MJC
MELBOURNE JAZZ CO-OPERATIVE

November & December

Sundays 7:30PM–10:00PM at The JazzLab
27 Leslie St. Brunswick – off Victoria St.
$30 & $25 Con. unless otherwise noted

NIRAN DASIKA

November

Sunday, 1st

Julien Wilson/Carl Dewhurst Quartet (Melbourne/Sydney) - Debut
Julien Wilson (saxophone) and Carl Dewhurst (guitar) met in 1994 and have been playing together ever since. For ten years they toured together with the AAO, and for the last twenty years Carl has been playing with Julien's Sydney quartet a couple of times a year. More recently they have been working on a co-led project which focusses on a shared passion for rhythmic devices for composition and improvisation. They are both direct and energetic performers and deep listeners who have experience playing the blues, funk, free improvisation, and various jazz styles, but manage to bring all their influences together in their own music. Earlier this year they played at Milton Festival in March, fllowed by a season of gigs in June in Sydney and Melbourne. For this performance, they will perform a selection of original music with Sam Bates (drums) and James Gilligan (electric bass).

Sunday, 8th

Mintzis & Williamson Quintet ft. Grabowsky, Anderson and Zakaria - Debut
Paul Williamson (trumpet) and Callum Mintzis (trombone) bring together a new project featuring the dynamic Paul Grabowsky (piano), Umar Zakaria (bass) and Kyrie Anderson (drums). The project features compositions from all members, with an emphasis on character and interaction. Drawing on the diversity of musical backgrounds in the group, this project has been a long-awaited opportunity for Williamson and Mintzis to continue developing music together.

Sunday, 15th

Joe O'connor's 'Full Circle' - Debut
With 'Full Circle' Joe returns to the piano trio, a format that has been a long and abiding musical love. As a younger musician, Joe's trio with James McLean (drums) and Marty Holoubek (double bass) was a sandbox for testing unique and challenging compositions that culminated in his albums Praxis (2015) and Confrontations (2018), the latter with trumpet virtuoso Scott Tinkler. Before this group formed though, Joe's first outings as a bandleader after moving to Melbourne in 2012 were with James McLean and Ben Robertson (double bass), performing some initial 'Studies in Dissonant Counterpoint' and compositions recorded in 1961 by Jimmy Giuffre's visionary trio with Paul Bley and Steve Swallow. Joe revives his formative collaboration with James and Ben with a new set of tunes that combine his trademark preference for multilayered intricacy with an embrace of the particular and the intimate. This music draws more deeply on Joe's love of singing line and expressive gesture than his trio compositions of the 2010s, though the music is still held taut by a cerebral undercurrent that occasionally breaches the surface.

Sunday, 22nd

Jex Saarelaht Quintet – Premiere
For one night only, the Esto-Cubist Jazz Festival 2026 sees auto-didact pianist/composer Jex Saarelaht, perennial of the Melbourne musical landscape, joined by four outstanding musicians – Scott Tinkler (trumpet), Julien Wilson (tenor and soprano saxophones), Ben Hanlon (double bass), and Felix Bloxsom (drums); continuing to present his own distinctive compositions, along with less-travelled pieces by jazz composers including Geri Allen and Andrew Hill.
'Rhythmic power is a signal feature of Jex Saarelaht's music. It's just bloody great to hear thrilling justice Being done to the beating heart of this great genre.' - Ian Muldoon, review of Jex Saarelaht Quartet, Esto-Cubist Jazz Festival 2025 - ericmyersjazz.com

Sunday, 29th

Adrian Sherriff's Kalachakra – Afro-Cuban Crossings – Debut
Kalachakra (The Wheel of Time) returns with a new program exploring connections between Afro-Cuban music, jazz, Indian and Japanese classical forms, and contemporary improvisation. Led by composer and multi-instrumentalist Adrian Sherriff, the ensemble combines traditional Afro-Cuban repertoire with reworked versions of existing compositions, incorporating Afro-Cuban rhythms, percussion and vocals into its evolving musical language. Sherriff is joined by Rohan Dasika (double bass), Jay Dabgar (tabla), Ria Soemardjo (voice and percussion) and Sooji Kim (violin), whom he knows through their shared work with the Australian Art Orchestra. Kim is one of Australia's leading creative improvisers on violin, while Soemardjo is known for her engagement with traditional gamelan. They are joined by Aloy Junco, a percussionist and dancer. Alongside his familiar instruments, Sherriff will play batá drums and sing, extending the ensemble's exploration of rhythmic interplay, cross-cultural exchange and collective improvisation. Kalachakra celebrates the creative possibilities that emerge when musical traditions encounter one another—where rhythms intersect, identities evolve, and the wheel of time continues to turn.

