

FALL SESSION – 2018  
PROFESSOR SONNY BUXTON

....THE PIANO

WEEK #1 – MONDAY – SEPT. 10

“THE ART OF JAZZ PIANO” – ART TATUM - (1909 – 1956)

Art Tatum was, perhaps, the greatest of all jazz pianists. He was a personal favorite of Vladimir Horowitz. Tatum, who hailed from Toledo, Ohio, was largely self-taught, blind in one eye with limited vision in the other.

WEEK #2 – SEPT. 17

Part 1 – OSCAR PETERSON (1925 – 2007)

Oscar Peterson, born and raised in Montreal, Canada, was the most gifted of all jazz pianists. A high school dropout, he received extensive classical music training in his early years before moving to New York to work for Norman Granz and his Jazz at the Philharmonic production. Peterson became one of the highest profile names within the music industry. During his career, he was the recipient of ten honorary doctorate degrees.

WEEK #3 – SEPT. 24

Part 2 – “MUSIC IS THE KEY OF OSCAR” is a video tracing four decades in the life of one of Jazz’s all time great pianists, Oscar Peterson.

WEEK #4 – OCT. 1

FATS WALLER (1904 – 1943) – “THIS JOINT IS JUMPIN” is the story of Thomas Waller, whose piano style touched a whole generation of fellow musicians. Waller too, was an accomplished classical musician performing at Carnegie Hall in presentations of the ‘Three Bs:’ Bach, Beethoven and Brahms. Waller’s career started at the age of 10 when he played the organ at his father’s church in Harlem, New York. He wrote some 950 tunes during his short, full-speed ahead lifetime.

OCTOBER 8 – HOLIDAY – NO CLASS

## WEEK #5 – OCTOBER 15

**THELONIOUS MONK** – (1917 – 1982) is known as the “High Priest of Jazz.” After Duke Ellington, it was Thelonious Monk who was regarded as one of Jazz’s first major composers. Monk was the pianist in the forefront of the bebop revolution. For more than half of his professional career he was labeled as the eccentric outsider; then, in 1964, the face of Thelonious Sphere Monk appeared on the cover of Time magazine.

## Week #6 – OCT. 22

**ERROLL GARNER** – (1923 – 1977) – “No One Can Hear You Read” is the improbable story of a 5 foot three inch giant – a giant among the jazz pianists. Garner, who’s career spanned some forty years, could not read or write music yet, he developed an international reputation, leaving an indelible mark on the world of jazz and popular music.

## WEEK #7 – OCT. 29

“**WILLIE the LION**” is a biography of Willie the Lion Smith (1897 – 1973). Willie was one of three masters of stride piano style usually grouped with James P. Johnson and Fats Waller.

Duke Ellington said: “...the Lion was a myth actually that you saw come alive...” Willie the Lion was one of the most brilliant – like Monk – and contradictory men of jazz. He was one of the creators of the new stomping piano style known as “Harlem Stride.” He was a decorated war hero, a cantor in a Harlem Synagogue, a teacher of young musicians like Artie Shaw, Duke Ellington and Thelonious Monk. He also composed over 100 tunes.

## WEEK #8 – NOVEMBER 5

### **DUKE ELLINGTON** (1899 – 1974)

Because of his success as an orchestra leader and composer – for over fifty years – Ellington is often overlooked as a pianist. Today, Ellington is recognized as a highly original and influential piano player.

We have a chance to see and hear Duke, 1967, sans orchestra, in octet to trio and solo.