



## SHOWTIME PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS JAZZY CHRISTMAS ONE MORE ONCE!

THE FINAL EDITION OF JAZZY CHRISTMAS

CONCERT PROGRAMME 16 Dec 2023, Sat, 7.30pm Esplanade Concert Hall

## JEREMY'S MESSAGE

My dearest jazz family,

I can't believe that it's been 20 years since the very first Jazzy Christmas concert in 2003.

In that time, my friends and I have performed the *Jazzy Christmas* concert 14 times, and tonight will be the 15th occasion.

Every *Jazzy Christmas*, I have presented a different configuration, from duo formats like the first one in 2003 with fellow pianist Michael Veerapen to a full big band, and all points in between.

We have had many eminent guests through the series including famed duo Tuck & Patti, two-time Grammy-winning saxophonist Ernie Watts, the late great Paul Ponnudorai and top trumpeter Leroy Jones, who joined me for the New Orleans edition of this concert series.

Grammy-nominated singer Carmen Bradford has also joined us on three previous occasions and I am delighted to have her back for this final edition.

I've had the concert performed in big band format twice, once with the Jeremy Monteiro Big Band and once with JASSO.

It has also been my pleasure to have had leading local singers Joanna Dong, Alemay Fernandez and Melissa Tham sing with me, among others, and I'm especially thankful to have Melissa return to Singapore to perform in this concert.

The musicians in my band are among my favourite musicians. Guesting on trumpet from Australia is Paul Panichi, who has played with Frank Sinatra, Sammy Davis Jr and Jacky Cheung.

On saxophones, we have Singapore-based American saxophonist Shawn Letts, who has performed often with me in Singapore, around Southeast Asia as well as the US and the UK. We have also recorded on an album together that has gone to number 12 on the USA National Jazzweek charts in 2022.

Young and talented guitarist Joe Lee and bassist Ben Poh join us, alongside my long-time associate Tamagoh, who completes the rhythm section.

Together, we promise you a lovely show of Christmas favourites and a couple of standards.

This is the final show in the *Jazzy Christmas* series. I have decided to retire the series after twenty years to reclaim December for myself personally. Many of you have attended the *Jazzy Christmas* concert on numerous occasions. I am aware of patrons who have travelled from SEA and even Australia to attend this series of concerts regularly. I thank all of you for supporting me and my friends for all these years, and for being here today.

I want to say a special thank you to my sponsor of 15 years, EFG Bank, who has supported me in my international and recording career through this time. I am proud to also be an EFG International Arts Ambassador since 2012. EFG is principal sponsor again this year.

Thank you also to Creative Labs for sponsoring the concert this year, and for giving selected patrons a lovely gift.

Since this is the last one, I would like to also thank all other previous sponsors of the *Jazzy Christmas* concert series.

Thank you to my Showtime Productions team members, technical director and FOH sound engineer Sunil Kumar who has worked on all 15 editions of *Jazzy Christmas* Lighting Designer Fares Aljunied, Producer and Artist Manager Melissa Tham, Production Manager Benny Goh and production assistant Kelly Tan.

Thank you also to the team at the Esplanade who have been the most wonderful collaborator and who have rendered world-class planning and production support to us over the entire series.

Once again, thank you all for being here to celebrate *Jazzy Christmas, One More Once*!

With much love, wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a happy 2024!

Jeremy Monteiro

## PROGRAMME

#### **SLEIGH RIDE**

Duet Jeremy Monteiro and Michael Veerapen Composed by Leroy Anderson

### CARAVAN

Duet Jeremy Monteiro and Michael Veerapen Composed by Juan Tizol & Duke Ellington