December

Saturday, 5 1:30pm–5pm 75 Reid St Fitzroy North. $30/$20 con.

Omid Shayan, Andrea Keller and the Victorian Youth Symphony Orchestra: "Safar" - Premiere
Composed by Omid Shayan and blending Iranian melodies and rhythms with Classical orchestration and Jazz improvisation, Safar is a suite for symphony orchestra and jazz quartet. The work tells the story of his parents' journey from Iran to Australia, and the sacrifice, uncertainty and danger they faced during revolution and war. But it is not a singular story. Safar is about the experiences of millions of people around the world whose lives have been irrevocably changed by conflict, displacement, and the search for a new beginning." Featuring Andrea Keller (piano), Omid Shayan (tenor saxophone), Tamara Murphy (double bass), Ronny Ferella (drum), and the Victorian Youth Symphony Orchestra. Made possible by Creative Victoria and the 2025 Creative Projects Fund. Supported by the MJC
Tickets: https://events.humanitix.com/shayan-andrea-keller-and-the-victorian-youth-symphony-orchestra

Sunday, 6th $30/$25 MJC Co-presentation in the MWIJF

Mia Barham's "Amber" + Elly Blackham Quartet - Album launch
Opening set presents the debut performance of Amber, a new ambient quartet formed by saxophonist/flautist Mia Barham (Lumina 2025 award

recipient). Combining electronics, synths and percussion, the group builds vivid soundscapes, inspired by Mia's travels to the Arctic Circle. Featuring Mia Barham (flute, alto saxophone and Synths); Ben Ingvarson (percussion); Dan Waddingham (guitar); and, Oscar Lenain (bass and Synths). Saxophonist and composer Elly Blackham launches her debut album, Don't Push The River, which is a chronicle of the experiences entering early adulthood through the lens of anxiety and grief. The title comes from her mother, but stems from various philosophical principles, representing a mindful release of control and that things left alone will resolve on their own. Featuring Elly Blackham (tenor saxophone); Mia Barham (alto saxophone & flute); Pat Jaffe (piano); Jack Smythe (double bass); and Pat Skarajew (drums).

Wednesday, 9th $30/$25 MJC Co-presentation in the MWIJF

In conjunction with SIMA & the University of Melbourne MCM support for the Big Band

Zela Margossian Quintet (Sydney) Album Launch + MWIJF Big Band (directed by Angela Davis)

Comprising Tertiary students from Monash University and the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music, the MWIJF Big Band open the concert, playing the music of Australian composers, as well as classic big band arrangements from the swing era and beyond, directed by Angela Davis. The ARIA-nominated Zela Margossian Quintet features a diverse line-up of some of Sydney's finest next-gen musicians, with Zela Margossian (piano); Stuart Vandegraaff (saxophones and clarinet); Alexander Inman-Hislop (drums); Adem Yilmaz (percussion); and, Jacques Emery (double bass). The Quintet are riding high on the back of their critically-acclaimed releases, The Road (2022) and Remedy (May 2026, on Ropeadope label, USA). Margossian has garnered international attention in recent years for her kaleidoscopic original works and arrangements which carry influences from Armenian traditional music, melded with jazz and classical roots. With the recent release of their third album, the Quintet will have an eclectic mix of tunes to showcase drawn from their extensive repertoire weaved over the years.

Sunday, 13th $30/$25 MJC Co-presentation in the MWIJF

Katarzyna Wiktorski Quintet (Single Launch) & DRYP (Canada/USA/Aus) - Premiere

Opening set presents pianist and composer Katarzyna Wiktorski launching her Single, Odessa, with her quintet featuring Yael Zamir (flutes), Jade Nye (alto saxophone), Madison James Smith (electric bass) and Tim Cox (drums). Fusing improvisation, modern jazz, classical and film score influences, she creates emotional and ornate listening experiences. Her sound is often described as cinematic, chamber-jazz with a touch of prog rock. The group will perform old and new works, alongside a preview of Kat's highly anticipated sophomore jazz record, Odessa, celebrating the release of the album's title single. DRYP comprises a force of four sonic palates mashed together, drawing from New Rock, Shoegaze, and Free Improvisation to create a new sonic infusion. The international collective of 4 artists from 3 countries met at Banff Centre for the Arts in 2025, immediately striking a musical bond. Their upcoming 5- song EP "DRYP" features Declan Sheehy-Moss' EWI bass, Sarah Rossy's electro-augmented vocals/synth, Kyrie Anderson's hard hitting backbeats, and Dan Waddingham's experimental yet melodic pads. The band has a European tour planned for 2027.

