



NEW JERSEY

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QuickTakes!

William Paterson University Jazz Series Features Alumnus Justin Kauflin

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Thirty-year-old internationally acclaimed Jazz pianist Justin Kauflin, William Paterson University alumnus, returns to his alma mater to perform in the Jazz Room Series on December 4th.

The story of Justin Kauflin's musical background was powerfully told in the award-winning documentary *Keep On Keepin' On* – from his time at William Paterson under the tutelage of the late Clark Terry to his subsequent discovery to a multi-record contract by Quincy Jones. Although he appeared on the Jazz

Room stage many times as a student, he now makes his debut as a featured artist. This performance will preview selections from his new CD due for release in spring 2017.

When Mr. Kauflin was 11 years old, he lost his eyesight, because of proliferative exudative retinopathy. He adjusted by learning Braille and cane mobility and switched to jazz piano at the Governor's School for Performing Arts. He studied with Liz Barnes and John Tommey, a professor of jazz at Old Dominion University. In jazz festivals throughout the U.S. he received top honors and began performing professionally at the age of fifteen with the Jae Sinnett Trio.

In 2004, Mr. Kauflin graduated in the top one percent at Salem High School with an Advanced Academic diploma and Valedictorian at the Governor's School for the Arts. He received a Presidential Scholarship to attend William Paterson University, where his mentor Clark Terry, and he played in the Clark Terry Ensemble. He was also influenced by Harold Mabern, Mulgrew Miller, and James Williams.

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In 2008 he moved to New York City and at age 23 produced, led, composed, and performed on his first album, *Introducing Justin Kauflin*. As noted above, Mr. Kauflin's relationship with Clark Terry was depicted in the documentary *Keep On Keepin' On*, which made its world premiere at the Tribeca Film Festival April 2014 and won both Heineken Audience and Best New Documentary Director Awards. Mr. Kauflin is credited for the film score with Dave Grusin.

Launched in 1978, William Paterson University's Jazz Room Series is one of the largest and most prestigious college-sponsored jazz events in the country. Performers include renowned professionals who encompass the complete spectrum of jazz, as well as William Paterson's own student ensembles. The series has won numerous grants from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts on campus. Mr. Kauflin is currently planning a European performance tour in February 2017 that will include Germany, London, Sweden, and the Netherlands among others.

Prior to the concert, Kauflin will be the guest for "Sittin' In," an informal discussion about jazz, at 3 p.m. in Shea Center. Admission is free to Jazz Room ticket holders. Tickets to the performance are available at the Shea Center Box Office in advance at 973-720-2371 or wp-presents.org. On the day of the performance ticket prices include \$15 general admission, \$12 senior citizens and William Paterson Community, and \$8 for non-William Paterson students. William Paterson students are admitted free with a valid I.D. There is a \$3 fee for tickets purchased on the day of the show.