### **FROSTY THE SNOWMAN**

featuring Joe Lee on guitar Composed by Walter "Jack" Rollins & Steve Nelson

HAVE YOURSELF A MERRY LITTLE CHRISTMAS featuring Melissa Tham on vocals

Composed by Hugh Martin Lyrics by Ralph Blane

### WHAT ARE YOU DOING NEW YEAR'S EVE?

featuring Melissa Tham on vocals Composed by Frank Loesser

### LET IT SNOW, LET IT SNOW, LET IT SNOW

featuring Ben Poh on bass Composed by Jule Styne

#### **O HOLY NIGHT**

featuring Paul Panichi on trumpet/flugelhorn Composed by Adolphe Adam

### WE THREE KINGS OF ORIENT ARE

Composed by John Harry Hopkins Jr. Arranged by Jeremy Monteiro

### INTERMISSION

#### **RUDOLPH THE RED-NOSED REINDEER**

featuring Jeremy Monteiro on vocals Composed by John David Marks

> CHRISTMAS MEDLEY featuring Stardust

### **IT CAME UPON A MIDNIGHT CLEAR**

featuring Shawn Letts on tenor saxophone Composed by Richard Storrs Willis

> WINTER WONDERLAND Composed by Felix Bernard

#### **MERRY CHRISTMAS BABY**

featuring Carmen Bradford on vocals Composed by Lou Baxter & Johnny Moore

### WHAT A WONDERFUL WORLD

featuring Carmen Bradford on vocals Composed by Bob Thiele & George David Weiss

SANTA CLAUS IS COMING TO TOWN/ WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS

Unless otherwise stated, all arrangements are by Michael Veerapen



## ARTIST'S BIO

### JEREMY MONTEIRO PIANO

Dubbed "Singapore's King of Swing," Cultural Medallion recipient Jeremy Monteiro has garnered critical acclaim all over the world. In 1988, he put Singapore jazz on the world map when he became the first Southeast Asian to play and lead a band of established international jazz musicians in a group named Monteiro, Young & Holt and Friends on the main stage of the Montreux Jazz Festival.

Monteiro started his career in 1976 at a local hotel and then as a pianist and bandleader at the famed Club 392 jazz club in Singapore in 1977. November 2021 marks the 45th year of his career.

Monteiro has performed and/or recorded with the likes of James Moody, Benny Golson, Michael Brecker, Bobby McFerrin, Randy Brecker, Lee Ritenour, Herbie Mann, Paulinho DaCosta, Ernie Watts, Charlie Haden, Terumasa Hino, Carmen Bradford, Matt Monro, Toots Thielemans and Simon & Garfunkel, to name a few. He has also played on the main stages of the EFG London Jazz Festival and is the only Southeast Asian jazz musician to have had an album, Jeremy Monteiro & Alberto Marsico – Jazz-Blues Brothers released with the iconic Verve record label.

Monteiro has 46 albums to his name, of which 11 albums including *Brazilian Dreams*, *Montage*, *With A Little Help from My Friends*, *Yesterday Once More – A Jazz Tribute to The Carpenters*, and *Jeremy Monteiro and Friends: Overjoyed – A Jazz Tribute to the Music of Stevie Wonder* were released in the past 10 years. His album, *Live at No Black Tie – Kuala Lumpur* released

in early 2021 with bassist Jay Anderson and drummer Lewis Nash is his 45th jazz album. The album maintained a Top 50 position for 10 consecutive weeks in the Jazzweek Charts, the most respected jazz chart in the United States. He has also played on more than 300 pop albums in the Asian region and received Silver Medal for Best Music Score in 1991 at the International Radio Festival of New York. His latest album, *Jazz-Blues Brothers* released in October 2021, is a collaboration with top Italian organist Alberto Marsico.

On 9 Aug 2021, Monteiro was awarded the National Day Honours Award—the Pingat Bakti Masyarakat (PBM) or Public Service Medal in recognition for his decades of service to the arts and the community in Singapore.

Monteiro is also a writer, with a volume of essays titled *Jeremy Monteiro: Late-Night Thoughts of a Jazz Musician* published by Marshall-Cavendish in 2018. The book received two literary Golden Door Awards—a 3rd Prize in the main category and a Bronze Medal in the Rex Karmaveer category for integrity in writing.

Since 2012, he has served as the International Arts Ambassador for EFG Bank, headquartered in Switzerland and sponsor of one of the most prominent jazz festivals in the world, the EFG London Jazz Festival. In addition, he is a Fellow of the London College of Music and the Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (RSA) in the UK, and Visiting Professor of the University of West London.

He is also a founder of the Composers & Authors Society of Singapore Limited (COMPASS), an organisation responsible for the protection of music copyrights in Singapore. In September 2021, he was elected 6th Chairman of the Board of COMPASS.

