**SAN FRANCISCO STRING TRIO**

sfstringtrio.com

Two-time Grammy winner violinist Mads Tolling, six-time DownBeat Magazine International Critics Poll Winner guitarist Mimi Fox, and internationally acclaimed bassist and composer Jeff Denson, have forged their musical talents in a new group, the San Francisco String Trio.

This super group, made up of three dazzling virtuosos, has come together to create an eclectic and riveting mixture of beautiful and passionate music crossing every genre from tango to funk, and gorgeous ballads to sizzling up-tempo originals. An all acoustic group defying categorization, the San Francisco String Trio provides its audiences with a special musical experience that is both poignant and compelling.

Together they have developed The Sgt. Pepper Project to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the release of the groundbreaking Beatles album. The trio’s new album, May I Introduce to You, received four stars in DownBeat Magazine, and it is now available in stores and on iTunes.

**Mads Tolling**

**Violinist**

Mads Tolling, internationally renowned violinist and composer, is a two-time Grammy Award-Winner and the 2016 DownBeat Critics Poll Rising Star winning violinist. As a former nine-year member of both Turtle Island Quartet and bassist Stanley Clarke’s band, Mads has spent most his professional life touring internationally. Since 2007 Mads has lead his own group, Mads Tolling Quartet. “The Playmaker” released in the fall of 2009, features Stanley Clarke and jazz greats Russell Ferrante & Stefon Harris. A MTQ album: “Celebrating Jean-Luc Ponty – Live at Yoshi’s” was released in May, 2012. Mads’ latest album is called “Mads Tolling & The Mads Men – Playing the 60s,” which features classic songs from TV, film and radio in fresh jazzy versions with his quartet and guest vocalists Kenny Washington, Kalil Wilson and Spencer Day. Mads has been featured on NPR’s Morning Edition, and his recordings have received rave reviews in Downbeat Magazine, Strings Magazine, Washington Post and the San Francisco Chronicle. He has performed with Chick Corea, Ramsey Lewis, Kenny Barron & Paquito D’Rivera.

For nine years in Turtle Island Quartet, Mads spent most of his professional life on the road or in the recording studio. In ‘06 and ‘08 as part of Turtle Island Quartet Mads won two Grammy Awards for Best Classical Crossover album with the recordings “4+Four” and “A Love Supreme – The Legacy of John Coltrane.” In 2015 with Turtle Island, he received a Grammy nomination collaborating with Mike Marshall. Mads is the winner of the 2016 DownBeat Critics Poll Rising Star Violin Award. Mads has received Denmark’s Sankt Annae’s Award for Musical Excellence as well as grants from Queen Margaret, Sonning Foundation and the Berklee Elvin Jones Award.

In 2007 Mads Tolling started his own trio and immediately recorded the album “Speed of Light.” The following year the trio expanded to a quartet. Today, 10 years later the quartet is still going strong, and in it are some of the top Bay Area musicians, including Colin Hogan on piano, Sam Bevan on bass and Eric Garland on drums. The Mads Tolling Quartet has performed all over the U.S including Yoshi’s San Francisco & Oakland, Herbst Theatre, Russian River Jazz Festival, Yerba Buena Gardens, Grass Valley Performance Arts, Blues Alley in Washington DC, Washington Pavilion in Sioux Falls, Monterey Jazz Festival and many venues large and small across the US.

Mads grew up in Copenhagen, Denmark and moved to the U.S. at the age of 20 to pursue jazz studies. He studied under violinist Matt Glaser, and he graduated summa cum laude from Berklee College of Music in Boston in 2003. While still attending Berklee, the renowned jazz violinist Jean-Luc Ponty recommended Mads to join Stanley Clarke’s band. Since then, Mads performed more than one hundred concerts with Clarke worldwide, including the Newport Jazz Festival and the Hollywood Bowl and appears on Clarke’s album: *“Toys of Men.”*

Besides his activities as a performer, Mads Tolling is an accomplished composer. In addition to his original writing on his albums, Mads arranged one of his compositions for saxophonist Joe Lovano and string orchestra. Of his three prior recordings of original material, one features the legendary pianist JoAnne Brackeen. Mads has recorded with vibraphonist Dave Samuels, appears on RMB singer Teena Marie’s recording *“La Dona”* and on jazz vocalist Ann Hampton Callaway’s *“At Last.”* He has additionally contributed numerous arrangements and compositions to Turtle Island Quartet’s repertoire. In 2014 Mads was commissioned by Music Director, Michael Morgan and the James Irvine Foundation to write a Violin Concerto (“Begejstring”) for Oakland Symphony Orchestra. The highly anticipated performance took place at the sold out 3000 seat Paramount Theatre in 2015. The piece and the performance turned out to be an overwhelming success, and Mads received high praise from the orchestra, critics and audience alike.

Mads Tolling is a thriving force in the educational aspects of jazz and improvisation. He is a Yamaha clinician and has been involved in workshops, coachings and master classes throughout Canada and the U.S. Since 2010 Mads has been on faculty at Berkeley’s Jazzschool Institute mainly focusing on spreading the knowledge of jazz and groove oriented styles to string players of all ages. He is on faculty at the Stanford Jazz Workshop, and he has taught at the Mark O’Connor Fiddle Camp. In 2017 Mads presented a workshop at Jazz Education Network in New Orleans.

