

ABOUT **NICK MACLEAN QUARTET**

feat **BROWNMEN ALI**

Led by fast-rising piano star **NICK MACLEAN** – a 10x Global Music Award winner, a Toronto Independent Music Award winner, and one of the most in-demand young jazz piano players in Toronto – this contemplative yet thrilling **JUNO NOMINATED** quartet delivers jazz between the two poles of thoughtful introspection and powerhouse conveyance, taking influences from Herbie Hancock's primordial 1960's Blue Note era recordings, while paying tribute to some of the greatest improvisers in jazz history.



Maclean's quartet heavily features one of Canada's most provocative improvising trumpet players -- **BROWNMEN ALI**, heralded as "*Canada's preeminent jazz trumpet player*" by New York City's Village Voice. Recognized as an internationally acclaimed jazz iconoclast, he currently splits his time between Brooklyn, NY & Toronto, Canada and is a 2x National Jazz Award winner. This jazz veteran is best known globally as the last trumpet player with the legendary jazz-hip-hop group **GURU's JAZZMATAZZ**, having replaced Donald Byrd in that seminal ensemble. Ali & Maclean stand shoulder to shoulder with two of Toronto's top-tier rhythm section 20-somethings: **BENNETT YOUNG** on bass and **JACOB WUTZKE** on drums. The synergy of the 4 is always palpable in concert.

Repeatedly regarded as a modern take on the ferocious and hard-swinging post-bop era, the group has been busy both at home and abroad with tours across the UK and an enormous, nearly 2-month long tour across Canada bringing the group from Toronto to Victoria and back. The group has been featured in numerous festivals and concert series including the Regina Jazz Society, the Altrincham Jazz Festival, and multiple appearances at the Toronto Jazz Festival both as a featured ensemble and an often requested backing band. In addition to their original material, the ensemble has also mounted several popular tribute series to jazz masters including Herbie Hancock, Wayne Shorter, Miles Davis, Freddie Hubbard, Clark Terry & Cole Porter.

The quartet's recent 11-track full-length album "Convergence" (released October 27, 2023, Browntasaurus Records) features 7 Maclean-penned compositions, 1 Brownman original and 3 re-imagined Herbie Hancock classics. Produced by Brownman Ali, this disk is a 2024 Juno nominee for 'Jazz Album of the Year (group)', it won 1st place in the 'Unsigned Only' music competition 'Jazz' category, 2 'Silver' Global Music Awards, made the 'Best of 2023' lists for 'Jazz in the City' and 'Textura', and was an 'Editor's Choice' at JAZZIZ magazine.

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AWARDS & ACCOLADES:

- 2024 JUNO nomination for 'Jazz Album of the Year (group)'
- 2024 International Song Writing Competition Semi Finalist
- 2024 JAZZIZ "Editors' Choice"
- 2024 "Couleurs Jazz Hit" winner (Paris, France)
- 2023 Unsigned Only Competition – 'Road Warrior' wins 1st place in the 'Jazz' category
- 2023 Global Music Award winner – 2 Silver Medals in the 'band', and 'album' categories
- 2023 "Road Warrior" becomes AllAboutJazz.com's 'download of the day' (Feb 2023)
- 2018 Global Music Awards pick 'Rites of Ascension' for 'Top 5 albums of Spring 2018'
- 2018 Global Music Award winner – 3 Gold Medals in the 'jazz', 'album', and 'instrumental' categories
- 2018 CJSF's 'Julian Award of Excellence' nominee for 'Rites of Ascension'
- 2017 "Elasticity of Time and Space" becomes AllAboutJazz.com's 'download of the day' (Nov 2017)

QUOTES:

"Nick Maclean's new quartet recording "Convergence", featuring my main man Brownman Ali, is simply Jazz of the highest order! The quartet is in such deep sync! Nick shows his Herbie Hancock and Bill Evans influences, but he's clearly his own man, while my former student trumpeter Brownman Ali's rich tone and exploratory lines are reminiscent of Freddie Hubbard on all those famous Herbie recordings, but with a more modern slant. Jacob Wutzke drives and swings the band mightily from the drum chair, and the muscular sound of bassist Ben Duff is the heartbeat of the band. In short, it's a full co-operative circle of modern jazz! Definitely check this one out!"

- Randy Brecker, multi-Grammy winning trumpet legend (NYC, USA)

"I was a great fan of Herbie Hancock's 60's music. Nick Maclean Quartet is very solid. « Convergence » is one of the best Canadian albums of 2023 and should have chances to get a Juno."

- Denys Lelièvre, CKRL (Quebec City, Canada)

"The Nick Maclean Quartet feat. Brownman Ali's second release, Convergence, builds on the modern reinterpretation of Herbie Hancock's '60s quartet spirit, expanding ideas from their acclaimed 2017 debut "Rites of Ascension." Marked by Nick Maclean's sophisticated writing and deeper exploration of Hancock's classic catalog, Convergence showcases a fearless crew advancing the modern jazz ethos, embracing risks for collective narrative exploration and personal expression."

- Jazziz (Florida, USA)

"A quartet that explores the immeasurable mysteries of eternal jazz. Their resolutely modern playing is full of appeal"

- Couleurs Jazz Radio (Paris, France)

"Nick Maclean, a pianist of exceptional skill and sensitivity, channels Hancock's pioneering ethos into the quartet's original compositions, creating a sound that is at once nostalgic and forward-looking... Ali adds a layer of depth and invention to these compositions. His solos are a highlight of the album, weaving through Maclean's compositions with precision, soulfulness, and a daring spirit of exploration... The rhythm section deserves equal praise for their contribution to the album's success. Their tight, intuitive playing grounds the music, allowing the soloists to soar."

- Glenn Astarita, AllAboutJazz.com (Winchester, USA)

"The connections shared by the four are strong... with each participant operating at a high level and responsive to the interactive flow. A deep rapport characterizes the group dynamic in performances that are often fierce but can also be sensitive and delicate... a band whose playing is the very definition of tight."

- Ron Schepper, Textura (Peterborough, Canada)