

Jazz festival to return Labor Day weekend

EASTON — The third annual Monty Alexander Jazz Festival will take place in Easton on Labor Day weekend from Aug. 31 through Sept. 2.

The festival is presented by Jazz on the Chesapeake, a program of Chesapeake Chamber Music, and will be held at Easton's Avalon Theatre.

The festival's headliner, artistic director and namesake is jazz pianist Monty Alexander, leading the Monty Alexander Quartet. Alexander recently received a Grammy nomination for best reggae album for his recording "Monty Alexander HARLEM-KINGSTON EXPRESS: LIVE!" His music, which bridges the worlds of American jazz, popular song and Jamaican reggae, twice topped the U.S. and world jazz charts in 2011.

Trumpeter Dominick Farinacci, who kicked off last year's festival in a duet with Aaron Diehl, will return this year to open the festival at 8 p.m. Friday, Aug. 31. Farinacci's horn recalls early Miles Davis and Chet Baker, among other trumpet greats. He recently was featured on NPR's "Jazz Rising Stars" and recognized by *The New York Times* as "having the prepossessing charm and lyrical instinct of a jazz superstar."

Chuck Redd will lead a "Salute to Duke Ellington" with the University



The Monty Alexander Quartet will perform Saturday, Sept. 1, at the Avalon Theatre, during the third annual Monty Alexander Jazz Festival.

of Maryland Jazz Ensemble at 4 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 1.

Redd, who has performed with the Charlie Byrd Trio and the Mel Torme All-Star Jazz Quintet, has toured with such jazz greats as Dizzy Gillespie, Dick Hyman, Frank Vignola and Monty Alexander. *The Washington Post* recently admired Redd's "melodic sparkle," while *Jazz Times* called his vibes work "exquisite."

Redd will perform with the University of Maryland Jazz Ensemble, one of only three bands invited to perform annually at

Washington, D.C.'s UDC Calvin Jones Big Band Jazz Festival.

At 8 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 1, the Monty Alexander Quartet will entertain the audience with the joyous side of jazz.

Alexander's early career included recording sessions with Bob Marley's first backing band, the Skatalites. He has toured the globe over the past five decades and collaborated with vocalists such as Natalie Cole and Bobby McFerrin.

To wrap up the weekend, a new event has been added at 2 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 2, when Dec Daniels

and her trio, along with Easton's Asbury Celebration Choir, will headline a jazz gospel concert, "A Salute to Mahalia Jackson."

The Los Angeles Times says, "Daniels' hardy tones, jazz-wise phrasing and triumphant scat showed why she's considered among the cream of mainstream jazz singers."

Weekend packages are available at the Tidewater Inn, which once again will join in the festivities by offering a Jazz Brunch at 11 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 1.

This year, the Festival Pass for pre-



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mium seating already is sold out, but passes for orchestra (\$110) and balcony (\$65) seating still are available. All Festival Passes include entrance to the Sunday concert. Individual tickets are available for purchase to each concert, though some seating options are sold out or in short supply. Seats to the Sunday concert will be available for \$15 each. For a direct link to tickets, go to www.instantseats.com/events/MAJF.

For more information, visit www.chesapeakejazz.org or call 410-819-0380.