

More about the band

NewYorkestra was formed in 1996 as a workshop for new creative big band music and soon began impressing audiences in clubs and concert halls in New York City and the metro area. Its repertoire is unique and varied, made up of both original compositions and creative arrangements of modern jazz classics. NewYorkestra plays the music of the band's prizewinning composers, bandleaders **Rob Middleton** and **Steve Kenyon**. The members of the group are veterans of the New York jazz scene, many of whom have played in internationally renowned bands, such as those of **Maria Schneider**, **Toshiko Akiyoshi**, **Lionel Hampton**, **The Vanguard Jazz Orchestra**, and many others. The band has featured jazz luminaries as guest soloists in performance, including David Liebman and Randy Brecker.

NewYorkestra's approach is eclectic, using elements of swing, funk, R&B and Latin, reflecting the nature of today's music. The band draws particular inspiration from jazz of the 1960's and 70's, from Thad Jones' work to the compositions and performances of Miles Davis' great 1960's bands. NewYorkestra performs frequently in Manhattan and is particularly popular with New York musicians. Their CD, *Urban Soundscapes* released in 2005, is played by radio stations around the country.

Here is some of what artists, critics and music industry insiders are saying about the members of NewYorkestra:

"This is a great band, supported by some great writing. Highly recommended!"

-Jim McNeely

"The high intellectual level of the writing... could not be fully realized by just any big band. Obviously the NewYorkestra players took up the gauntlet because they believe in the eclectic concepts that constantly push the tonality envelope. ...16 intensely swinging players...who form highly disciplined sections..."

-Harvey Siders, Jazz Times

"ensemble beyond reproach, the soloists consistently engaging"

-Jack Bowers, allaboutjazz.com

"...the word has instantly gotten out to the jazz world that Rob is an exceptional composer..."

Robbin Arhold, BMI vice-president

Members of the band Bandleaders

Rob Middleton



Rob Middleton is a prize-winning composer and an active saxophonist and educator in the New York area. He has performed with many jazz greats, including Wynton Marsalis, Branford Marsalis, Phil Woods, Harry Connick Jr., Lionel Hampton, The New York Voices, Dizzy Gillespie, Joe Lovano, the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra, Woody Shaw, Oliver Lake, David Liebman, Randy Brecker, John Faddis, Joe Williams, George Coleman, Jimmy Cobb and has recorded with Lionel Hampton and others. He is featured soloist in the Birdland Big Band.

Rob's performance career has taken him to major jazz clubs and festivals in this country and abroad. His compositions and arrangements are performed regularly in the New York area. His arrangement of "Windmills of Your Mind", recorded by the Chico O' Farrill Afro-Cuban jazz big band featuring Rob as the soloist, can be heard in the 1999 hit movie "The Thomas Crown Affair". Rob's other recordings include the recently released CD "Urban Soundscapes" by the band NewYorkestra, which he co-leads.

Rob is a professor of music at Caldwell College and maintains an active teaching studio in the area.

Steve Kenyon



Woodwind player and composer **Steve Kenyon** has led ensembles performing his original music at the Blue Note, Birdland, Carnegie Hall, and live on WNYC radio. He has performed throughout the U.S., Europe, and Asia with Maria Schneider, Toshiko Akiyoshi, Blood Sweat and Tears, Chuck Mangione, Rachel Z, Philip Glass, New York City Ballet, Brooklyn Philharmonic, Concordia Orchestra, New Jersey Symphony, Aretha Franklin, and Beyonce. He is co-leader, composer, and lead saxophonist with NewYorkestra. He has performed with dozens of Broadway shows, numerous *Encores!* at City Center, and many original cast recordings. Other recordings include his Quartet's CD *Fidel's Nightmare*, and albums with Mike Holober, Andy Middleton, NewYorkestra, Audra McDonald, Judy Collins, Maury Yeston, Ricky Ian Gordon, and Michael John LaChiusa. Television work includes *Ed*, *Today Show*, *David Letterman*, *Wonder Pets*, and many jingles. Films include *Hollywoodland*, *What Just Happened*, and *Boynnton Beach Club*. He is currently lead woodwind for Broadway's *Little Mermaid*.

He received B.M. and M.M. degrees from the University of Miami, graduating Magna cum Laude, and was awarded a Downbeat magazine composition award while at the University. He teaches privately at City College of New York.

New Yorkestra-The band

Steve Kenyon ~alto, soprano saxes, flute

Ben Kono ~alto sax, flute

Chris Bacas ~tenor, soprano saxes, clarinet, flute

Rob Middleton ~tenor sax, clarinet, flute

Jay Brandford ~baritone sax, bass clarinet

Mike Ponella ~lead trumpet, flugelhorn

Jon Owens ~lead trumpet, flugelhorn

Rick Savage ~trumpet, flugelhorn www.savagetunes.com

Bill Mobley ~trumpet, flugelhorn-www.billmobley.net

Bruce Eidem ~trombone

Noah Bless ~trombone

Mark Patterson ~trombone www.jazzconvergence.com

Jeff Nelson ~bass trombone

Mike Holober ~piano, fender Rhodes piano

Andy Eulau ~bass, electric bass

Scott Neumann ~drums www.ScottNeumannMusic.com