

WILTON LIBRARY



NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wilton Library's Hot & Cool Jazz features pianist Gerald Clayton Jan. 11

Wilton, CT – Jazz pianist Gerald Clayton starts off the New Year with Wilton Library's Hot & Cool: Jazz at the Brubeck Room performance on Sunday, January 11 at 4 p.m. The concert is followed by a reception where guests will be able to meet the musician. Born in the Netherlands in 1984, Clayton moved to the United States and graduated from the Los Angeles County High School for the Arts (LACHSA) in 2002, then received a Bachelors of Music from the Jazz Studies program of USC in 2006. He hails from a musical family—his father is bassist/composer John Clayton and his uncle is saxophonist Jeff Clayton—and was raised on a variety of musical styles at a young age. He studied classical piano with Linda Buck, and jazz piano and composition with Kenny Barron, Shelley Berg and Billy Childs.

Young in years, the talented artist has garnered awards from many prestigious institutions. During his formative years in high school, he won the Music Center Spotlight Awards, received the "Outstanding Soloist" award during the Monterey High School Jazz Competition twice, was selected for the Grammy High School Big Band comprised of high school students from across the U.S., and was presented with the "level 1" award by the National Foundation for the Advancement of the Arts (NFAA). In 2002, he was named Presidential Scholar in the Arts and was asked to perform at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.; he performed at Steinway Hall in New York and was presented with a scholarship award by the Music for Youth Foundation; he received the Shelley Manne Award for emerging young artists from the Los Angeles Jazz Society and received second place in the Thelonious Monk Institute Jazz Piano Competition.

This gifted performer has already played extensively with outstanding musicians in a variety of venues. Clayton has performed a composition written by his father for the Henry Mancini Orchestra at Royce Hall and Disney Hall. He joined pianists Benny Green, Mulgrew

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Miller and Kenny Barron for a series of duo concerts in Europe in 2005 and later that year performed with trumpeter Clark Terry in Switzerland. Clayton has performed at the Playboy Jazz Festival, New York's Village Vanguard with The Lewis Nash Quintet, and joined trumpeter Roy Hargrove's quintet in Brazil. Of Clayton's style, Ben Raitliff of *The New York Times* noted, "...his playing had huge, authoritative presence, an Oscar Peterson-like style, highly controlled touch and dynamics..."

Wilton Library's Hot & Cool: Jazz at the Brubeck Room series is made possible by the William and Karen Tell Foundation with special thanks to Catherine and Ed Romer. Advance registration is strongly recommended and pre-registrants must arrive by 3:50 p.m. If space is available, wait-listed and walk-in registrants will be admitted after 3:50 p.m. The suggested donation is \$10 per person. For more information, registration or directions, visit www.wiltonlibrary.org/events or call (203) 762-3950. Wilton Library is located at 137 Old Ridgefield Road in the heart of Wilton Center.

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Caption: Jazz pianist Gerald Clayton performs Sunday, January 11, 4 p.m. at Wilton Library's Hot & Cool: Jazz at the Brubeck Room. Suggested donation: \$10 per person. Advance registration recommended. For information, directions and registration: www.wiltonlibrary.org/events or call (203) 762-3950.