

Relive the songs of Disney, jazzed up, at the Wortham Center

Hayley Benton

Special to Scene

Whether you're 8 or 80, it's likely you grew up on Disney — watching the iconic films, singing along to their soundtracks, and swaying to the often-jazzy melodies that defined American childhood for generations.

Nostalgists rejoice: On Thursday, Nov. 2, the last century of wholesome movie magic is swinging into downtown Asheville with *When You Wish Upon A Star: A Jazz Tribute to 100 Years of Disney*, featuring popular songs from famous films — from “Snow White” to “Lady and the Tramp,” “Mary Poppins” and “Toy Story” to “The Jungle Book.” Performed by the house band of The National Jazz Museum in Harlem, “Somebody My Prince Will Come,” “He’s a Tramp,” “Everybody Wants to be a Cat” and “The Bare Necessities” are just a few of the iconic songs to be celebrated in this unique reflection on the impact of jazz on some of Disney movies’ most memorable music.

“What makes this music so special is that the stories and songs of Disney are timeless,” said the tour’s trumpet player Anthony Hervey. “It’s something we all grew up with that unites generations young and old. When I look into the audience at our shows, I see people from all walks of life with the same spark of joy on their faces.”

Hervey added that not only will the band perform the classics of past generations, but they have also added a few contemporary soundtrack singles to the mix too, including “Down in New Orleans” from “The Princess and the Frog” and “Feel Soul Good” by Jon Batiste from the movie “Soul.” Batiste and Christian McBride are co-artistic direc-



Sasha Dobson PROVIDED

tors of The National Jazz Museum in Harlem, a Smithsonian-affiliated museum dedicated to the preservation, promotion and presentation of jazz.

Backed by the talented troupe from the museum’s acclaimed house band (which includes Hervey), *When You Wish Upon A Star* showcases the talents of jazz pianist, composer and musical director Sean Mason, vocalist Tahira Clayton and singer and multi-instrumentalist Sasha Dobson.

“Everyone brings a different flavor to the table,” Hervey explained. “Jazz is a genre that offers a lot of freedom and celebrates individuality. In this show, you can clearly hear everyone’s personalities shine through the music.”

Performing together for years (and, in some cases, decades), the musicians on



Sean Mason PROVIDED

this tour have developed deep, personal relationships with one another that have strengthened their musical bond both on and off the stage. In fact, Hervey and Mason attended The Juilliard School together, and during the pandemic, the pair would often duet in uptown New York City, keeping the arts alive for socially distanced audiences.

“We developed a very special chemistry during that time, and you will hear moments in the show where the ensemble breaks down to just the two of us,” Hervey continued. “Music requires a lot of trust, and we have a lot of that on stage. We will sometimes change keys without warning or segue to a different song — but it always works out because we are all constantly listening to each other.”



Tahira Clayton PROVIDED

IF YOU GO

What: *When You Wish Upon A Star: A Jazz Tribute to 100 Years of Disney*.

When: 7 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 2.

Where: Wortham Center for the Performing Arts, 18 Biltmore Ave., downtown Asheville.

Tickets: \$58 for adults, \$22 for children 15 and under at worthamarts.org.

When You Wish Upon A Star rolls into the Wortham Center for the Performing Arts, 18 Biltmore Ave., at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 2. Tickets can be purchased at worthamarts.org and are \$58 for adults and \$22 for children 15 and under.