

Our Next Concert: **Danny Tobias & Friends**

Sunday, January 25, 2025
Community Art Center, Wallingford PA



Get ready for "an oasis of joy!" (in the words of our reviewer after Dan's last appearance). Dan last brought his friends to Tri-State in June 2024; today we see the return of Dan leading and playing trumpet, with Randy Reinhart on trombone, Pat Mercuri on guitar and banjo, Joe Plowman on bass and Jim Lawlor on drums.

A 1985 graduate of Trenton State College (now College of New Jersey), **Danny Tobias** has worked with such jazz luminaries as Kenny Davern, Warren and Allan Vache, Harry Allen, Howard Alden, John Bunch, Marty Napoleon, Greg Cohen, Derek Smith and many other jazz legends.

Jim Lawlor began playing drums after moving from Philadelphia to Atlantic City in 1979, just as the town was beginning its rise as the East Coast gambling mecca. He is another frequent performer at TSJS, noted primarily for his association with the Midiri Brothers and Danny Tobias.

Randy Reinhart played his first gigs when he was a teenager, making jazz his profession at the age of 18 and becoming an ongoing substitute at Eddie Condon's on 54th street in 1973. He played with some of the finest players on the New York scene including Vic Dickenson, Pee Wee Erwin, Herb Hall and drummer Connie Kay.

Joe Plowman is a Philadelphia area bassist. An alumnus of Temple University's Boyer College of Music, Joe can often be seen playing anywhere from D.C. to New York.

Banjoist/guitarist **Pat Mercuri** is one of the area's most active freelance jazz musicians. As a member of Jerry Rife's Rhythm Kings, the Midiri Brothers' and Ed Wise's bands, he plays for TSJS frequently.

Coming Soon

Royce Martin - Piano

February 22, 2026 – Haddonfield United Methodist Church



Photo credit – The Focal Point

Royce Martin is a pianist, composer and 2022 graduate of Berklee College of Music. Born in St. Louis, Royce taught himself to play the piano at the age of 14 on a small keyboard. He has a rich musical background and an affinity for a myriad of genres. He worked as the in-house pianist and lecturer at the **Scott Joplin State Historic Site** between semesters at Berklee. After graduation, Royce returned to St. Louis to record an album of a dozen Joplin classics, reinterpreted in his own eclectic style for his debut album **Memories on Morgan Street: Scott Joplin Reimagined**.

Royce has provided original music for **The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air Reunion** special on MAX, Hulu's **Mormon no More**, and most recently completed a full feature length score for MAX documentary **They Called Him Mostly Harmless**.

In October of 2024, The New York Times opinion columnist John McWhorter captured Royce's piano playing in three words: "...Sly, Relatable and Brilliant..."

Royce continues on his path of exploration and experimentation with innovations on his new genre creation that he has coined Swagtime. By combining the striding pianism of ragtime, with the melodic storytelling and lyricism of bebop and rap, Swagtime is the bridge between then, now, and tomorrow.

Bria Skonberg
November 23, 2025, at the Haddonfield United Methodist Church
Review by Bill Hoffman



Bria Skonberg’s quintet, consisting of Bria on trumpet and vocals; Evan Arntzen on clarinet, alto and vocals; Jeff Miller on trombone and vocals; Luther Allison on piano; Liany Mateo on bass; and Alex Raderman on drums, played to the largest crowd we have had since live concerts resumed after the Covid shutdown. They did not disappoint; I wouldn’t have hired them if I thought they might!

They opened with “Back Home Again in Indiana,” which is played almost every Wednesday at Birdland by the Louis Armstrong Eternity Band, where Bria occupies the trumpet chair when she’s not on the road. Very fitting, as Satchmo is perhaps her main inspiration. Alex, who holds the drummer’s chair in the LAEB, comes from a family of musicians, the best known of whom was 1920s bandleader Leo Raderman. This number featured extended solos by Bria, Evan and Liany.

The third member who’s played for us before was Evan. By the time you read this he and his wife and young son will be living back in NYC after a few years in Northampton, MA. Among the other three members, Jeff and Luther both recently relocated to greater (or not-so-great, depending on your point of view) New York—specifically Union and Secaucus, NJ, respectively—so we may be seeing more of them in the future. Liany, also new to me, acquitted herself very well on bass. She appears on Bria’s next album, due out in 2026.