In 2016, together with a few jazz supporter friends, Monteiro established the Jazz Association (Singapore) (JASS), to bring jazz to people in all parts of Singapore, help raise its level of excellence, especially in the area of youth development and work towards making Singapore a leading jazz city of the world. Monteiro serves as Executive Director and Music Director.

Today, Monteiro continues to bring jazz to all corners of Singapore, and Singapore jazz to countries all around the world with his musician friends and with the JASS orchestras.

## CARMEN BRADFORD

Born in Austin, Texas and raised in Altadena, California, Carmen Bradford grew up with music in her home and in her heart. It was only natural that Carmen would follow in the footsteps of her great family legacy, being the daughter of legendary trumpeter and composer Bobby Bradford, and world-renowned vocalist and composer Melba Joyce.

Carmen was discovered and hired by William "Count" Basie and was the featured vocalist in the legendary Count Basie Orchestra for nine years. Carmen performed on two Grammy Award-winning albums with the Basie band in the 1980s and later collaborated on a third Grammy Award-winning album, Big Boss Band, with guitarist George Benson in 1991.

Carmen began another chapter in her illustrious career as a solo artist with her critically acclaimed debut album *Finally Yours* (Evidence Records) in 1992. The 1995 release of her second solo album *With Respect* (Evidence Records) established the Atlanta-based singer as one of jazz music's most diverse and exciting vocal stylists, proving to the world that Carmen Bradford was a unique voice in jazz in her own right.

Carmen's 2004 release, *Home With You* (Azica Records), is a warm and beautiful collection of piano and vocal duets with talented artist Shelly Berg. Carmen Bradford returned to her big band roots with her new 2008 release, *Sherrie Maricle & The DIVA Jazz Orchestra*, featured on Live From Jazz At Lincoln Center's *Dizzy's Club Coca-Cola*. Carmen was featured on John Mills' 2015 release, *Invisible Design*, proving once again her outstanding ability to sing all forms of jazz, be it straight-ahead jazz, blues or jazz fusion, and swing it like nobody can.

### STARDUST VOCALS

Stardust was like a breath of fresh air when it was staged in 1978.

It was one of the earliest English-language musical shows with an all-local cast – a group of some 20 friends who came together to sing and dance and to raise funds for the Breadline Group, which provides food or cash to the destitute old.

Written, produced and directed by Singapore's Swimming Golden Girl Pat Chan, it was described by one reviewer as offering 'mad moments of uninhibited fun'.

Another reviewer said: '...the two-hour show was an enjoyable excursion into yesteryear, reliving at a fast and lively pace the evergreen music of the past 50 years'.

"In those days most of the local English plays and musicals were primarily performed by expats. Being a proud Singaporean, I was very keen to showcase our own local talent in a song and dance musical," said Pat Chan.

Firm friendships were forged during the production, and some of the cast continued to perform together as Stardust.

Pat adds: "We had a cast of more than 20. After the show, six of us decided to continue to perform regularly as the group Stardust singing nostalgic familiar favourites and standards of the 30s, 40s and 50s."

The original six were Jacintha Abishegenaden, Gerry Rezel, Faridah Ali, Farid Ali, Robert Fernando, and Pat Chan.

In 1983, Pat came up with another show and wrote, produced, directed – and performed in - *I Remember Broadway.* It was a hilarious multilingual, multi-racial musical featuring the group Stardust, which now included Clement Chow, and a whole bunch of other local amateur talent.

Stardust continued to perform after the show, with the addition of singer Ann Hussein. The group collaborated with young, emerging talent Jeremy Monteiro, who honed his prodigious musical chops crafting superb arrangements for Stardust in many sell-out shows. The group last performed with Jeremy in 45RPM – Jeremy's Jazz Journal, at Esplanade Concert Hall in 2022.

## MELISSA THAM

Melissa captivates her audiences with her large repertoire and impeccable delivery of songs from the American Songbook.

Beginning in 2013, Melissa started working extensively with Jeremy Monteiro, Singapore's most eminent jazz musician and entrepreneur, at his full-house concerts and tours as guest vocalist. She was featured in his "Three Divas" South-east Asian tour (Hong Kong, Thailand, Taiwan, Indonesia) as one of the three featured jazz vocalists, together with Nancy Kelly and Eileina Dennis. Since then, Melissa has performed and continues to perform with many international jazz artistes, most notably with the Asian All-Stars Power Quartet (AASPQ: Jeremy Monteiro, Eugene Pao, Tots Tolentino, Hong Chanutr Techatana-nan).

