

Department
of Fine Arts
presents

FEATURING:
**Kortland
Whalum**

Singer-Songwriter
and Actor

44TH
ANNUAL

JAZZ

FESTIVAL
2026

APR. 25 @ 11AM

Vicksburg Convention Center
Featuring **Kortland Whalum & Friends**

Alcorn
State University



Dr. Tracy M. Cook
21st President, Alcorn State University

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Attendees,

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the 44th Annual Alcorn State University Jazz Festival. This tradition has become a staple of our university, bringing world-class jazz artists to our campus and the Southwest Mississippi region.

As Mississippi's longest-running jazz festival, and a recipient of the 2022 Governor's Arts Award for Arts in Community, this annual event has stood as a testament to the power of music to bring together people of all backgrounds and to inspire youth from across Mississippi and beyond.

The festival has been graced by legendary performers who represent the highest level of jazz excellence. Over the years, we have had the privilege of hosting such jazz greats as Delfeayo Marsalis, the Kirk Whalum Quintet, the Branford Marsalis Quartet, and the Joe Lovano Quartet featuring Esperanza Spalding.

As in past years, a highly acclaimed performance is in store with featured artist Kortland Whalum, a powerhouse singer, songwriter, and actor from Memphis, Tennessee. We are delighted to welcome him to our roster of musicians and artists.

This year's slate of jazz performers will provide an unforgettable experience. Beyond the performances, our Jazz Festival represents Alcorn's commitment to the arts by offering free workshops with world-renowned performing artists to educate community members and students about the arts.

As we celebrate this 44th milestone, I extend my sincere gratitude to all performers, attendees, and sponsors for your continued support of the Alcorn State University Jazz Festival.

Always Alcorn,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tracy M. Cook".

Tracy M. Cook
President



Department of Fine Arts
1000 ASU Dr. #29
Lorman, MS 39096
Phone: (601)877-6261 / (601)877-3962
Email: sedaniels@alcorn.edu



Dear Friends,

Greeting and Welcome to the 44th Annual Alcorn State University Jazz Festival. On behalf of Alcorn State University and the Department of Fine Arts, we humbly welcome you to this historic Festival.

The ASU Jazz Festival is a tradition of excellence in music, jazz, and education. This tradition has been enriched and upheld by our past directors; Dr. Russell Thomas, Dr. David Miller, and Dr. Sean Daniels. The festival would not be the event we all know and love without the leadership, expertise, and guidance from these past directors.

We are pleased to have Singer-Songwriter Kortland Whalum joining us as our guest artist this year. Kortland comes to us from Memphis, Tennessee, where he is a musical staple of the city.

Our Jazz Festival will continue to grow and leave an impact on the region and state. We join together with High School, Community College, and University ensembles to showcase the talent and musicianship represented across the nation. We take pride in selecting guest artists that will contribute to the legacy of this festival, and Kortland Whalum is no exception!

Thank you to the guests and audience members who contribute to the success of this event each and every year. Thank you to the bands and their staff for blessing us with their talents. We hope you enjoy this year's festival and look forward to the 45th next year!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ryan Stransky".

Dr. Ryan Stransky
Director, 44th Annual Alcorn State University Jazz Festival

Alcorn State University

44th JAZZ FESTIVAL SCHEDULE

10:30AM	Doors open for performing groups
11:00AM	Doors open to the public
11:10AM	Welcome Dr. Ryan Stransky, <i>Director of Alcorn Jazz Festival</i>
11:15AM	Murrah High School FM 1400 Jazz Ensemble Mr. Ousman Camara, <i>Director</i>
12:00PM	Cleveland Central High School Jazz Ensemble Mr. Ivory Lloyd, <i>Director</i>
12:45PM	Covington High School Jazz Ensemble Mr. Anthony Smith, <i>Directors</i>
1:30PM	Hinds Community College Jazz Ensemble Dr. Ben Bullock, <i>Director</i>
2:15PM	Miles College Jazz Ensemble Mr. Bryan Nalls, <i>Director</i>
3:00PM	Alcorn State University Jazz Ensemble Dr. Ryan Stransky, <i>Director</i>
4:30PM	Dinner is served for bands and staff
5:15PM	Jam Session for student groups
6:00PM	Award Ceremony
7:00PM	Kortland Whalum and Friends

A portrait of Kortland Whalum, a man with short dark hair and a goatee, smiling and looking to the right. He is wearing a black shirt and a necklace. His hands are clasped in front of him. The background is dark.

