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CITY OF HARTFORD

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CARLOS RIVERA
Director



News and Community Advisory

Who: Sharel Cassity Quintet
What: Pork Pie Hat Jazz Series 2010
Where: Polish National Home, 60 Charter Oak Ave. Hartford
When: Friday, November 19th at 8:00 p.m.
Admission: \$15 (general) \$10 (Hartford residents and students)
Contact: Andres Chaparro, Director Office of Cultural Affairs, 860-757-4895, achaparro@hartford.gov

Sharel Cassity (pronounced sha-REL) was begging for a saxophone at the age of eight. Thankfully, she received an old Conn alto for Christmas the following year, and as the saying goes, "the rest is history," because she is developing into a vibrant jazz saxophonist.

Cassity earned a scholarship to the New School of Jazz and Contemporary Music to complete her BA. In 2005, she was awarded a full scholarship to the Juilliard Institute for Jazz Studies and completed her MA under the direction of Victor Goines. It was there that she formed strong relationships with fellow classmates (Michael Dease, Tom Barber, and Alum Adam Birnbaum) who also appeared on her first solo album, "Just for You" (DW Records, 2008).

Cassity's mission statement: "My art is an improvised form of music that is steeped in the tradition of blues, swing, bebop and post bop; I am interested in using that history to help reflect the sound of my generation and the time we are living. I hope that I can be a positive example and make a lasting contribution to this great art form."

These contributions continue to materialize in a growing number of rewarding experiences: the DIVA Jazz Orchestra, Jimmy Heath's Big Band, Roy Hargrove Big Band, Dizzy Gillespie All Star Sextet and All Star Big Band; small group work with Harry Whitaker, Ingrid Jensen, Mark Whitfield, and Michael Dease; recordings which include Jason Hainsworth Jazz Orchestra, Kaleidoscope (DW Records), Adam Birnbaum, Travels (Smalls, 2008), Fat Cat Big Band, Angels Praying for Freedom (Smalls, 2009) and Snow Road, by Tom Barber's Janus Block (DCleff Records, 2009).

Cassity's sophomore release, "Relentless" (Jazz Legacy Productions), showcases her abilities as a performer and writer.