

ROSSANO SPORTIELLO

Piano

AND

NICKI PARROTT

Bass

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2018 | 7:30 P.M.
CASPARY AUDITORIUM

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PROGRAM

Jazz Improvisation and the Great American Songbook

There will be one 15-minute intermission.

Program and personnel subject to change.

As a courtesy to the artists, please remain seated until they have left the hall.

FEATURING

Rossano Sportiello is an award-winning jazz pianist from Vigevano, Italy. At 16, he was performing professionally at jazz venues in the Milan area. In 1992, he joined one of Europe's historic jazz bands, the "Milano Jazz Gang," touring with the group throughout Italy and Western Europe until the end of 2000.

Mr. Sportiello made his first trip to the United States to perform at the 2003 "March of Jazz" party in Clearwater Beach, Florida. In 2007, he established himself in New York City. Stylistically, Mr. Sportiello is influenced by great masters such as Fats Waller, Teddy Wilson, Art Tatum, and Bill Evans, to name a few. At the Ascona Jazz Festival (Switzerland), he received the 2009 Ascona Jazz Award in recognition of his expertise and mastery of jazz piano, in particular stride piano.

He has performed with many of the world's finest jazz luminaries, and has been in great demand in the U.S., appearing at venues such as Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall, as well as globally at main jazz parties and festivals. Since 2008, Rossano has performed regularly with the Harry Allen Quartet. In 2011, in his home town of Vigevano, Italy, Rossano received the prestigious Vittorio Ramella award, bestowed upon native persons of Vigevano who through their profession have made a significant contribution to the world and distinguished themselves in the international community.

Nicki Parrott, born in Newcastle, Australia, started her musical training at age four with the piano, followed by the flute soon after, and switched to double bass at the age of 15. Nicki was the recipient of two awards, a scholarship to Pan Pacific Music Camps at the age of 16, and first place in the 1992 Jazz Action Society's Annual Song Competition for her composition "Come and Get It." She was also nominated for the annual Australian Young Achievers Award by the Arts Council of Australia who granted her the funds to come to New York to study with Rufus Reid.

In June 2000, Nicki began performing with the legendary guitarist and inventor, Les Paul. As part of the Les Paul Trio, Nicki worked side-by-side with guitar greats Paul McCartney, Slash, Steve Miller, and fellow Aussie, Tommy Emmanuel. Since then she has performed with numerous notable musicians such as Joe Wilder, Harry Allen, Randy Brecker, and Patti Labelle & The New York Pops Orchestra, just to name a few. In 2007 and 2008, Nicki received back-to-back honors for *Swing Journal's* Best Jazz Vocal Album and in 2010 she received *Swing Journal's* Gold Disc Award. She has also performed in several Broadway shows.

Nicki actively participates in continuing musical education for women, helping them further their careers and remain active in music well beyond their teen years. She takes pride in teaching music to inner-city children, giving them opportunities to express creativity, encouraging them to stay actively involved with school, and opening up brighter options for the future.