Kortland Whalum

VOCALIST

44th Jazz Festival

Kortland Whalum is a singer, songwriter, and actor whose work spans music, theater, and screen. A graduate of Overton High School for the Performing Arts, he went on to earn a Bachelor of Arts in Music from Morehouse College.

In 2009, Whalum relocated to New York City, where he spent six years working in Off-Broadway productions and touring with the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra. After returning to Memphis in 2016, he served as Vocal Director at the Stax Music Academy, where he played a key role in facilitating the 50th Anniversary of the Stax/Volt Tour across the United Kingdom and France.

Whalum has amassed over a dozen theater credits, including *Carmen Jones*, *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical*, *Raisin*, *The Wiz*, *AIDA*, *Hello, Dolly!*, *Ain't Misbehavin'*, *CATS*, *Porgy & Bess*, *Father Comes Home from the Wars: Parts I, II, & III*, and *Guys & Dolls*. His on-screen work includes *Freedom's Village* (2024), an official selection of the Indie Memphis Film Festival.

His EP, *A Love Letter*, is a collection of original music available on all streaming platforms. Following sold-out performances at Crosstown Arts' Green Room, he was named one of the "5 Must-See Shows in December" by *The Daily Memphian* (2023). He is a professional member of the Recording Academy and regularly performs with the Memphis Symphony Orchestra Big Band.

In recognition of his artistic contributions and cultural impact, Whalum has been honored by the Tennessee State Senate and received the "Shining Star" Award from Mayor Lee Harris.

44th Jazz Festival

GUITARIST
JB
Brownlee



JB Brownlee was born and raised in Arkansas. At the age of 13, he started playing the guitar and fell in love with it. JB has been playing guitar for a living since 2012. He has performed extensively in the Memphis area and around the world. JB met his wife while he was on tour overseas playing guitar. His wife is from South Africa, and they have two children together.

Loren D. Clark

BASSIST



44th Jazz Festival

Loren “Snoopy” Clark is a bassist currently playing and having played for artists such as TobyMac, Hunter Hayes, Keb Mo’, Colbie Caillat, Michael W. Smith, LeAnn Rimes, Byron “Mr. Talkbox” Chambers, David Ryan Harris, CeCe Winans, and more. He has quickly become one of the industry’s best-kept secrets to watch.

Born and raised in the musical city of Memphis, Tennessee, into a family of musicians, with a grandfather who shared stages with the likes of Mahalia Jackson, Sam Cooke, and The Blind Boys of Alabama, Loren was sure to develop a love for music and a skill to play it well. Starting with the exploration of piano, drums, and percussion, Loren moved forward to the lead guitar but found his love in the bass guitar. Through years of playing in Memphis and alongside his brother, drummer Terence Clark (Brandi Carlile, Keith Urban, Robert Cray, Gungor, etc.), Loren has developed the ability to become a musical chameleon, capable of blending and playing all styles of music, including Americana, R&B/Hip-Hop, Contemporary Christian, Gospel, Blues, Pop, and more.

Being based back in Memphis following 15 years of residing in Nashville, Loren continues playing year-round with various artists, also doubling as a background vocalist on many gigs. He has been privileged to have worked with prominent artists on live stages and in recording studios. When speaking of his future goals, he says, “As a professional in my career I would like to fully tap into the highest level of not only musicianship but also music business. Not only am I striving to be one of the greatest players/performers, as well as producers, but also one very well-rounded in every aspect the industry opens for me to enter.

44th Jazz Festival

PIANIST

Terrence Brown



Terrence Brown is a versatile musician and producer deeply embedded in the Memphis music scene, recognized for his work as a producer, keys player, and musical director.

Brown is a member of the production duo All Cows Eat Grass, known for a genre-bending style that moves between technical mastery and deep emotional resonance. He frequently co-writes and produces music for the pop/R&B artist A\$H, blending pop, R&B, and electronic music. He is an accomplished keys player who performs with notable Memphis artists such as saxophonist and vocalist Kenneth Whalum, and is often featured at venues like The Green Room at Crosstown Arts, contributing to the city's modern R&B and jazz landscapes.

Brown serves as the Music Director at Mississippi Boulevard Christian Church in Memphis. He is also active in the southern soul and blues scene, performing under his own name in venues across the city.

A photograph of Henry Conerway III, a bald man with a goatee and glasses, wearing a maroon suit, white shirt, and grey tie. He is looking upwards and to the right. The background is a blurred cityscape with tall buildings under a blue sky. A purple vertical bar is on the left side of the image, and a gold horizontal bar is at the bottom right.