Bria has also gained fame as a composer, and we were treated to several of her recent compositions: “Sweet Pea,” “Beautiful Boy (a mix of John Lennon and Count Basie),” and “Dolly Jones.” The latter, which contained some strains of the well-known “China Boy,” was a tribute to the first black female trumpeter to make a jazz record, in 1926. Somehow I was unfamiliar with her, so I googled and learned that she had a notable career that lasted into the 70s. It is not unknown in her concerts for Bria to pay tribute to overlooked female jazz musicians.



Bria



Alex



Evan



Liany

Bria, in the nearly 15 years I've known her, has come into her own as a vocalist. We heard her renditions of "Do You Know What It Means to Miss New Orleans," "Beautiful Boy," "The More I See You," and in keeping with the upcoming Christmas season, "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer," given a much more swinging treatment than that carol usually gets.

Departing—somewhat—from the jazz canon, the band played "Sugar Rum Cherry," a take-off by Duke Ellington on "Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy" from Tchaikovsky's ballet *The Nutcracker*. This tune will be on Bria's upcoming EP, which should be out by the time you read this (or even if you don't).

Luther got his moment in the spotlight with an impromptu solo of various Christmas songs. Though done in a relatively modern (for Tri-State) jazz style, it was warmly received.

I should mention that traditional jazz standards were not overlooked during the concert. We heard, in addition to the afore-mentioned "Indiana," "Cornet Chop Suey," "After You've Gone," "Basin Street Blues," "On the Sunny Side of the Street" (with vocal by Jeff), Sidney Bechet's "Petite Fleur," and the lesser-known "Comes Love" from 1939.

The concert ended with a rousing version of "Centerpiece," a 1958 tune by Harry "Sweets" Edison and Jon Hendricks.

This was Bria's first performance at Tri-State in almost ten years. I'll try not to wait another ten before having her back.



Jeff



Luther



Other Jazz Happenings



PENNSYLVANIA JAZZ SOCIETY presents

Mardi Gras!

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2 – 4:30 pm

Congregation Brith Sholom

1190 W. Macada Road

Bethlehem PA 18017

\$15 admission

free admission for those who come to jam

More Information: 347-247-5214

Visit the Society's website at

<https://www.pajazzsociety.org/>



Potomac River Jazz Club Zoom Jazz Talk

The Palm Court Jazz Café Legacy w/Craig Klein

Monday, February 23, 2026 – 7:00 pm to 8:15 pm EST

The Palm Court Jazz Café was a New Orleans fine dining and traditional jazz institution for 35 years, and its heart lives on! It was one of the few New Orleans traditional jazz institutions that also offered fine dining. It offered live jazz 5 nights a week featuring the city's finest musicians. Learn more about the restaurant and jazz club and about the band that continues to honor the club's legacy - **The Palm Court Jazz Band**.

This on-line presentation is free (donations to defray production costs are appreciated) but you must advance register by 5pm EST the night of the talk. -- [Registration Link](#) -- Then, you'll get the Zoom link by email shortly before start time.



Concert Schedule

All Concerts on Sunday afternoon, 2:00 pm to 4:30 pm (unless otherwise noted)

