

Kenny Barron – Live At The Village Vanguard 2008

Written by bluesever

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1. *Barron Intro* 2. *Softly, As In A Morning Sunrise (Romberg)* 3. *Um Beijo (Barron)* 4. *Shuffle Boil (Monk)* 5. *Blame It On My Youth (Levant)* 6. *New Samba (Barron)* 7. *And Then Again (Barron)* Kenny Barron (piano); Dayna Stephens (tenor saxophone); Kiyoshi Kitagawa (bass); Francisco Mela (drums). The Village Vanguard, August 27, 2008

A living bridge between multiple generations of jazz, 65-year-old Kenny Barron is still consistently recognized as one of the most talented all-around pianists in New York. He brings a quartet of young musicians downtown to the Village Vanguard for a live performance broadcast on air by WBGO and online at NPR Music.

As a pianist, Barron sums a wide range of interests into his palette: driving bebop, delicate ballads, bounding calypso and rhythms from across Brazil. He brought them all to bear at the Vanguard, with pretty harmonies and fast-flying chops alike. Barron called an uptempo take on "Softly As In A Morning Sunrise" as an opener — as he began his 2001 duet album *Freefall* with violinist Regina Carter. He then launched into swaying Brazilian-inflected numbers ("Um Beijo," "New Samba"), a lyrical ballad ("Blame It On My Youth"), underheard Monk repertoire ("Shuffle Boil") and a favorite hard-swinging original ("And Then Again," a blues). Along the way, excellent young sidemen complemented him: The smoky-toned saxophonist Dayna Stephens, the versatile, sensitive bassist Kiyoshi Kitagawa, and the rhythmically adroit drummer Francisco Mela.

Now a mentor to young musicians, Kenny Barron was once the talented protege, accompanying his saxophone-playing brother Bill Barron (over 16 years his elder), and being tapped to join Dizzy Gillespie's combo before his 20th birthday. Over the next 45-odd years, Barron continued to work with the finest players from every era; highlights include co-founding the group Sphere, which interpreted music of Thelonious Monk, and collaborating with Stan Getz over the course

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of several albums.

Many of New York's finest young jazz musicians know Barron both as a pianist and a teacher. Under the encouragement of multi-instrumentalist Yusef Lateef, Barron pursued a college education and earned a degree while touring. In 1973, he began teaching at Rutgers University; he continues to mentor top talent at the Manhattan School of Music and Juilliard.

Having recorded over 40 albums as a leader alone, Barron is still producing fresh, original music. His latest record *The Traveler* arrives the week of his appearance at the Vanguard.
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