



When the unmistakable musical influences of Thelonious Monk and Charlie Parker intersect with J.S. Bach, Scott Joplin, and the folkloric rhythms of Cuba, could one possibly conceptualize the celebration that occurs at that intersection?

New York-based jazz pianist Kevin Harris plays a distinctive combination of traditional and contemporary music that seeks to explore such a crossroad.

Fred Hersch talks of Harris as one who *"plays and writes with flair and real soul"* and Downbeat Magazine writes that *"Harris' compositions deal with themes of strength, love, courage, and self-awareness. It's a heavy task he's set up for himself, and he meets the challenge gracefully."*

One of the captivating elements of the Kevin Harris Project is the level of comfort and understanding they have with one another as they dive into soulfully expressive conversations and playful exchanges of ideas. Both live and recorded performances reflect Harris's determination to capture his audience through explorative interactions that Terri Lyne Carrington describes as *"an exciting commitment to quality"*.

Among his most notable collaborations are Greg Osby, Bill Pierce, Francisco Mela, Avishai Cohen, Eddie Gomez, Duane Eubanks, Richie Barshay, Ben Street, Steve Langone, Jason Palmer, Jerry Bergonzi, Yoron Israel, Tommy Campbell, Dezron Douglas, and Terri Lyne Carrington.

Harris performs at renowned national and international venues -Blue Note (NYC, Beijing, Milan, and Boston), Smalls Jazz Club, Mezzrow Jazz Club, JazzHus Montmartre, Wally's, to name a few. His ensemble has also participated at Jazz Festivals in Cuba, Panama, Italy, Denmark, Peru, Israel, and the USA.

As a leader, he has released five albums. DownBeat defines some of Harris' compositions as *"overall smart, lyrical and engrossing"*, and The Phoenix highlights *"the tight/loose elasticity, the tension between form and freedom that was the hallmark of so many Miles Davis sessions with Shorter and Herbie Hancock . . . calm and collected, but also loose and full of surprises."*

Harris is in demand as a clinician and consistently collaborates with both public and private education institutions nationally and internationally. He is currently on faculty at Berklee College of Music where he teaches piano, jazz ensembles, and theory classes; he is also a MIT affiliated artist.

Harris thrives on communication. A typical performance always involves interacting with the audience that in turn inspires a sense of joyful connectedness and community.

"Participation," Harris says, "is what keeps our souls alive."