1/25/2026 Wallingford	<p>Danny Tobias and Friends Cornetist Danny Tobias returns to Tri-State at the helm of his group of friends. A much sought-after musician, Danny is frequently heard both leading and performing with many popular traditional jazz and swing groups.</p>
2/22/2026 Haddonfield	<p>Royce Martin – Piano Royce Martin – pianist, composer – has a rich musical background and an affinity for a myriad of genres. He worked as the in-house pianist and lecturer at the Scott Joplin State Historic Site between semesters at Berklee College of Music. And Royce has recorded an album of a dozen Joplin classics, reinterpreted in his own eclectic style. Royce also has composed original music for streaming documentaries.</p>
3/15/2026 Wallingford	<p>Manouche 5 Manouche 5, the Philadelphia based quintet, performs gypsy-jazz influenced standards and popular music similar to the original Hot Club of Paris. They've become a Tri-State favorite!</p>
4/12/2026 Haddonfield	<p>The Orleans Kids The Orleans Kids has evolved from a band that originated in the early 2010's in New Orleans. The band later relocated and formed anew; the Orleans Kids began to play at venues like the Boston Swing Central events, and the annual Roaring Twenties Lawn Party in Ipswich. And today, Tri-State Jazz presents the band for your enjoyment, under the leadership of Alex Owen.</p>
5/31/2026 Wallingford	<p>Rossano Sportiello Award-winning Italian jazz pianist Rossano Sportiello returns to Tri-State! He last appeared in September 2022. He brings his eclectic style of pianism that blends classical training with jazz and stride.</p>
6/14/2026 Haddonfield	<p>Larry Toft's Red Hot Ramblers The Red Hot Ramblers are an authentic 1920s jazz ensemble in every way. They exemplify red-hot syncopation, stompin' rhythms, and lyrical melodies associated with the Jazz Age. The repertoire can extend before and after the 1920s from the early years in Jazz, such as New Orleans Style and Ragtime, up to the swing era of the 1930s and 40s and even into the modern Second Line New Orleans parade style.</p>
7/12/2026 Wallingford	<p>The Tri-State All-Stars Jam The Tri-State All-Stars return! Our annual tradition offers a core band of top performers jamming together with guest musicians, on familiar trad jazz tunes. Guest musicians can pre-register, and even last-minute walk-ins may be accommodated, checking in the day of the concert.</p>
8/23/2026 Haddonfield	<p>Neville Dickie with Joe and Paul Midiri This Tri-State tradition continues! World-class British pianist Neville Dickie rejoins TSJS veterans Joe and Paul Midiri. Neville is among the most accomplished stride and boogie-woogie pianists on either side of the Atlantic. Joe and Paul Midiri, well-known to Tri-State audiences, have recorded with everything from trios to big bands.</p>
9/27/2026 Wallingford	<p>The Blackbird Society Orchestra The 11 to 12-piece Blackbird Society Orchestra has become one of Tri-State's favorites. The Tri-state area's Premier Authentic 1920's/1930's Jazz Band plays original arrangements of bands of the 1920s – 1930s.</p>
10/18/2026 Haddonfield	<p>Pete & Will Anderson with Adam Moezina Twin brothers Peter and Will Anderson have wowed TSJS audiences before with their reed mastery. This time they're bringing a friend – guitarist Adam Moezina – with whom they've played a series of concerts around New York and beyond.</p>
11/15/2026 Wallingford	<p>Kris Tokarski – Piano New Orleans pianist Kris Tokarski offers a solo performance that is sure to feature legendary NOLA composers like Jelly Roll Morton and King Oliver.</p>

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Tri—State Jazz Society depends on the generous contributions of members because basic membership dues and concert admission charges do not cover all costs. The board asks members to consider renewing their memberships at the Sponsor, Patron, or Sustainer level if they are able to do so.

Features Now ONLINE on the
Tri—State Jazz Website



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Sundays from 2:00 to 4:30 pm

Visit our [Tri-State Jazz Society website](#) for up-to-the-minute news about schedule and concert changes

Our Hotline number is (908) 349-0162

Member admission is \$10; general admission is \$20.

Introductory offer — start a *new, first-time* TSJS annual membership (\$20) at the door and receive free admission to this concert (*not applicable to renewal or re-activation*)
Full-time students with ID, or children accompanied by a paying adult, are free.

ADA compliance — access to our concert venues is available at grade level.

Restroom facilities are available at grade level.

Elevator access is available for the HUMC auditorium level.

Restroom facilities are available at the HUMC auditorium level.

Tri—State Jazz Society, formed in 1988, is dedicated to the preservation and live performance of traditional jazz. Concerts featuring leading professional soloists and bands are presented throughout the year. Events are open to the public and all who enjoy traditional jazz are invited to join. The society is a non—profit educational corporation supported by its members.

Membership

Basic dues are \$20 per person. New and renewal memberships can be started in any month and run for one year. In addition to half—price concert admissions, members receive *The Strutter* newsletter by email.

Premium memberships help sustain and expand the work of Tri-State Jazz Society. Individual Sponsors contribute at the \$50 level (\$70 for couples); Patrons, \$100 (\$120 for couples); Sustainers \$200 or more (\$220 or more for couples). Premium level members are eligible to attend an annual reception for Sponsors, Patrons and Sustainers.

Visit our website for more details:

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**TRI—STATE JAZZ SOCIETY, INC.
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