Sunday, 20th $35/$25 con

Niran Dasika & Mateusz Gwizdałła (Finland) Presents "SILVER LETTERS"

Melbourne-based improvising trumpeter Niran Dasika joins forces with Helsinki-based conductor, composer, arranger Mateusz Gwizdalla for a ten year revisitation of their 2016 collaborative project "Silver Letters", an independent release of music written and arranged for classical brass quintet (2 trumpets, french horn, trombone and bass trombone) plus rhythm section (guitar, bass, drums). A foray into developing an authentic synthesis of classical-chamber and jazz-improv sensibilities and aesthetics, pushing the limits of textural and dramatic possibilities in chamber jazz music. Since the first Silver Letters project, Niran Dasika has continued to build a discography of original jazz releases across Australia and Japan, while Gwizdalla has worked across Poland, Finland, The Netherlands and greater Europe as an orchestral conductor, composer and arranger. A decade in the making and reuniting two musicians from opposite corners of the globe, this concert promises to be an exciting one-of-a-kind celebration of chamber jazz at its most adventurous.

2027 MJC Program

Sunday, January 10th

Daniel Gassin Trio (Paris/Melb.)

Around The Scene

Contemporary performances outside the M.J.C. program

2026 Melbourne Women's International Jazz Festival

Founded by the Melbourne Jazz Co-operative in 1997, this year marks the 28th. year of the Festival (having not run in 2008 and 2011 due to lack of funding). Curated by Sonja Horbelt, it will be staged over December 6-13 at The Jazzlab, with artists including DRYP (Canda/USA/Aus), Zela Margossian Quintet (Sydney), MWIJF Sextet, , Elly Blackham Quartet's album Launch; Mia Barham Trio; Monash University Sounding Change featuring Cheryl Durongpisitkul, MWIJF Big Band directed by Angela Davis, Katarzyna Wiktorski single launch "Odessa", Kate K-S, Georgia Fields with the Andromeda String Quartet, Xani Kolac, Nina Ferro. Natasha Lowe album launch "Flights", and the GDJ Student concert, plus a free-entry symposium on creative vision and project management at MCM with a panel of artists.

Jazz News

Wangaratta Jazz & Blues Festival

Wangaratta Jazz & Blues Festival will present a four-day program across 13 local venues over the pre-Cup Day weekend on October 30-November 1. It will include the National Jazz Drums Awards, with artists including The Bamboos featuring Kylie Auldist, Cookin' on 3 Burners featuring Stella Angelico, Horns of Leroy featuring THNDO, Frank Sultana Blues Band, Monstress, to name a few. For more details, go to https://wangarattajazz.com.

M.J.C. Unsuccessful With State Funding For 2027

The MJC was recently informed that it was unsuccessful with its funding application to Creative Victoria for its 2027 Annual Program (which had a 13.33% success rate). Apart from a modest $20,000 over the 2025/2026 Financial Year, the MJC's Annual Program has received no State support since 2022.

Memberships & Acknowledgements

Support the co-op in 2026

M.J.C. Associate Membership

MJC Membership for 2027 is available is three tiers: Gold level is $85; Silver level is $40 ($30 concessions), and Bronze level is $10 for musicians (plus a special Student rate). Membership benefits include free entry for one MJC performance by a Victorian act; concession entry to all MJC performances for Gold members; special member deals on selected events, and occasional giveaways through the e-newsletter. Visit our website for more details

Sign Up To Our E-News

Keep up to date by joining our free mailing list. Emails are sent once a fortnight with the latest gigs, albums and giveaways. Sign-up online at www.mjc.org.au or email melbournejazzcooperative@gmail.com

"This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through Music Australia and Creative Australia, its arts funding and advisory body, together with the Victorian Government through Creative Victoria funding of $20,000 over the 2025/2026 financial year"

Founding Artistic Patron the late Brian Brown,
OA Artistic Patrons Mike Nock, ONZM,
MJC Chairperson Professor Tony Gould, OA,

These events take place on the land of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation and we pay respect to their elders past, present and emerging

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