas Christian University and Bethel College.

Jamey Tate has performed with Grammy nominees/winners and Billboard chart toppers including Al Jarreau, Quincy Jones, The New York Voices, The Stan Kenton Orchestra, John Daversa's Big Band, Ron King's Big Band, Chris Walden, Renee Olstead, Patrick Williams, Russell Ferrante, Mindi Abair, Melissa Manchester, and Kurt Elling. His playing has also been featured on albums by David Benoit and The Stan Kenton Band, to name a few. Tate has produced artists such as Selina Albright, The Edge Effect and Justin Ray. He is a regular clinician at the Crossroads School Summer Jazz Program, and served as an instructor at USC, Crossroads School, Don Bosco Technical Institute, and Warren High School. He is an artist/clinician with Yamaha Drums, Zildjian Cymbals, Gen-16 Acoustic/Electric Cymbals, Remo Drumheads, and Vic Firth drumsticks.

Otmaro Ruíz is a Grammy nominated Venezuelan pianist, keyboardist, composer and arranger. Regarded as one of the most sought-after keyboardists for recordings in today's scene, Mr. Ruíz is still able to dedicate time to teaching, scoring of movie sound-tracks and to the production of his works as a leader with original compositional material, captured in the CDs *Otmaro Ruíz plays Ryuichi Sakamoto*, *Distant Friends*, *Nothing to Hide*, *Latino* and *Sojourn*. He has performed or recorded with Alex Acuña, Justo Almario y Abraham Laboriel, Dianne Reeves, John McLaughlin, Tito Puente, Arturo Sandoval, John Patitucci, Paquito D'Rivera, Jing Chi, Nana Caymmi, Dori Caymmi, Akira Jimbo, Frank Gambale, Peter Erskine, David Weckl, Art Davis Quintet, Charlie Haden Liberation Music Orchestra, Alain Caron, Gino Vannelli, Tolu, Frank Morgan, Robben Ford, Vinnie Colaiuta and Jon Anderson. Currently, Otmaro is a Jazz Piano Faculty at USC and Shepherd University School of Music.

David Hughes was born and raised in Sweden and studied at Royal College of Music in Stockholm and Bass Institute of Technology, BIT in Hollywood. He soon joined the teaching staff at BIT. His first big break came after Wayne Henderson of the Jazz Crusaders asked Hughes to join the band. He has performed or recorded with such artists as Dav Koz, Patti Austin, Angela Bofill, Chaka Khan, Melissa Etheridge and Burt Bacharach, as well as countless sessions for TV and films. Hughes has recorded four solo CDs featuring his bass playing, composing, arranging and producing. Currently Hughes tours with Christopher Cross, David Benoit, and his company Music With View.