## Jeff Denson

## Bassist/Vocalist

Today, the art of jazz expression and the world of formal education are fully intertwined, both demanding powerful commitment. Pursuing both is immensely challenging. Bassist/composer Jeff Denson is meeting that challenge.

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Fully immersed in both worlds since the late 1990s, the bassist/composer has balanced a full career as both an acclaimed performing musician and a highly respected educator. Currently leading or co-leading four distinct ensembles, Jeff has toured extensively throughout the U.S. and Europe with both his own groups – including the renowned cooperative trio Minsarah – and as a sideman with some of jazz’s finest artists, such as Anthony Davis, Mark Dresser, Joe Lovano, Jane Ira Bloom, Kenny Werner, Dave Douglas and an ongoing relationship with the legendary Lee Konitz since 2007.

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Jeff has recently released a pair of duo recordings on pfMENTUM Records: Two, with the remarkable European clarinetist Claudio Puntin; and I’ll Fly Away, a re-imagination of hymns and spirituals with pianist Joshua White, who is also a member of the Jeff Denson Trio. That trio performs both as a unit and as The Jeff Denson Trio + 1, featuring a special guest each season (Lee Konitz in 2014/15), and will be touring extensively throughout the U.S. and Europe, as will his ensemble Secret World. Jeff is also exploring new ground with the cooperative experimental ensemble Electreo; and is working on his opera, WEBS.

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With a doctorate from the University of California San Diego, Jeff is a full professor at the California Jazz Conservatory, also serving as its Outreach Director, nurturing young musicians into the world of professional performance, while promoting partnerships and relationships among various elements of the Bay Area scene.

## Mimi Fox

## Jazz Guitarist

Internationally renowned guitarist/composer/recording artist Mimi Fox has been named a winner in 6 consecutive Downbeat Magazine international criticʼs polls and is one of the most widely acclaimed jazz guitarists on todayʼs scene.

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Mimi has released nine recordings as a leader, including her newest release on Steve Vaiʼs Favored Nations label, “Live at the Palladium.” This new DVD features Mimi in front of a sold out audience and has all the magic and excitement of a live performance. Pop Culture Classics said: “Fox demonstrates her vibrant virtuosity in this concert and turns each selection into a distinctive gem.” Just Jazz Guitar said: “This is simply jazz guitar playing at its best. Her ideas are creative, heartfelt, and sophisticated.”

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2006’s double CD, Perpetually Hip, received rave reviews from scores of publications including the San Francisco Chronicle, which called this project Fox’s “Masterwork” and said: “The two discs stand as a definitive Fox statement. The first showcases her simmering interplay with a quartet featuring drum maestro Billy Hart, while the second captures her breathtaking solo style in an approach that is as harmonically resourceful as it is lyrically inventive.”

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Mimi has performed/recorded with Branford Marsalis, David Sanchez, Houston Person, Don Lanphere, Abbey Lincoln, Diana Krall, Kevin Mahogany and Janis Siegal (Manhattan Transfer), Joey DeFranceso, Barbara Dennerlein, Dr. Lonnie Smith, Terri Lyne Carrington, and fellow guitarists Charlie Byrd, Stanley Jordan, Charlie Hunter, and Mundell Lowe. She has also shared the stage with legends Stevie Wonder and John Sebastian and was featured on La Guitara, a special project of Vanguard recording artist Patty Larkin. Mimi has released eight highly acclaimed albums as a leader, including her two most recent on Steve Vaiʼs Favored Nations label. Her YouTube videos have received hundreds of thousands of views.

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Mimi maintains a whirlwind touring schedule, playing major festivals from New York to Tokyo, including tours of the Caribbean, Japan, Thailand, Australia, New Zealand, and Europe. International festivals include the Montreal Jazz Festival, The Kennedy Center, The Guinness Cork Jazz Festival, the Perth International Jazz Festival, and the Monterey Jazz Festival among countless others. Stateside, she has headlined at elite jazz venues, including the Blue Note, Merkin Concert Hall, Sweet Rhythm, and The Village Gate in New York City, the Regattabar and Scullers in Boston, Blues Alley in Washington DC, Triple Door and Jazz Alley in Seattle, and Yoshiʼs and the Great American Music Hall in San Francisco. Mimi Has appeared on numerous television shows, including “BET on Jazz”, and as a guest on many radio shows, including NPRʼs “piano Jazz” with Marian McPartland.

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Mimi has also written and performed original scores for orchestras, documentary films and dance projects while receiving grants from prestigious funders such as Meet the Composer and the California Arts Council.

A respected and devoted educator with several popular books and CD-roms with Mel Bay Publications and True Fire, Mimi conducts clinics worldwide and heads the guitar department at the Jazz School in Berkeley, and is adjunct professor of jazz studies at New York University.

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Whether delivering jaw-dropping solo sets, performing dazzling duets with sympathetic partners, or leading a hard-charging combo, Mimi is a consummate improviser who seizes the imagination of her listeners with her passion, soul and unerring ear for beauty.