In the fall of 2014, Melissa toured with AASPQ in Europe, and was featured in the Jeremy Monteiro Trio at the Queen Elizabeth Hall for EFG London Jazz Festival, opening for Kenny Barron and Dave Holland. Jazz writer Ian Patterson of allaboutjazz.com praised her for having "won over the Queen Elizabeth Hall".

In 2015, Melissa released her debut solo album produced by Jeremy Monteiro titled *Falling in Love Again* to critical acclaim. The album saw Melissa returning to her roots: her love for traditional jazz genres such as swing, bossa nova and the quintessential jazz ballad. It comprises of many of her favourite standards such as *A Sleepin' Bee, Just Squeeze Me, My Ideal* to name a few. Through the encouragement of her mentor and producer, Melissa also wrote lyrics to the album title, which was originally written as an instrumental piece by Jeremy. The album was recorded in Darmstadt with some of Germany's finest jazz artistes like Tony Lakatos, Rudi Engel, Axel Schlosser and Jens Bunge, and Hong from AASPQ.

2015 was also the year Melissa received the award for "Vocalist of the Year' at the Singjazz Festival held annually at Marina Bay Sands. She opened the night with an intimate duo performance with well-known US-based bass player Joseph Lepore.

To date, Melissa has recorded as guest vocalist on many of Jeremy Monteiro's albums, namely *Brazilian Dreams*, the Beatle's Tribute album *With A Little Help from My Friends*, and *Yesterday Once More*, a tribute album to the Carpenters.

### MICHAEL VEERAPEN PIANO

Being one of the strongest driving force behind the jazz scene in Malaysia, Michael Veerapen is set to take the main stage with his many talents. He launched his career even before graduating from the prestigious Berklee College of Music with Suma Cum Laude in 1982, making a name for himself in the industry.

He has become a renowned jazz pianist, a composer, and even a musical director for some of Malaysia's top performers like the legendary, Sudirman. In more recent times, he has composed and directed several highly successful musicals including 'SuperMokh', 'Lat Kampung Boy' – for which he won the coveted BOH Cameronian Award for Best Composer.

Last year, he was the music director, composer, and orchestrator for the grand and successful opening ceremony of the 2017 SEA Games held in Kuala Lumpur and it was a spectacle to behold as it was broadcasted live to all major ASEAN countries. With an impressive professional track record to date, audiences can anticipate an extraordinary performance!



## SHAWN LETTS

Singapore-based Oklahoman Shawn Letts plays the saxophone and keyboards. When the late jazz giant Bill Evans heard him at age 18, he wrote, "Shawn Letts shows unexpected poise, maturity and thoughtfulness."

Inspired by the traditional music of Southeast Asia, Letts has toured much of Asia as a live musician and has lived in Singapore for many years. He has collaborated with many brilliant Asian musicians, including his own world music group, Transformasi. Attached to a recording studio as a composerarranger-producer for several of his Singapore years, his experiences scoring for Asian TV commercials is extensive.

Shawn produced the *Heart of Asia* CD and CD-ROM sound collection, which has since been used by everyone from Coca-Cola to CSI. He also produced a remix of Let's Dance released in 2002 on EMI's *Best of Bowie-Limited Edition* CD-DVD; composed award-winning orchestral scores for Disney Channel Asia; composed the score for the original Steppenwolf Theatre production of *Man From Nebraska*, named one of Time Magazine's 10 Best Plays of 2003; and scored PBS' *NOVA: Sinking the Supership*, the 2nd-place winner in the World Music category of the 2006 Billboard World Song contest.

## TAMA GOH

Apart from being a percussionist of all kinds of music from jazz and classical to Latin and contemporary, Tama Goh is also a producer for major concerts, Singapore television, music festivals and special events. He has performed with the likes of Jeremy Monteiro, Sandy Lam, Francis Yip, FIR, Laura Fygi, Ronald Keating, Chris Brubeck, James Moody, Ernie Watts, Carmen Bradford, Eric Manriental, Eldee Young, Singapore Symphony Orchestra, Singapore Chinese Orchestra and the Singapore Festival Orchestra. In addition to his role as music advisor to Mus'Art Wind Orchestra and Mus'Art Percussion Ensemble, Goh also mentors young artists and aspiring teachers in music performance and visual arts.



