

**EAST BAY CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS
HOME FRONT FESTIVAL FEATURED FACULTY ARTISTS**

TIFFANY AUSTIN



With the June 1st release of her new CD, "Unbroken," Tiffany Austin further solidifies her standing as one of the leading vocalists on the current international jazz scene. Austin was propelled onto the national stage in 2016 when her debut recording, "Nothing But Soul," received rave reviews from media outlets such as DownBeat and NPR's Fresh Air, as well as airplay on jazz radio stations across the U.S. With her sophomore CD "Unbroken," Austin has raised her artistry to a higher level both conceptually and musically. Her silky smooth voice has gained an earthy smokiness and a gravitas ideally suited to expressing her broadening, deepening artistic vision. (*Music News Desk*)

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HOWARD WILEY



When it's time to get a party started, Howard Wiley gets the call. The Oakland saxophonist has been a mainstay on the Bay Area music scene since he was a teenager in Richmond, and at 39 he's taken up the mantle of his mentors, playing soul-steeped jazz palpably connected to its roots as social music. Impossible to pigeonhole, Wiley can generate blowtorch heat in just about any context. Wiley hasn't released an album under his own name since 2010's acclaimed "12 Gates to the City," a project that delved deeply into spirituals gleaned from Angola, the

notorious Louisiana State Penitentiary. More recently, East Bay Center commissioned Wiley to compose "Richmond Second Line," which was premiered at the Center on July 21, 2018. (*The Mercury News*)

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JOE ORRACH



"Tap is the most important dance in America. It's like jazz; it says things deeply," says multi-faceted artist and teacher Joe Orrach, creator of a new brand of tap dance-theater that he performs locally and internationally in Paris and Shanghai. Originally trained as a boxer, Orrach's trainer suggested he take ballet to improve his footwork. While performing as a street dancer on a wooden board on Columbus and 72nd Street in New York City, he was discovered by Gregory Hines. Orrach soon took his act from the street to the stage, performing at Home for Contemporary Theatre and Arts in Tribeca, on Star Search, and with Liza Minnelli and Savion Glover. (*Theatre Bay Area*)

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ARTEMIO POSADAS



Artemio Posadas was one of eight 2016 National Endowment for the Arts National Heritage Fellows, as well as recipient of the 2016 Bess Lomax Hawes Fellowship "in recognition of an individual who has made a significant contribution to the preservation and awareness of cultural heritage." He was born in San Luis Potosí, Mexico, where he discovered son huasteco, regional music punctuated with poetic, instrumental and dance improvisation and falsetto breaks. A tremendous influence for generations, Posadas has taught musicians and dancers in the US and Mexico for over 40 years. In May 2018, he received an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from San Jose State University.

Shorter version: Artemio Posadas, *son* master artist, is a 2016 National Endowment for the Arts National Heritage Fellow, as well as recipient of the 2016 Bess Lomax Hawes Fellowship "in recognition of an individual who has made a significant contribution to the preservation and awareness of cultural heritage."

VALERIE TROUTT



Bay-area born and bred, Valerie Troutt is a musical collagist, borrowing from ancestral centuries of sound, channeling spirits, and delivering the stories of our love, loss, and lives. In the East Bay, Valerie has established herself not only as an artist, but as a leader in the area's famed creative community – performing for two years with the Grammy-nominated Linda Tillery and the Cultural Heritage Choir, most recently as a featured soloist on "Still We Rise, Still We Sing" and partnering with the Embodiment Project (where Troutt is Music Director). This served as the genesis for MoonCandy, a soulful house ensemble that features the inspirational voices and composition of some of the East Bay's most understated jazz, soul, blues, and gospel singers.

Shorter version: In the East Bay, Valerie Truitt has established herself not only as an artist, but as a leader in the area's famed creative community, founding MoonCandy, a soulful house ensemble that features the inspirational voices and composition of some of the East Bay's most understated jazz, soul, blues, and gospel singers.

MITCH BUTLER



Mitch Butler has been the trombonist and leader of a number of musical groups including the Nebulous Jazztet from 2001 to 2006, Modus Bone from 2010 to 2012, the CSU East Bay Faculty Jazztet, and currently the Mitch Butler Quartet. Mitch was a member of the New Orleans Jazz Orchestra headed by world-renowned trumpeter Irvin Mayfield from 2008 to 2010. In February of 2010 the group won the Grammy Award for large jazz ensemble with the release of the recording "Book One" - a recording on which Mitch is featured. Mitch was also the Director of Jazz Studies and Assistant Professor of Music at California State University, East Bay in Hayward, CA from 2013 to 2016.

Shorter version: Mitch Butler has been the trombonist and leader of a number of musical groups, as well as a member of the Grammy-Award winning New Orleans Jazz Orchestra headed by world-renowned trumpeter Irvin Mayfield from 2008 to 2010.