

**Jazz Links Jazz Master Residency/Professional Development Program**  
**Jazz Master Residency Artists Bios 2017-18**

**Ernie Adams**

Ernie Adams has been involved in the Chicago/Milwaukee and National "Jingle" scene for the past 25 years. Adams has been involved in over 60 plus recordings, including Ramsey Lewis' 1999 CD "Apassionando" and Nancy Wilson's 2002 CD "Meant to Be". He has appeared on Ramsey's TV show "Legends of Jazz" with Kurt Elling and Al Jarreau. Prior to becoming a Resident Artist for the Jazz Institute of Chicago, he worked from 1995-2003 as a Mentor in a program that allowed him to go into Chicago's inner-city high schools to tutor young drummers and percussionists to prepare them for professional gigs as well as impart on them lessons in life skills.

**Ruben P. Alvarez**

Ruben P. Alvarez is a 2013 Grammy nominated drummer and Latin percussionist. He performs and records on a variety of styles from Blues legend Junior Wells, Walt Disney's "The Lion King", to Chicago's own Patricia Barber and Ramsey Lewis. He currently performs with Chicago's premiere Latin jazz ensemble, Chevere, the Latin dance band Charangué, and leads the Sun Sounds Latin Jazz Ensemble. Ruben teaches Latin percussion and drum set at Columbia College Chicago and Roosevelt University. He directs the Latin Pop rock ensemble at Columbia College Chicago, the Roosevelt University Latin Jazz Ensemble and the Latin Jazz Ensemble at Prairie State College. He serves on the Board of Directors of The Jazz Education Network, the Board of Governors of the Chicago Chapter of the Recording Academy and as Vice President of the Illinois Chapter of the Percussive Arts Society.

**Renee Baker**

Renee Baker is a composer, conductor, violinist, violist and educator. She has served as principal violist of the internationally-renowned Chicago Sinfonietta and is an active member of the Chicago land music scene. As an improviser, Renee has performed and recorded with Nicole Mitchell's Black Earth Strings, Karl E. Seigfried's New Quartet and Galaxy String Quartet, the David Boykin Expanse, Orbert Davis, George Lewis, Mwata Bowden, the Great Black Earth Music Ensemble, the Chicago Jazz Philharmonic and the Chicago Jazz Orchestra. Renee has been a participant in many international music festivals and has performed extensively throughout Africa, Asia and Europe.

**Mwata Bowden**

Mwata Bowden is Director of Jazz Ensembles at the University of Chicago. He attended Chicago's DuSable High School and studied music under the legendary Captain Walter Dyett. Bowden has received the Outstanding Artist Service Award for his dedication to children through music. His activities in local jazz and music education conducting music residencies for the Chicago Council on

Fine Arts, the Illinois Arts Council, Ravinia, and Urban Gateways. From 1989 to 1998 he served as Chairman of the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM), one of the oldest Black musicians' collectives in the U.S. He plays the family of clarinets, tenor and baritone saxophones, flute and the didjeridu.

**Ari Brown**

Ari Brown is a Chicago based composer, arranger, tenor saxophonist, pianist and educator. He has performed with many music greats including Anthony Braxton, Muhal Richard Abrams, Lou Rawls, B.B. King, Chuck Berry, Elvin Jones, Andrew White, Della Reese and Billy Eckstein. He has made numerous recordings and has performed with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in the Chicago premiere of the Anthony Davis Opera "Malcolm X. He was a featured performer in a clarinet solo in Universal Studio's motion picture "The Babe".

**Katie Ernst**

Katie Ernst is a jazz bassist, vocalist, and educator in Chicago, IL. She received a BM in Jazz Studies from the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, NY and is the jazz ensemble director at Wheaton College in Wheaton, IL. She is currently an Education Associate at the Jazz Institute of Chicago and coordinates the Jazz Links Student Council for high school musicians. As an educator, she has presented workshops and clinics on jazz history and performance for the Illinois Music Educator's Association, the Jazz Education Network, and the Jazz Institute of Chicago. As a performer, Katie is an active freelance musician in Chicago and can be heard singing and playing in venues throughout the country.

**Greg Ward**

Greg Ward is one of the leading virtuoso saxophone players of his generation, with a unique versatility in a wide variety of styles including Modern Jazz, Funk, Latin as well as Classical, Indian, Klezmer and African Music. Ward grew up in a musical household, singing in Gospel groups as a child before the discovery of Charlie Parker led him to dedicate his life to the saxophone. Ward has performed with musical greats including Von Freeman, Frank Wess, Al Jarreau, Carl Allen, Rufus Reid, Jeff Parker, Brian McNight and Hamid Drake, touring across the world in countries such as Peru, Singapore, Guam, Japan, Italy, Switzerland, Holland, France, and South Africa. Ward's diverse musical interests have led him to explore the world of Classical and Crossover music as a composer and performer. Recent commissions include a chamber work for ICE (International Contemporary Ensemble), a new ballet for the Peoria Ballet Company, and a septet for Gallery 37's Downtown Sound Gallery Composer's Series