THE SOUND OF MY SOUL
FRANK STEWART’S LIFE IN JAZZ
Sept. 16 - Dec. 13, 2019

Frank Stewart, Self-portrait, Dominican Republic, 1986
THE SOUND OF MY SOUL: FRANK STEWART’S LIFE IN JAZZ

Ruth Fine, Curator

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Frank Stewart (born 1949) was engaged with music starting in childhood; gospel and blues played an equally important role as jazz in the environment established by his mother, Dorothy Jean Lewis Stewart (Dotty, 1929-2010) and her extended family. The emerging centrality of jazz may be tracked, in part, to his stepfather, the renowned jazz pianist Phineas Newborn Junior (1931-1987), with whom Stewart attended concerts at New York clubs in the 1950s, on 52nd Street and in Greenwich Village.

Stewart initiated his career in jazz photography travelling with Ahmad Jamal (born 1930) and his group shortly after receiving a degree in photography from The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art (1975). Photographers Roy DeCarava (1919-2009) and Garry Winogrand (1928-1984), and painter Jack Whitten (1939-2018) were among his important mentors. Stewart’s focus on jazz was solidified from 1989-92, when he accompanied the Wynton Marsalis Septet, culminating in the 1994 publication *Sweet Swing Blues on the Road*, with text by Marsalis (born 1961). In the intervening years, Stewart had worked independently in clubs and at jazz events primarily in New York and Chicago. Since 1992 he has been the lead photographer for Jazz at Lincoln Center, traveling the globe with the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra. The breadth of Stewart’s rich photographic project, in Africa, Cuba, throughout the United States (most recently tracking issues of climate change), and around the world is referenced in this brochure’s chronology.

Stewart’s art reflects and pays homage to his long association with collage-painter Romare Bearden (1911-1988). This is suggested by the commitment of the works on view to both the abstract properties of a composition and the distinctive sensitivity that controls Stewart’s framing of his images, which are virtually never cropped. Viewers are thus able to connect with the emotional range of the musicians and vocalists depicted, and to grasp the deeply understood parallels between Stewart’s vivid photographic forms and spaces, and the dramatic sounds and silences of jazz music.

This first museum exhibition of Stewart’s jazz photographs highlights an intimate association with their subjects, that enables him to portray situations off-stage that otherwise would remain unknown to most of us. Represented, too, are portraits of jazz greats, both revered and newly acclaimed. On the street, in festivals, clubs, and major concert halls, they are performing solo, in groups, in collaborations with dancers, and in teaching situations that introduce this richly nuanced music to younger generations. The exhibition features images of baptisms, funerals, Second Line marches, conversations, practice sessions, going on stage, and taking a bow. Stewart works with film and digitally, using no artificial illumination other than stage lighting. The prints employ subtle tones of black, grey, and white; and a diverse palette of great brilliance. Their formats and printing processes are provided in this brochure’s exhibition checklist.

Stewart is a member of the New York-based African American photography collective Kamoinge. His photographs have been featured in some thirty solo exhibitions and dozens of group shows; in landmark texts about barbecue and the breadth of African American life, as well as jazz music. In 2017 he received the Jazz Journalists of America’s Lona Foote-Bob Parent Award for Career Excellence.

Ruth Fine, Curator
SELECTED ILLUSTRATIONS

Comments in quotations are provided by Frank Stewart.

God’s Trombones, Harlem, 2009
“Baptism in the Street.”
Checklist 1
Phineas Newborn Junior, 1970s
“At a club called Bottom of the Gate, with Phineas’ childhood friend Jamil Nasser on bass. Phineas was my stepfather”
Checklist 19
Keisha at Lola’s, 1986

“Lola’s was a restaurant on 22nd street, and sometimes they would have music.”

Checklist 4
Jazz and Abstract Reality (aka Lincoln Center Orchestra, New York City), 1992

“The remaining members of Duke Ellington’s orchestra fused with Wynton’s Septet to form the original JALC Orchestra.”

Checklist 31
Jazz and Abstract Reality (aka Lincoln Center Orchestra, New York City), 1992

“The remaining members of Duke Ellington’s orchestra fused with Wynton’s Septet to form the original JALC Orchestra.”

