



## Chamber Music New Zealand

"This concert is presented in association with Chamber Music New Zealand"

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### The Jac

This is a programme of exciting originals with broad crossover appeal, ranging from intimate jazz trios to big band sounds. It includes originals by Baxendale, Milward and Allardice from their award-winning album "the green hour".

### **ABOUT the MUSIC...**

*"I don't like jazz, but I loved that!"*

*The members of The Jac hear comments like that a lot. For a group that is ostensibly a modern jazz ensemble, The Jac does sit a little uncomfortably within the definition of jazz. If jazz is American music, then what are we playing? Are there African-American roots, ragtime and blues in our music? It's syncopated, yes, and there is improvisation; but most importantly, where's the swing? The Jac isn't a swinging band. Driving, propulsive, groove-based... but we don't play swing.*

*And what are we doing playing chamber music venues? Chamber music doesn't usually involve improvisation. It doesn't have drums. It certainly doesn't involve amplifiers. Yet the definition of chamber music seems, for us, a better fit.*

*Most broadly, chamber music includes any art music that is performed by a small number of performers, with one performer to a part. Because of its intimate nature, chamber music has been described as "the music of friends..." Certainly we're all friends here - we've been playing together for years. It's one of the reasons the band still plays together, even when some of us live halfway around the world.*

*Johann Wolfgang von Goethe described chamber music (specifically, string quartet music) as "four rational people conversing". This conversational paradigm has been a constant thread throughout the history of chamber music composition from the end of the 18th century to the present. It's also a wonderful way to describe the art of improvising, and the dialogue between improvisation and composition which is the hallmark of The Jac's music (although we might substitute "irrational" at times...)*

*So having settled nicely into our role as a chamber music ensemble, some of the music we will play is from our first album, Nerve, something of an attempt to emulate the style of large ensemble jazz playing coming out of New York. Some of the music features on our latest album The Green Hour, which presents compositions more firmly rooted in our own conception of long-form, through-composed music, written with the 8 players in mind and with a New Zealand identity. Some of the music is new and untested: we're constantly seeking to hone and improve our sound and road-testing new material is critical.*

- Jake Baxendale & The Jac

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## THE JAC

**Jake Baxendale** is one of Wellington's most respected saxophonists. Raised in remote Golden Bay, he demonstrates in his music a freedom of expression and a love of nature that is heavily influenced by this beautiful environment. He completed a Bachelor of Music and Postgraduate Diploma in Jazz Performance at the NZSM in Wellington. After studying, Jake spent a year in Berlin. It was here he met Sydney pianist Luke Sweeting and formed Antipodes, a collaboration exploring melody-focused, pop- and folk-inspired jazz. Antipodes successfully toured in Australia and New Zealand in 2014-15 and has released a live album. Since returning to NZ, Jake has joined second-line outfit the Richter City Rebels and featured on their debut album, "We Do It Like That". He plays regularly in Wellington and around NZ.

**Lex French** is known both as a leader and a sideman. He performs and tours regularly with his original quartet, quintet, and sextet, New Orleans-style brass band Richter City Rebels, throwback trio The Bayou Brothers and hard-bop quartet The Boogaloos. As a sideman, he plays lead-trumpet for the RNZAF Jazz Orchestra, trumpet with contemporary Jazz octet The Jac, as well as appearing as a soloist with Jonathan Crayford, Lucien Johnson, Norman Meehan, John Rae and The Rodger Fox Big Band. He is Artist Teacher in Jazz trumpet and small ensembles at the NZ School of Music, and maintains a busy private teaching studio. Lex holds a Master's degree in Jazz from McGill University in Montreal. While studying, he played regularly with the The National Jazz Orchestra of Montreal,

Since completing a Bachelor of Music with Honors in jazz performance at the NZSM, **Chris Buckland** has been a mainstay of the Wellington music scene, playing saxophones, clarinet and flute. Chris has played at all the major jazz festivals around the country, and has toured alongside many high-profile visiting musicians including Michael Houston, Steve Smith, Bill Cunliffe, Jon Papenbrook, and Rodger Fox's Wellington Jazz Orchestra. Chris's passion for music education led him to complete a Postgraduate Diploma of Teaching (Secondary) and he currently teaches privately and at high schools around the Wellington region.

**Matthew Allison** is the Associate Principal Trombone of the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra. Previously, he was an inaugural member of La Orquesta de la Comunitat Valenciana (Spain), hand-selected by Music Director Lorin Maazel. He has also performed with the San Francisco Symphony, San Francisco Opera, Virginia Symphony Orchestra, Singapore Symphony Orchestra, and the Melbourne Ring Orchestra. Matthew holds a Bachelor's Degree and a Professional Studies Diploma from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. In 2004, he was the winner of the Robert Marsteller Competition at the International Trombone Festival in New York. Matthew is Acting Head of Brass and trombone teacher at the New Zealand School of Music. He is a member of BonaNZa - New Zealand's premier trombone quartet, The Jac, and the Richter City Rebels.

Born and raised in small town Motueka, **Callum Allardice** took some time to discover jazz. However, it quickly became an enduring passion. In 2008, he left to study at the New Zealand School of Music, completing a Bachelor of Music and a Post-Graduate Diploma in jazz performance. During this time he started writing and performing his own compositions with long-time collaborator Jake Baxendale. In 2013, Callum moved to Berlin to hone his skills as a guitarist and seek new sounds and inspiration. Returning to NZ in 2014, Callum and Jake went on tour, teaming up with Australian pianist/composer Luke Sweeting to tour New Zealand with jazz ensemble Antipodes, and taking The Jac through Australia.

Originally from Tokoroa, **Daniel Millward** completed an Honours degree in jazz performance at the New Zealand School of Music in 2011. Daniel has since developed his career as both a performer and teacher, including concerts and gigs with his own self-named trio. In 2014 Daniel relocated to Melbourne, but he frequently returns to New Zealand to perform with ensembles including his trio and The Jac.

**Nick Tipping** having gained degrees in Musicology, Linguistics and Jazz Performance in NZ, and a MMus in jazz performance from UNLV in the USA, Nick returned to NZ in 2004 to lecture at Massey University. On its transition to the NZ School of Music, Nick served as Programme Leader of Jazz from 2007-2011, after which he returned to study; his recently completed PhD thesis examines Wellington jazz in the contexts of "New Zealand music" and global jazz. Nick has worked with groups as diverse as the Rodger Fox Big Band, the NZSO, the NZ String Quartet. Nick also appears regularly on Radio NZ as a jazz critic and commentator.

Since completing a Post Graduate Diploma in jazz performance at the NZSM in 2011, **Shaun Anderson** has been in demand as a drummer. He has toured extensively throughout the USA, Australia and New Zealand with artists such as metal bands Saving Grace and Depths, and contemporary jazz ensemble The Jac. Shaun has released multiple albums to national and international acclaim, and his recordings have appeared on the USA Billboard charts and the New Zealand pop charts. Shaun has been a finalist in the New Zealand Music Awards for both jazz albums of the year and metal album of the year. He is a worldwide endorsee of TRX Cymbals and CYMPAD USA.