Henry Conerway III

DRUMMER

44th Jazz Festival

Henry Conerway III has become a leading presence on the modern jazz scene since moving to New York in 2015, as evidenced by his ongoing work with such global touring artists as the iconic Freddy Cole; the stalwart Jazz at Lincoln Center trumpeter, Marcus Printup; 2015 Thelonious Monk International Jazz Vocal Competition winner, Jazzmeia Horn; Grammy-nominated trumpeter, Russell Gunn; and several residencies with Jazz at Lincoln Center in Doha, Qatar.

His notable performances include such esteemed venues as the Atlanta Jazz Festival; Jacksonville Jazz Festival; Savannah Jazz Festival; National Black Arts Festival; Toronto Jazz Festival; The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts; The United Trombone Summit (Indiana University) featuring Slide Hampton, Steve Turre, Curtis Fuller and Bill Watrous; Birmingham Jazz Festival; The Gulf Coast Ethnic & Heritage Festival; The Beverly Hilton in Beverly Hills, CA (A Tribute To Ray Charles); the Mount Vernon Jazz Series in Golden, CO with jazz masters Nicholas Payton and Russell Malone; and notable NYC jazz clubs such as Minton's, Birdland, Smalls, Smoke, Jazz at Lincoln Center and its Dizzy's Club.

Conerway, a proud Detroit native, made extraordinary use of the many educational and cultural opportunities of that formidable city, performing as a high school student on The Detroit Jazz Festival stages and spending several years studying under the tutelage of the late, great trumpeter, Marcus Belgrave as a member of the Detroit Symphony's Civic Jazz Orchestra. His thirst for the jazz idiom was nurtured there by his mother, a lover of music, who made sure he experienced live performances of all types; and his father, a brilliant classical violinist, who also shared a deep and abiding love for jazz music in all its incarnations.

While matriculating at Atlanta's historic and prestigious Morehouse College (B.A. in Music Composition), Henry co-founded the group Jaspets, which quickly became a staple in that city's music scene and successfully sold thousands of their own recordings, while booking their own tours and forming creative collaborations with such luminaries as Maroon 5's P.J. Morton, Grammy-nominated Janelle Monáe, Tyler Perry's Tony Hightower, and Chantae Cann, who can each be heard on Jaspets' recordings. Henry has also composed original works for film and performed in theatre settings including the Tony Award-nominated *Shuffle Along, or The Making of the Musical Sensation of 1921 and All That Followed on Broadway*.

44th Jazz Festival Adjudicator

Dr. Ryan Stransky



Dr. Ryan Stransky currently serves as Assistant Professor of Music at Alcorn State University in Lorman, Mississippi. His duties include Applied Trumpet Lessons, Applied Horn Lessons, Trumpet Studio, Trumpet Ensemble, Music History, and Brass Methods. He also serves as the Director of the ASU Jazz Ensemble and Director of the ASU Jazz Festival. Dr. Stransky completed his DMA in Trumpet Performance at the University of Southern California, MIM in Trumpet Performance from Temple University, and BM in Trumpet Performance from the University of Minnesota.

Dr. Stransky regularly performs at Alcorn State University and affiliated functions and is an avid performer in his community of Natchez, Mississippi. He is active in research and writing about trumpet pedagogy and creativity in the trumpet lesson. He has an article published in the ITG Journal (March 2023) regarding his observations and engagements with the trumpet section of the Alcorn State University Marching Band.

He has had the privilege of studying trumpet under Tom Hooten, Jen Marotta, Tony Prisk, and Dr. David Baldwin. He has received additional trumpet instruction and mentorship from Bob Dorer, Ron Hasselman, Jim Olcott, and David Bilger. He also received brass quintet coaching from Doug Tornquist, Tim Morrison, and Jeff Curnow.

Dr. Stransky is a member of the Pi Kappa Lambda Honor Society, the International Trumpet Guild, the Historic Brass Society, and the Medieval Academy of America. He currently serves as a member of the Alcorn State University Faculty Senate and on various committees throughout the institution. He is a proud recipient of the Mississippi Arts Commission Individual Artist Mini-Grant in 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025.

44th Jazz Festival Adjudicator

Byron M. Chatman



Mr. Byron M. Chatman, a native of Natchez, Mississippi, is the Assistant Director of Bands and Music Instructor at Alcorn State University, where he teaches marching band, concert band, pep band, music appreciation, University Life, and low brass applied lessons and ensembles.

