



El Club
Southwest Detroit

Saturday Evening, March 17, 2018 at 9:00
El Club, Detroit

STEVE LEHMAN & SÉLÉBÉYONE

HPrizm (aka High Priest) / English Vocals
Gaston Bandimic / Wolof Vocals
Steve Lehman / Alto Saxophone and Electronics
Maciek Lasserre / Soprano Saxophone and Electronics
Carlos Homs / Keyboards
Rich Brown / Electric Bass
Damion Reid / Drums

with special guest
Jamaal May / Poet

RENEGHUE

72nd Performance of the 139th Annual Season
24th Annual Jazz Series
Traditions & Crosscurrents

This evening's performance is funded in part by the Building Audiences for Sustainability initiative of The Wallace Foundation and by the JazzNet Endowment Fund.

Media partnership provided by *Metro Times*, WDET 101.9 FM, and WEMU 89.1 FM.

Steve Lehman and Sélébéyone appear by arrangement with B Natural Management, Inc.

In consideration of the artists and the audience, please refrain from the use of electronic devices during the performance.

Special thanks to Graeme Flegenheimer and the entire staff of El Club for their collaboration on tonight's co-presentation.

Please visit elclubdetroit.com for upcoming events and venue information.

The photography, sound recording, or videotaping of this performance is prohibited.

PROGRAM

This evening's performance will be announced by the artists from the stage and will be performed with a short pause following poet Jamaal May's opening set.

ARTIST STATEMENT

by Steve Lehman

Sélébéyone is a group that was formed in 2015 by US-based rapper HPrizm, French saxophonist Maciek Lasserre, Senegalese rapper Gaston Bandimic, and myself, a US-based saxophonist/composer. Developing our music collaboratively, we have always sought to create unique and compelling music, informed by current developments in Senegalese rap, French spectral music, modern jazz, underground hip hop, and interactive electronics. As we continue to build our musical language together, we are so thrilled to have this opportunity to perform and share our work.

Steve Lehman is professor of music at the California Institute of the Arts.

SÉLÉBÉYONE: A BRIEF HISTORY

by Kwami Coleman

In 1816, after decades of conflict and political compromise over colonial holdings and control over the slave trade, France regained “ownership” of Senegal from the British by way of a treaty, precipitating the French empire’s hegemony in the sub-Saharan region. Its colonial interests on the continent were formalized at the Berlin conference of 1884, a convergence chaired by German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck where France, along with Britain, Belgium, the US, the remaining Ottoman Empire, and nine other European nations charted and agreed upon political boundaries across the African continent. These imagined, politically enforced boundaries divided the topography and resources of the continent to satisfy varied colonial interests. In 1895, Jean-Baptiste Chaudié was appointed Governor-General of French West Africa, and Dakar became the capital of the Imperial Consolidate by 1902.

Shortly after moving to Paris in 1842, Belgian-born Adolphe Sax filed a series of patents for a new family of instruments he developed just years prior. The saxophone’s slow but steady rise to prominence was due, in part, to the increasing demand for municipal and military bands across the empire, and a surge in compositions being written and published for brass-led ensembles. Its use and popularity spread across the country and its colonies in the latter-19th and early-20th centuries, especially the Caribbean and North America, the former Louisiana territories in

particular. Kansas City, one locality in the former French territories, produced musicians that effectively made the saxophone synonymous with jazz and other 20th-century black music.

Technical and conceptual innovations made by Coleman Hawkins, Lester Young, and Charlie Parker rippled across the musical spectrum, their influence reverberating through time while the sound of the saxophone seeped into countless streams of music practice across the globe.

Sélébéyone (intersection in the Wolof language), which, in metropolitan Dakar, converges idiomatically with French and Arabic, conveys the forces in motion on this record. Hip hop, the music culture that itself is an intersection of contrasting historical and contemporary musical styles and expressive forms (emceeing and djing/electronic musical production being two) for Lehman, Bandimic, HPrizm, and Lasserre, is the variegated terrain through which Wolof and English rapped text, melody, harmony, and rhythm undulate. Streaming between Bandamic’s and Prizm’s rhymes, which touch on themes ranging from mysticism, to introspective reflection, to the boastful, the politically conscious, and the galvanizing, are the sinuous saxophones of Lehman and Lasserre — their playing sourcing from multiple musical idioms fervently crashing together. And on each track, underneath these distinct voices, are unique symmetrical and asymmetrical metric foundations responsible for the

ebbing and flowing of the scaffolded rhythmic layers.

For Sélébéyone, distinct languages, musical idioms, and cultural origins intermingle. The product is a confluence of words, sonic textures, and ideas that course through the imagination in waves.

