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NY CULTURE

Masterworks at the Met

Plus Bettye LaVette, T. Oliver Reid, and a Look at Music of Sondheim and Reich

T. Oliver Reid will perform at the Metropolitan Room. *PHOTO: LYNN REDMILE*

By **WILL FRIEDWALD**

Jan. 29, 2015 8:59 p.m. ET

Jazz & Colors, 'The Masterworks Edition'

The Metropolitan Museum of Art
1000 Fifth Ave, (212) 535-7710
Friday

Here's an ingenious way to combine two art forms into what promises to be a memorably multidisciplinary evening. Start with a wide array of bands, selected with an emphasis on ensembles from all over the jazz world: These include the combination of the Iraqi-American trumpeter Amir ElSaffar and Norwegian saxophonist Ole Mathisen,

the jazz-rock fusion chamber music ensemble Cellar and Point, guitarist Marvin's Sewell's group with Lonnie Plaxico, clarinetist-conceptualist Don Byron, and a dozen others. Then, arrange to have them play newly minted reinterpretations of classic jazz standards, from Cole Porter to Billy Strayhorn to Ornette Coleman. Finally, position these ensembles and these standard tunes in the various galleries of the Metropolitan—the music will complement the masterpieces on the walls, and vice versa.

Lincoln Center's American Songbook, 'Reich and Sondheim: In Conversation and Performance'

The Appel Room (Formerly the Allen Room)
Broadway at 60th Street; Centercharge, (212) 721-6500
Saturday

Broadway's eternal experimentalist Stephen Sondheim meets the avant-garde classicist, minimalist, and percussion maven Steve Reich in this "conversation and performance." The program will illuminate the influence these two giants have had on each other, using one Steve as a means of discussing the other. Performers include Paul and Alexander Gemignani, Kate Baldwin, Michael Cerveris, and Ensemble Signal.

Bettye LaVette at the Café Carlyle *PHOTO: ALAN NAHIGIAN*

Bettye LaVette

Café Carlyle
35 E. 76th St., (212) 744-1600
Through Feb. 7

She is one of the major interpreters of our time, and like her approximate British equivalent, Barb Jungr, she illustrates that the superior rock and soul songs of the contemporary era can be interpreted no less than Cole Porter or Richard Rodgers. Her current show features too many completely new numbers (most from her new album "Worthy"), and could also benefit from a greater diversity of moods and tempos (her opener, Dylan's "Unbelievable," is the most cheerful song in the set). Still, what's here is powerful and moving: "Nights in White Satin" is now a lacerating saloon song and even Paul McCartney's "Wait" becomes a harrowing experience.

T. Oliver Reid, 'Drop Me Off in Harlem'

The Metropolitan Room
34 W. 22nd St., (212) 206-0440
Sundays and other dates through May 31

"There is no place you will ever see / Like this dusky town-within-a-town." Seen (but not heard enough) in Broadway's "After Midnight," the remarkably versatile bari-tenor T. Oliver Reid shows how African-American music of the interwar years wasn't just one single style, but a polyglot of styles—jazz, show music, gospel, blues—and he does justice to the cumulative legacies of all of these genres at once.

Steve Lippia, 'Sinatra Centennial'

Birdland
315 W. 44th St., (212) 581-3080
Through Saturday

There is no mistaking Steve Lippia for the most obvious kind of Sinatra impersonator—for one thing, the actual timbre his voice sounds more like a hybrid of Steve Lawrence and Harry Connick Jr. For another, while he sings many of the most obvious Sinatra signatures ("My Way," "New York, New York") he doesn't concentrate on what most people consider the fin-de-siècle of Sinatra music—the 1950s Nelson Riddle arrangements—but instead offers more charts from the 1960s onward, such as Sy Oliver's updates of the Tommy Dorsey hits "Without a Song" and "I'll Be Seeing You."

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