Checklist 31

Marcus Roberts, 1994/95

“On the road in Boston, with the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra before Wynton was Director.”

Checklist 7
“Her mother was Carlene Ray, a star with the all-female International Sweethearts of Rhythm, and her father was Luis Russell, Louis Armstrong’s music director.”

Checklist 27
Stomping the Blues, 1996
Checklist 29
Boo and Humphrey, 1989
“Walter Davis Jr. and Art Blakey at Bradley’s, talking about the changes for Bud Powell’s Glass Enclosure.”
Checklist 37
Amadeo Roldan Conservatory, Havana, 2010
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Two Bones I (aka Chris and Vincent), 2008
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Hands, Berlin, 2010
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Stacy, c. 2016
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Checklist 73
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Checklist 10
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“Camille Thurman warming up.”
Checklist 62
Cécile, New Year's Eve, 2016
“Cécile McLorin Salvant celebrating at Dizzy's Club.”
Checklist 60
Sonny Rollins, 2017

“Sonny Rollins is a monster; he's giving tribute here to Jimmy Heath.”
Checklist 70
Joe Temperly at the Teatro Romana in Aosta, Italy, 2011
Checklist 61
“Etienne Charles is a rising star in the jazz galaxy.”
Checklist 2
EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

Section titles below represent the exhibitions organization by gallery. All works are lent by Frank Stewart unless otherwise specified. Stewart also provides commentary (in quotation marks) about selected photographs. All measurements are in inches, height preceding width. They document the paper sizes of exhibited works; many images exist in multiple sizes.

INTRODUCTION

1. God’s Trombones, Harlem, 2009
   inkjet print mounted on aluminum
   48 x 60
   “Baptism in the street”
   Illustrated page 2

2. Etienne, 2017
   inkjet print
   22 x 17
   “Etienne Charles is a rising star in the jazz galaxy.”
   Illustrated page 24

3. Blues Singer, c. 1976
   gelatin silver print
   14 x 11

4. Keisha at Lola’s, 1986
   gelatin silver print
   20 x 16
   “Lola’s was a restaurant on 22nd street, and sometimes they would have music.”
   Illustrated page 5

5. Netman, 1990
   gelatin silver print
   20 x 24
   “Charnett Moffett on the road with the Septet”

6. Ron Carter, 1994
   gelatin silver print
   14 x 11

7. Marcus Roberts, 1994/95
   gelatin silver print
   20 x 16
   “On the road in Boston, with the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra before Wynton was Director”
   Illustrated page 7

8. Roy Hargrove, c. 1989
   gelatin silver print
   11 x 14
   “A child Prodigy, a flame that burned out too quickly.”

9. Drummer, c. 2004
   inkjet print
   8 ½ x 11
   “Ulysses Owens was in the first Julliard jazz class.”

10. Coopy, 2019
    inkjet print
    8 ½ x 11
    “Wycliffe Gordon in Savannah”
    Illustrated page 19

11. Herlin, c. 2004
    inkjet print
    8 ½ x 11
    “Herlin Riley is the embodiment of the New Orleans Black Indian beat called Two-Way-Pocky-Way”

12. Max Roach, Jazzmobile, c. 1978
    gelatin silver print
    11 x 14
    “The greatest jazz drummer of his generation”

13. Roy Haynes, Alice Tully Hall, 2002
    gelatin silver print
    10 x 8
    “He calls himself the second greatest jazz drummer of his generation.”
14. Cassandra Wilson, 1994
gelatin silver print
14 x 11
“From the year she played Leona at the premiere of Wynton’s oratorio Blood on the Fields, the first Pulitzer Prize Jazz winner.”

gelatin silver print
11 x 14
“At Carlos II, a club in the Village”

16. Dianne Reeves, 1978
gelatin silver print
11 x 8 ½
“We love Dianne and she loves us, so any opportunity we get to work with her, we jump on it.”