An articulate, solid and melodic bass player, Benjamin Poh is an up-and-coming performer and sessionist in the music circuit. At 28, he has already performed on many local and international platforms. Apart from the electric bass, Poh took the opportunity to hone his craft by taking up the double bass under the tutelage of Christy Smith.

His versatility and ability to play across genres has seen him taking up session jobs at performing venues and events with various sought-after musicians. Most recently, he performed at the JEN (Jazz Education Network) conference in Reno, Nevada and the EFG London Jazz Festival with the Jazz Association Singapore Orchestra (JASSO), Prior to that, he was in charge of bass duties at Joanna Dong's sold-out concert held at Esplanade Concert Hall. He was part of the band that performed with the Jeremy Monteiro Trio featuring special guest, Grammy Award-winning artist, Ernie Watts. Besides playing at the Victoria Theatre as part of the rhythm section for the Lion City Youth Jazz Festival, he also plays alongside Dr Benny Golson. He played in Jeremy Monteiro's *Little Big Band* featuring Steve Lippia last year, and was part of *Brazilian Dreams - Jeremy Monteiro & Jazz Brasileiro* in 2016.

Poh has performed throughout Asia including Hong Kong, China, Brunei, Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore and also in the USA and UK with high profile local and international artistes such as Jeremy Monteiro, Gabriel Hernandez, Paulinho Garcia, Steve Lippia, Tony Lakatos, Jakob Dinesen, Tamagoh, Juliana Da Silva, Tina May, Joanna Dong, Alemay Fernandez and Richard Jackson. Poh completed his BA(Hons) Music in Jazz Performance at LASALLE with a First Class Honours.

## JOE LEE

Born and raised in Singapore, Joe Lee pursued his BA Hons degree in Jazz at Lasalle College of the Arts and graduated with first class honours. He has played both big band and ensemble categories for the youth mentorship programmes at The Singapore International Jazz Festival in 2015 and 2016. He was also part of a free jazz trio project led by Lasalle head lecturer Dr. Timothy O 'Dwyer and was involved in 2 music theatre production. After graduation, he was involved in mentoring at the JazzAsia Workshop: jazz @ the Red Dot 2018 and playing for the Jazz Association (Singapore) Youth Orchestra (JassYO!). He is currently actively involved as a sideman in various local jazz groups.

## PAUL PANICHI

Paul Panichi is one of Australia's top lead trumpet players. Over the past thirty years, has played for major television shows like Australian Idol and the Music Max Session featuring Michael Buble. He has extensive theatre and recording credits, and has also recorded on the soundtracks for major films such as Strictly Ballroom, Moulin Rouge and Australia.

Paul has performed in concerts and tours with some of the world's biggest artists including Frank Sinatra, Barbara Streisand, Liza Minneli, Sammy Davis Junior, Michael Buble, Shirley Bassey, Al Jarreau and Peter Allen along with Asian artists Joey Yung, Khalil Fong, Jenny Tseng, George Lam, Rubber Band and Chris Wong.

Since 2004, Paul has divided his time working between Sydney and Hong Kong and as a result has performed and toured with some of the biggest artists in Asia culminating in the 2007 world tour of Hong Kong Superstar Jacky Cheung.

## PRODUCTION CREDITS

Jeremy Monteiro Music Director & Executive Producer

> Melissa Tham Artist Manager & Producer

Benny Goh Production Manager & Trumpeter

> Sunil Kumar Technical Director

Fares Aljunied Lighting Designer

Kelly Tan Technical Assistant

Prakash Xavier Videography

Marci Delfin Programme Design & Artwork

> Christina Jael Makeup & Hair

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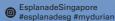




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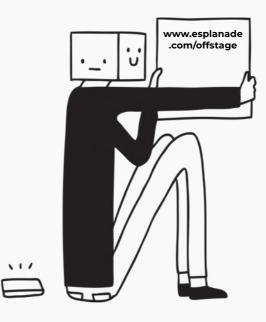


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