

## About Trumpeter and Composer Ambrose Akinmusire

Born and raised in Oakland, California, Ambrose Akinmusire (pronounced ah-kin-MOO-sir-ee) was a member of the Berkeley High School Jazz Ensemble when he caught the attention of saxophonist Steve Coleman. Akinmusire was asked to join Coleman's Five Elements, embarking on a European tour when he was just a 19-year-old student at the Manhattan School of Music. After returning to the West Coast to pursue a master's degree at the University of Southern California, Akinmusire went on to attend the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz in Los Angeles, where he studied with Herbie Hancock, Wayne Shorter and Terence Blanchard.

In 2007 Akinmusire won the prestigious Thelonious Monk International Jazz Competition, decided by a panel of judges that included Blanchard, Quincy Jones, Herb Alpert, Hugh Masekela, Clark Terry and Roy Hargrove. That year Akinmusire also won the Carmine Caruso International Jazz Trumpet Solo Competition and released his debut album *Prelude...To Cora* on the Fresh Sound label. He moved back to New York and began performing with the likes of Vijay Iyer, Aaron Parks, Esperanza Spalding and Jason Moran. It was also during this time that he first caught the attention of another discerning listener, Bruce Lundvall, President of Blue Note Records.

# SCHOOL OF MUSIC

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## Sean Kiefer, Trumpet

with  
**Lex Adkisson, Guitar**  
**David Donald, Piano**  
**Martin Hachmann, Bass**  
**Jack Deahl, Drums**



# Program

*As We Fight (Willie Penrose)*..... Ambrose Akinmusire  
(b.1982)

*Vartha*..... Ambrose Akinmusire  
(b.1982)

*Moment in Between The Rest  
(To Curve An Ache)*.....Ambrose Akinmusire  
(b.1982)

*Maurice & Michael* .....Ambrose Akinmusire  
(*sorry I didn't say hello*) (b.1982)

## About the Artist

Sean Kiefer is an award winning jazz trumpeter and composer/arranger currently studying jazz performance at the University of Northern Iowa. He studies under Dr. Randy Grabowski, Dr. Michael Conrad, and Chris Merz. As a trumpeter, he has performed at the local, state, and national levels, including a residency at the Telluride Jazz Festival in August of 2024.

Additionally, he was a third place winner in the jazz division of the prestigious 2025 National Trumpet Competition. He regularly performs his compositions and arrangements at Iowa's premiere jazz club, Noce, with his own group. He has collaborated with artists such as Mike Stern, John Clayton, Annie Booth, Terrell Stafford, Dave Rivello, Steven Feifke, and many others.

As a composer/arranger, he has had his works praised by organizations including Downbeat Magazine, ASMAC (American Society of Music Arrangers and Composers), and ISJAC (International Society of Jazz Arrangers and Composers). He was selected as the 2nd place winner of the 2024 Bill Conti Big Band Arranging Competition, the 3rd place winner of the 2024 Van Alexander Arranging Competition, and the 1st place winner in the undergraduate division of the 2024 ICF Composition Contest. He regularly does freelance engraving work and has recently opened up for commissions.

## About the Program

The music on tonight's program is from one of my favorite artists: Ambrose Akinmusire. His music is extremely deep and thought provoking while avoiding unnecessary complexity that is standard in the jazz tradition. I encourage you to soak in his music as much as possible and immerse yourself in the experience. Become vulnerable, be open, and try to let the music impact you in a meaningful way.