17. Carrie Smith, 1989
gelatin silver print
11 x 14
“Listening to trumpeter Clark Terry”

18. Comics, 1973
gelatin silver print
16 x 20
“Music in the neighborhood and nobody’s listening”

19. Phineas Newborn Junior, 1970s
gelatin silver print
14 x 11
“At a club called Bottom of the Gate, with Phineas’ childhood friend Jamil Nasser on bass. Phineas was my stepfather”
Illustrated page 3

Polaroid print
33 x 22
Lent by Jazz at Lincoln Center

Polaroid print
33 x 22
Lent by Jazz at Lincoln Center

Polaroid print
33 x 22
Lent by Jazz at Lincoln Center

23. Miles in the Green Room, 1981
inkjet print
33 ½ x 49 ½
“Christ-like figure in Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center”
Illustrated page 4

Polaroid print
33 x 22
Lent by Jazz at Lincoln Center

25. Carlos Henriquez, 2013
Polaroid print
33 x 22
Lent by Jazz at Lincoln Center

Polaroid print
33 x 22

27. Catherine Russell, c. 2000
inkjet print
11 x 8 1/2
“Her mother was Carline Ray, a star with the all-female International Sweethearts of Rhythm, and her father was Luis Russell, Louis Armstrong’s music director.”
Illustrated page 8

28. Behind the Septet and Septet II, 1991
gelatin silver prints (dyptich)
14 x 11 each

29. Stomping the Blues, 1996
inkjet print
20 x 30
Illustrated page 9
30. Four Tenors / Embrace, 1996
gelatin silver print
16 x 20
“Teddy Edwards, Joe Lovano, Johnny Griffin, and Von Freeman”

31. Jazz and Abstract Reality (aka Lincoln Center Orchestra, New York City), 1992
gelatin silver print
16 x 20
“The remaining members of Duke Ellington’s orchestra fused with Wynton’s Septet to form the original JALC Orchestra.”
Illustrated page 6

32. Photo-op, 1990
gelatin silver print
14 x 11

33. JALCO Getting Dressed, c. 1996
gelatin silver print
11 x 14
“Anybody seen my shirt?”

34. Marsalis and Reed, 1990
gelatin silver print
16 x 20

35. Dizzy and Dexter, c. 1976
gelatin silver print
14 x 11
“Dizzy Gillespie, one of the architects of Bebop, with Dexter Gordon, who just returned from Europe after more than a decade.”

36. Lionel Hampton and Benny Carter, Alice Tully Hall, 1996
gelatin silver print
14 x 11

37. Boo and Humphrey, 1989
gelatin silver print
11 x 14
“Walter Davis Jr. and Art Blakey at Bradley’s, talking about the changer for Bud Powell’s Glass Enclosure”
Illustrated page 10

38. Warm Daddy in the House of Swing, 1996
gelatin silver print
16 x 20
“Wessell Anderson at Jazz at Lincoln Center”

39. Walking the Bar, 2002
inkjet print
30 x 20
“Walter Blanding demonstrating Coltrane”

40. Skayne and Cooppy, Palm Beach Florida (aka Skaine and Cooppy), 1991
gelatin silver print
8 x 10
“Wynton Marsalis and Wycliffe Gordon from Wynton’s Septet”

41. St. Louis Cemetery II, 1980
gelatin silver print
11 x 14
“Goin’ home right!”

42. Gonzalez, Leitzie, Pate, 1990
gelatin silver print
14 x 11
“Jerry Gonzalez, Kurt Leitzie, and Don Pate at Bradley’s”

43. Teach Me, 2001
gelatin silver print
20 x 16
“Andre Hayward and Farid Barron going through changes in a tune.”

44. Trumpet and Euphonium, Mexico, c. 2016
inkjet print
17 x 22

45. Yusef Lateef, 2010
inkjet print
16 x 11

46. Trumpet and Bone, 2001
inkjet print
17 x 22
“Marcus Printup and Vincent Gardner”
47. *All Rise*, 1999
inkjet print
16 x 20
“Commissioned by the New York Philharmonic, and premiered at Lincoln Center in December '99”

inkjet print
16 x 20
“Master Class for an all-girl jazz band”
Lent by Jazz at Lincoln Center

49. *Bass and Violin*, c. 1998
gelatin silver print
10 ½ x 13 ½

gelatin silver print
20 x 16
“Wynton’s mutes”

COLLABORATIONS

51. *Jazz for Young People*, 1996
gelatin silver print
17 x 11

52. *Swing Central II, Savannah Music Festival*, 2017
inkjet print
17 x 22
“Memphis School band getting ready to go on stage”