Kwami Coleman is assistant professor of music at New York University.

ARTISTS

Steve Lehman (*alto saxophone/electronics*) is a saxophonist and composer who works across a wide range of experimental musical idioms. The recipient of a 2015 Guggenheim fellowship and a 2014 Doris Duke Artist Award, Mr. Lehman has performed throughout the US and Europe with his own ensembles and as a member of ensembles led by Anthony Braxton, Vijay Iyer, Bennie Maupin, Jason Moran, Georgia-Anne Muldrow, and Meshell Ndegeocello. His 2014 recording *Mise en Abîme* was named the “#1 Jazz Recording of the Year” by *NPR Music*.

As a founding member of the Antipop Consortium collective, **HPrizm** (*English vocals*) has helped to reshape the sound of modern hip hop. In addition to his work as a lyricist in collaboration with artists including Pharoahe Monch, HPrizm has enjoyed frequent partnerships with noted jazz musicians Vijay Iyer, Matthew Shipp, Wadada Leo Smith, and Henry Grimes.

A young star of the new Senegalese rap movement, **Gaston Bandimic** (*Wolof vocals*) has performed throughout West Africa and Europe. He was named “Lyricist of the Year” in Senegal’s 2016 Hip Hop Awards, and his daring lyricism was described as “a revelation” by *Pitchfork* magazine.

Maciek Lasserre (*soprano saxophone/electronics*) is a saxophonist and composer whose work moves seamlessly between the worlds of jazz, Afro pop, and new electronic media. In addition to his work with Sélébéyone, he is currently a member of (legendary Cameroonian percussionist) Brice Wassy’s jazz quartet.

Carlos Homs (*keyboards*) is a pianist and composer who has made a name for himself contributing to innovative ensembles led by Peter Evans, Eric Harland, Tyshawn Sorey, and Steve Lehman.

Rich Brown (*electric bass*) has been an active member of Toronto’s culturally diverse music scene since 1992. Influences such as Jaco Pastorius, Victor Bailey, Jimmy Haslip, and Alain Caron fueled his passion for bass at the age of 17. He has toured with the band Samdhi led by New York-based saxophonist Rudresh Mahanthappa.

A former protégé of the great Billy Higgins, **Damion Reid** (*drums*) has become one of the most influential drummers of his generation. He is a founding member of the Robert Gasper Trio and has performed throughout the US, Europe, and Japan with Greg Osby, David Sanchez, Rudresh Mahanthappa, and Liberty Ellman.

Jamaal May (poet) was born and raised in Detroit. His first book, *Hum* (2013), won a Beatrice Hawley Award and an American Library Association Notable Book Award and was an NAACP Image Award nominee. Mr. May’s poems have appeared widely in journals including *Poetry*, *New England Review*, *The Believer*, and *Best American Poetry 2014*. His second collection is *The Big Book of Exit Strategies* (2016). Mr. May’s honors and awards include a Spirit of Detroit Award and an Indiana Review Poetry Prize. He is a recipient of the Civitella Ranieri Fellowship in Italy.





UMS ARCHIVES

This evening's concert marks **Steve Lehman's** second appearance under UMS auspices, following his UMS debut in November 2013 in the Lydia Mendelssohn Theatre with the Steve Lehman Octet. **Damion Reid** makes his second UMS appearance this evening, following his UMS debut in February 2011 in the Power Center with Rudresh Mahanthappa and Bunky Green's Apex. UMS welcomes both the remaining members of Sélébéyone and Detroit-based poet Jamaal May as they make their UMS debuts tonight.



#A2UMS

TONIGHT'S VICTORS FOR UMS:



JazzNet Endowment Fund

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The Wallace Foundation

*Supporters of this evening's performance by Steve Lehman
& Sélébéyone.*

MAY WE ALSO RECOMMEND...

- 3/31 Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Chick Corea
- 4/13 A Tribute to the Jazz Epistles: Abdullah Ibrahim & Ekaya
- 4/14 Colin Stetson: *Sorrow*

Tickets available at www.ums.org.

ON THE EDUCATION HORIZON...

- 3/19 FRAME: A Salon Series on Visual Art, Performance, and Identity
(202 S. Thayer Street Building, Atrium, 7:00 pm)
- 3/20 Imagining in the Archive: Artist Interview with Jillian Walker and
Anita Gonzalez
(202 S. Thayer Street Building, 4:00 pm)
*Part of the 2017–18 UMS Education and Community Engagement
Research Residency*

Educational events are free and open to the public unless otherwise noted.



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