

Contact:  
Ellie Falaris Ganelin  
Marketing assistant  
734-769-2999  
kch@kerrytown.com

## **Jazz pianist Kirk Lightsey returns to region for Reunion concert with Marcus Belgrave and friends**

May 6, 2010 — Ann Arbor, Mich. — Detroit native Kirk Lightsey has made his mark on the international jazz scene. “From Lightsey’s opening moments of solo piano, his touch and sheer musical coherence were enthralling,” writes Australian jazz writer John Shand. Currently based in Paris, Lightsey returns home to play with area jazz legend Marcus Belgrave. Belgrave’s wife Joan Belgrave (singer) joins these jazz stars, as well as De'Sean Jones (tenor sax), Marion Hayden (bass) and Gayelynn McKinney (drums) at **Kerrytown Concert House on Thursday, June 17 at 8 p.m.**

An accomplished artist in the hard bop genre, Lightsey describes himself as a Detroit pianist incorporating “...a Bud Powell awareness, an Art Tatum styling, a bebop feeling and a pianistic approach.” Lightsey was born in Detroit, growing up in a rich jazz scene influenced by Hugh Lawson, Sir Roland Hanna, Barry Harris, Hank Jones and Tommy Flanigan. He studied piano with Flanigan’s brother Johnson, and attended Cass Technical High School. It was at this time that Lightsey honed his improvisational skills with legendary pianist Barry Harris. Rather than accept a music scholarship to attend Wayne State University, Lightsey instead chose to pursue a performing career.

In the 1960s, Lightsey appeared on five recordings with Chet Baker on the Prestige label. He also performed and recorded with jazz luminaries Yusef Lateef, Sonng Stitt, George Coleman, Freddie Hubbard, Woody Shaw, Harold Land and Damita Jo. In 1974, he joined forces with singer Lovelace Watkins, with whom he toured across the world, performing in Europe, Africa and Australia. A real turning point for Lightsey happened in the late 1970s, when he began touring with Dexter Gordon, bringing him exposure to a wider jazz audience. In 1984, he helped found The Leaders, a sextet that has played many of the major European jazz festivals.

Fellow Detroit jazz master Marcus Belgrave joins Lightsey on trumpet for this concert. His career as a player has intersected with an unparalleled variety of musicians including Ella Fitzgerald, Charles Mingus, McCoy Tyner, Dizzy Gillespie, Eric Dolphy, Aretha Franklin, Wynton Marsalis and Joe Henderson. He also collaborated extensively with Ray Charles, who was a long-time mentor to Belgrave. He has been praised for playing “subtle, wide and logical solos on trumpet and flugelhorn that were like compressed pieces of wisdom” (New York Times). He is also a professor of music at Oberlin University, and is the co-founder of the Jazz Studies Program at the Detroit Metro Arts Complex. Named the official Jazz Master Laureate for the city of Detroit, Belgrave’s impact has become rightfully recognized both within and outside of the jazz community.

Tickets are \$30 for seats in rows 1-2, \$20 for rows 3-5, and \$15 for general admission. To reserve tickets, call 734-769-2999 or visit [www.kerrytownconcerthouse.com](http://www.kerrytownconcerthouse.com). Kerrytown Concert House is located at 415 N. 4th Ave. in Ann Arbor, Mich.

### **About Kerrytown Concert House**

The Kerrytown Concert House is an arts organization focused on community engagement and bringing fine artists and their audiences together. An intimate 110-seat venue, the Concert House has diverse offerings in a wide range of musical styles, while rotating art exhibits are displayed on the walls of the house. Located in the Kerrytown district of Ann Arbor, Mich., KCH is available to the community, including educators, students and organizations for recitals, meetings and events. In addition, it is home to the internationally acclaimed festival Edgefest, and is a presenter of artists of the highest artistic excellence. Kerrytown Concert House is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.