



A very distinctive trait of New York/Boston-based jazz pianist Kevin Harris is his desire to constantly grow, evolve, improve, and advance. Harris plays a distinctive combination of traditional and contemporary music that seeks to celebrate the musical influences of Thelonious Monk and Miles Davis intersecting with J.S. Bach, Scott Joplin, and the folkloric African rhythms of the Caribbean.

Among his most notable collaborations are Greg Osby, Bill Pierce, Francisco Mela, Avishai Cohen, Eddie Gomez, Duane Eubanks, Richie Barshay, Ben Street, Jason Palmer, Rudy Royston, Frank Lacey, Jerry Bergonzi, George Garzone, Curtis Lundy, Eric McPherson, Dayna Stephens, Ralph Peterson, Ameen Saleem, Greg Hutchinson, and Terri Lyne Carrington.

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"*.

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."*

International and national performance includes -Blue Note (NYC, Beijing, Milan, and Boston), New York's Smalls, Mezzrow, and 55 Bar, Copenhagen's JazzHus Montmartre-Denmark, Perugia Jazz Festival-Italy, Lima Jazz Festival-Peru, Wally's Jazz Club-Boston, Havana Jazz Festival-Cuba, Panama Jazz Festival - Panama, Catania Jazz-Italy, to name a few.

In 2020 he was nominated by the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum to be a Neighborhood Salon Luminary with the goal to exchange creative ideas and dialogue with Boston's most innovative and thoughtful luminaries, fostering collaborations and artistic networks while shaping Gardner Museum programming.

With his most recent projects, *"Roots, Water and Sunlight: A Contemporary Octet Expedition through the Expressions of James Baldwin"*, *"Upward Mothers"*, and *"Griot Series"*, Harris directed his creativity to inspire the audience to reflect on unexpected realities and continuously be committed to positive and courageous changes.

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 and he is also a MIT affiliated artist.

Harris thrives on a courageously playful style of communication in music. A style, in his opinion, that requires a very special and sincere habit of listening and an equally patient endeavor to express oneself enthusiastically. He hopes that his performances will always inspire the audience to walk away with a sense of joyful connectedness and community.

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