He earned the Bachelor of Music degree from Alcorn State University in 2010 and the Master of Music Education from Jackson State University in 2015. He is currently pursuing the Doctor of Music Education degree at Liberty University, with an expected completion date of spring 2028. His research focuses on the integration of artificial intelligence in music education, music education at Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and marching band techniques.

Mr. Chatman has studied concert and marching band techniques under the late Samuel L. Griffin, Dowell Taylor, and David Willson. Prior to returning to Alcorn State University, he contributed to the development of K–12 band programs throughout Mississippi, where ensembles under his direction consistently earned superior and excellent ratings at both marching and concert band festivals.

He is an active arranger, having written for marching bands across Mississippi, Louisiana, and Georgia. Notably, he arranged music for the Alcorn State University Marching Band's appearance in the 2025 Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. In recognition of his work, he was awarded a mini-grant supporting the integration of artificial intelligence in music instruction.

Mr. Chatman is a member of the Mississippi Bandmasters Association and the Alpha Psi Omega Chapter of Iota Phi Theta Fraternity, Inc., where he serves as the on-campus advisor for the Alcorn State University colony. He is married to Dr. Shawnta D. Chatman.

Alcorn State University

JAZZ FESTIVAL

PAST FEATURED ARTISTS

- 1981** Rutgers-Livingston Jazz Professors
Kenny Barron – Piano
Larry Ridley – Bass
Charles Rouse – Saxophone
Bill Fielder – Trumpet
Horace Arnold – Drums
- 1982** Clark Terry – Trumpet
- 1983** Slide Hampton – Trombone
- 1984** Bunkey Green – Saxophone
David Baker – Cello
Warrick Carter – Percussion
- 1985** Maynard Ferguson
and the MF Band
- 1986** Ramsey Lewis Trio
- 1987** Hank Crawford Quartet
- 1988** Les McCann Trio
- 1989** Randy Brecker Group
Randy Brecker – Trumpet
Dave Kikoski – Piano
Mark Egan – Bass
Danny Gottlieb – Drums
- 1990** New Orleans All Stars
Delfeayo Marsalis – Trombone
Donald Harrison – Alto Saxophone
Marlon Jordan – Trumpet
Cyrus Chestnut – Piano
- 1991** The Max Roach Quartet
Max Roach – Drums
Cecil Bridgewater – Trumpet
Odean Pope – Tenor Sax
Tyrone Brown – Bass
- 1992** The Frank Morgan Duo
Darrell Grant – Piano
- 1993** Freddie Hubbard – Trumpet
- 1994** Donald Byrd – Trumpet
- 1995** B Sharp Jazz Quartet
- 1996** The Louie Bellson Quintet
Louie Bellson – Percussion
Pete Christlieb – Tenor Sax
Art Hoyle – Trumpet
Willie Pickens – Piano
John Heard – Bass
- 1997** Stanley Turrentine Quintet
- 1998** Wallace Roney Quintet
w/ Buster Williams – Bass
- 1999** Kirk Whalum Quintet
- 2000** Ramsey Lewis Trio
- 2001** Russell Thomas Quintet
Featuring – Irvin Mayfield – Trumpet
- 2002** The Terence Blanchard Quintet
w/ Aaron Parks
- 2003** Jazz Legends
Jimmy Heath – Tenor Sax
Curtis Fuller – Trombone
Randy Brecker – Trumpet
Mulgrew Miller – Piano
Terri Lyne Carrington – Drums
Ray Drummond – Bass
- 2004** Yellowjackets
Russell Ferrante – Piano
Jimmy Haslip – Bass
Bob Mintzer – Saxophones, Bass
Clarinet, EWI
Marcus Baylor – Drums
- 2005** Michael Brecker Group
Joey Calderazzo – Piano
Chris Minh Doky – Bass
Jeff “Tain” Watts – Drums