53. *Swing Central, Savannah Music Festival*, 2017
inkjet print
17 x 22
“High school jazz competition”

54. *Hands, Berlin*, 2010
inkjet print
17 x 22
Courtesy of Wynton Marsalis
Illustrated page 17

55. *Knees and Horns*, 2017
inkjet print
17 x 22
“Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra Jazz Camp”

56. *One Note Spasm Band*, 2006
chromogenic print
36 x 24
“Just like the Blues, that one note can carry a lot of meaning”
Lent by Jazz at Lincoln Center

57. *Amadeo Roldan Conservatory, Havana*, 2010
inkjet print
22 x 17
Illustrated page 11

58. *Goldberg Variations, Andersson Dance and Scottish Ensemble*, 2019
inkjet print
17 x 22
“At the Savannah Music Festival”

inkjet print
17 x 22
Illustrated page 15

THE CHANGING FACE OF JAZZ

60. *Cécile, New Year’s Eve*, 2016
inkjet print
33 x 49 ½
“Cécile McLorin Salvant celebrating at Dizzy’s Club”
Illustrated page 21

61. *Joe Temperley Backstage at Teatro Romana, Aosta, Italy*, 2011
inkjet print
11 x 17
Illustrated page 23
62. *Before the Gig*, 2018
inkjet print
11 x 17
“Camille Thurman warming up"
Illustrated page 20

63. *Ahmad Jamal*, 2013
inkjet print
30 x 30
Illustrated page 16

64. *Reflection*, 2018
inkjet print
17 x 11
“Sherman Irby contemplating the battle which will begin shortly.”

65. *Bone and Silhouette (aka Chris and Vincent)*, 2009
inkjet print
22 x 16
“Going to play”

inkjet print
40 x 60
“After the show”

67. *Camille in Blue*, 2018
inkjet print
30 x 20
“Blue note, going on stage again”

68. *Houston Person*, 2017
inkjet print
8 ½ x 11
“Person and my mother were buddies. Here he’s performing at the Savannah Music Festival”

69. *Veronica Swift*, 2018
inkjet print
11 x 8 ½
“Young Jazz voice on the rise”

70. *Sonny Rollins*, 2017
inkjet print
8 ½ x 11
“Sonny Rollins is a monster; he’s giving tribute here to Jimmy Heath”
Illustrated page 22

71. *Going on Stage, Virginia Beach*, 2009
inkjet print
33 ½ x 49 ½
Illustrated page 12

72. *Two Bones I (aka Chris and Vincent)*, 2008
inkjet print
49 ½ x 33 ½
Illustrated page 13

inkjet print
26 x 17
“The great Stacy Dillard”
Illustrated page 18

inkjet print
33 ½ x 49 ½
“Procession after a concert. It’s a prize-winning oratorio about a husband and wife moving from slavery to freedom.”
Illustrated page 14

Vitrines, with Stewart’s cameras; musical instruments, lent courtesy of Todd Stoll, the late Dorothy Johnson and Sarah Escarraz, and printed ephemera installed in three galleries: Photographic Processes, Tools, and The Changing Face of Jazz, respectively. A loop of additional images is installed in the Tools gallery.
Chronology

Note: Solo exhibitions are identified by Stewart’s name as part of their titles; a small selection of group exhibitions is also listed. All institutions cited are in Manhattan unless otherwise noted.

1949

1955–1957
Moves to Memphis and lives with maternal great-grandmother, grandmother, aunts and uncles, when Dotty moves to Manhattan to pursue career as model and dancer. Attends grades 1 through 3 at St. Augustine Catholic Elementary School, Memphis. Starts playing football. Summer 1957: visits Dotty and partner, later husband, jazz pianist Phineas Newborn Jr., in Manhattan.

1958–1960
Lives in Manhattan with Dotty and Newborn. Attends Holy Name School, PS 93, and PS 75. Joins track team. Returns to Memphis with Dotty when she and Newborn separate, then accompanies her and two half-sisters to Mount Vernon, NY.