Alcorn State University

JAZZ FESTIVAL

PAST FEATURED ARTISTS

- 2006** The Benny Golson Quartet
Rashaan Carter – Bass
Mike Ledonne – Piano
Carl Allen – Drums
- 2007** The Joe Lovano Quartet
w/ Esperanza Spalding – Bass
- 2008** The Roy Hargrove Quintet
- 2009** Terri Lyne Carrington All Star Group
Terri Lyne Carrington – Drums
Geri Allen – Piano
Esperanza Spalding – Bass
Grace Kelly – Alto Sax
Special Guest
Dee Dee Bridgewater – Vocals
- 2010** McCoy Tyner Trio
Gerald Cannon – Bass
Eric Gravatt – Drums
Special guest Gary Bartz – Saxophone
- 2011** Nicholas Payton Quartet
Lawrence Fields – Keyboard
Karrien Riggins – Drums
Bob Hurst – Bass
- 2012** Gathering of Stars
Russell Malone – Guitar
Mulgrew Miller – Piano
Terri Lyne Carrington – Drums
Tineke Postma – Saxes
Ed Howard – Bass
- 2013** All-Stars Sextet
Patrice Rushen – Piano
Carmen Lundy – Vocals
Terri Lyne Carrington – drums
James Genus – Bass
Antonio Hart – alto sax
Nir Felder – Guitar
- 2014** Arturo Sandoval Sextet
w/ Ed Calle – Saxophone
- 2015** Ron Carter’s “Golden Striker” Trio
Ron Carter – Bass
Russell Malone – Guitar
Donald Vega – Piano
- 2016** Branford Marsalis Quartet
Branford Marsalis –
Tenor and Soprano Sax
Joey Calderazo – Piano
Eric Revis – Bass
Justin Faulkner – Drums
- 2017** Ramsey Lewis and His Electric Band
- 2018** Chick Corea
- 2019** Dee Dee Bridgewater Quartet
- 2022** 40th Anniversary ASU Jazz Festival
The Kenny Barron Trio
- 2023** 41st ASU Jazz Festival
Randy Brecker Quintet
- 2024** 42nd ASU Jazz Festival
Bobby Watson Quintet
- 2025** 43rd ASU Jazz Festival
Louis Hayes Quintet

Alcorn State University

JAZZ FESTIVAL PAST PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS

High Schools

Wingfield High School, Jackson, MS
Calloway High School, Jackson, MS
Lanier High School, Jackson, MS
Murrah High School, Jackson, MS
Bailey Magnet High School, Jackson, MS
Provine High School, Jackson, MS
Fairley High School, Memphis, TN
McClaine High School, Lexington, MS
Fair Park High School, Shreveport, LA
Green Oaks High School, Shreveport, LA
Raymond High School, Raymond, MS
Leflore County High School, Itta Bena, MS
Canton High School, Canton, MS
O. Perry Walker H.S., New Orleans, LA
Hinds AHS, Utica, MS
Kennedy High School
Mound Bayou High School
Neshoba Central High School
Moss Point High School, Moss Point, MS
Vicksburg High School, Vicksburg, MS
Pearl High School, Pearl, MS
Natchez High School, Natchez, MS
Yazoo City High School, Yazoo City, MS
Yazoo Jr. High School, Yazoo City, MS
Velma Jackson High School, Camden, MS
Amanda Elzy High School, Greenwood, MS
East Side High School, Cleveland, MS
East Flora High School, Flora, MS
Wilkinson County High School
William Winas Attendance High School
South Natchez High School, Natchez, MS
Byhalia High School
Liberty High School, Liberty, MS
T.L. Weston High School, Greenville, MS
Port Gibson High School, Port Gibson, MS
Sumner Hill High School
Greenville High School, Greenville, MS
Hazelhurst High School, Hazelhurst, MS
Newton County H.S., Decatur, MS

Oak Grove High School, Hattiesburg, MS
Warren Central High School, Vicksburg, MS
Terry High School, Terry, MS
Madison Central High School
Grenada High School, Grenada, MS
Whitehaven High School, Memphis, MS
Laurel High School, Laurel, MS
West Feliciana H.S., St. Francisville, LA
Cleveland High School, Cleveland, MS
Wayne County H.S. Waynesboro, MS
Waltrip High School, Houston, TX
Proviso West High School, Chicago, IL
Covington High School, Covington, LA

Universities/Colleges

University of Southern Mississippi
University of Mississippi
Jackson State University
Delta State University
Alcorn State University
Mississippi Valley State University
Mississippi College
Hinds Community College
Southeastern Louisiana University
University of Louisiana at Monroe
Southern University
Alabama State University
Alabama Community College
LA Pearl River Community College
University of Arkansas Fayetteville
University of Arkansas Pine Bluff
University of Arkansas Monticello
University of Memphis
Northeast Alabama Comm. College
Miles College

Other Educational Institutions

Roberta Flack School of Music, NY, NY
(Trip sponsored by Yoko Ono, 2008)
Byram Middle School, Terry, MS
Grenada Middle School, Grenada, MS

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President

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Interim Chair, Department of Fine Arts

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Mr. Gerard Howard
Jazz Festival Host

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Department of Fine Arts
1000 ASU Drive #29
Lorman, MS 39096
(601) 877-6261 or (601) 877-3962