Late 1961–mid-1968

Fall 1968–winter 1969
On track scholarship, attends previously all-White Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, about twenty-five miles from all-Black Fisk University, Nashville. Frequently travels to Fisk where Robert Sengstacke, Chicago friend whose family owns Chicago Defender, teaches photography and Carlton Moss teaches film. Audits classes on African American art history with David C. Driskell. Returns to Chicago after one semester. Moves to New Rochelle, NY, where Dotty lives with Johnson.

1969–1970
1971–1975
Earns BFA degree in photography at The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art; teachers include DeCarava (photography), Jack Whitten (painting), Rubin Kadish (sculpture), Stephen Anderson (printmaking), John A. Williams (African American literature), George C. Preston (African art). Sustains himself driving taxicabs and working in restaurants as cook, dishwasher, and delivery person. **Summer 1972:** studies at School of the Art Institute of Chicago with Garry Winogrand, who then moves to Manhattan and teaches at Cooper Union.


1975–1980

1980s
Daughters Sing and Bining born.

1990s

2001–2010
2011–present


2012: Publication: primary photographer for In the Spirit of Swing: The First 25 Years of Jazz at Lincoln Center, text by Wynton Marsalis.


2018: travels to Colorado and California to photograph environmental impact of extensive forest fires caused by global warming.


Selected Collections

Detroit Institute of Arts
George Eastman House, Rochester, New York
High Museum of Art, Atlanta, Georgia
Mint Museum of Art, Charlotte, North Carolina
Museum of African Art and Origins, Manhattan
Museum of Modern Art, Manhattan
New York Public Library, Schomberg Center for Research in Black Culture
Rhode Island School of Design, Providence (promised gift)
Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of African American Art and Culture, Washington, D.C.
Studio Museum in Harlem, Manhattan
Telfair Museum of Art, Savannah
Temple University, Philadelphia, Charles L. Blockson Afro-American Collection
University of Delaware Museums, Newark, Paul R. Jones Collection
University of Maryland, College Park, David C. Driskell Collection
And many important private collections throughout the United States
Acknowledgments

Exhibitions require the keen attention of many people. First and foremost my admiration and appreciation goes to Frank Stewart, for shooting these extraordinary photographs, for sharing them with me, and for our conversations over many years about his life in jazz, as well as for his enduring friendship. Most of the photographs are from Stewart’s own collection, but we are grateful to two additional lenders, Wynton Marsalis Enterprises, with assistance from Edith Bolton, and Jazz at Lincoln Center, with assistance from Greg Scholl and Gabrielle Armand. Appreciation is likewise due David Bindman, Emeritus Professor of the History of Art, University College London, and Visiting Fellow at the Hutchins Center for African and African American Research, Harvard University, who brought Stewart’s photographs to the attention of Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Alphonse Fletcher University Professor and Director of the Hutchins Center, Abby Wolf, Executive Director of the Hutchins Center, and Gabriella Jones-Monserrate, Program Director at the Hutchins Center’s Ethelbert Cooper Gallery. Their enthusiastic support of the idea of the exhibition and their warm assistance throughout the organizational process has been at the highest level of collegiality, for which I am most grateful. Installers Brian Zink, Pablo Gonzalez, Registrar Batja Bell, and Gallery Attendants Kamila Vasquez and Kristyna Young ensured that the exhibition became a reality with utmost professionalism and attention to detail. Assistance from Elie Glyn, Assistant Director for Exhibitions at Harvard University Art Museums was critical as well, as were loans of musical instruments, courtesy of Todd Stoll, the late Dorothy Johnson, and Sarah Escarraz, Stewart’s assistant, who also has conveyed various additional support, as she embarks on her own life in jazz.

Generous help has been conveyed by Susan Sillins, Black Light Productions, who shared with me her extensive files documenting Stewart’s professional activities; and Tessa Haas, a PhD candidate at Bryn Mawr College, who offered organizational support in Philadelphia. Editorial suggestions were provided by Judith Thomas, Director of Exhibitions at The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Susan John, and Kenneth White Rodgers. Ongoing hospitality at the Stewart household from Frank’s daughter Sing Lee Lathan and her four extraordinary children, William Edward-Lee, Malaya Mei, Lyra Ling, and Luke Lehman, has contributed many unique pleasures to my work on this exhibition. To all of them I offer grateful appreciation for welcoming my interruptions into their home.

Ruth Fine, Curator