

# THE

SPRING 2020

A BEHIND THE SCENES LOOK AT THE PEOPLE  
& PROGRAMS YOU SUPPORT **AT THE FLYNN**

# MARQUEE



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Evolution

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Jazz Festival

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# A VISION FOR OUR FUTURE

Change can be hard. But it's also necessary. Ever since we opened our doors in 1930, we've been continuously evolving. This year, we celebrate our 90<sup>th</sup> year as a cultural landmark in the Burlington community.

Birthdays are the perfect time to reflect on past accomplishments, reaffirm core values, and renew a vision for the future. We've spent this past year doing just that and are thrilled to share those with you.

We focused our efforts on creating a shared understanding of our brand story, enhancing our guest experience, and identifying opportunities to continue to grow and expand our impact. We envision an inspiring future filled with wonder, possibility, and transformative moments—where everyone feels at home at the Flynn, regardless of any and all barriers.

Throughout the process, we heard from over 1,700 voices within our community, both internally and externally, to understand what the Flynn means to them and how we could improve our brand experience. You may have been asked to participate in one way or another. Thank you for your input; your voice matters.

Many of the things we all love about the Flynn were reaffirmed. We also discovered opportunities to simplify how we present ourselves and make the Flynn more accessible.

This includes a return to our roots as simply “the Flynn,” to unify how we talk about all that we do and more clearly express who we are and how our community already sees and interacts with us. The Flynn is, and will always be, a catalyst for creative expression and self-discovery—for anyone seeking the transformative power of the arts and live performance.

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**“RETURNING TO OUR ROOTS AS  
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OF THE ARTS TO UNIFY,  
STRENGTHEN, AND INSPIRE.”**

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For this pivotal moment, we teamed up with the talented and dedicated partners at Ruthless & Wellington, a branding studio based in Burlington led by Susan Weeks and Katie-Marie Rutherford. Through a highly collaborative process, together we developed a lively, welcoming, and sophisticated style that preserves the Flynn's integrity now and into the future.

You may have noticed that we've already begun to make some changes to the way we look and sound, and we'll continue to do so over the coming months. This is just the beginning. As a valued member of our Flynn community, you play an important role in this evolution. We're grateful for your support. Stay tuned! 🎉



## OUR BRAND VALUES DRIVE OUR SHARED SENSE OF PURPOSE.

WITH MANY BRAND VALUES AT OUR FOUNDATION, THERE ARE TWO THAT RISE TO THE TOP:

### POSITIVE IMPACT

Built by the **COMMUNITY**, supported by the community, sustained by the community—we are woven into the fabric of Burlington.

Our promise to make the performing arts accessible to all, regardless of any and all barriers, begins with our tireless commitment to **EQUITY** and inclusivity.

As **STEWARDS** of our rich legacy, we are dedicated to preserving and protecting our beautiful historic art deco theater while ensuring our fiscal stability and a prosperous and sustainable future.

### WORLD-CLASS EXPERIENCE

We believe art ignites curiosity, fuels imagination, and invites **DISCOVERY**—of new and different experiences, diverse cultures, and artistic genres.

We believe everyone should have the opportunity to experience the creative energy, anticipation, excitement, and sheer **JOY** of live performance.

We honor and celebrate **ARTISTRY**. From world renowned performers to those just beginning their creative exploration, we all aspire to greatness in ourselves and in our work.

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#### Have Questions? Reach out.

Email Kevin Titterton, our Director of Marketing and Communications, at [ktitterton@flynncenter.org](mailto:ktitterton@flynncenter.org).

## WHAT'S EVOLVING?

**A SIMPLIFIED & UNIFIED BRAND** that more clearly expresses who we are and how our community already sees and interacts with us—as “the Flynn.”

**A SHORTER NAME** that brings us back to our roots as the Flynn, already overwhelmingly used inside and outside the organization.

**AN ENHANCED GUEST EXPERIENCE** at every touch point—from our website and our programming, to how we greet our guests and our signage. We're more committed than ever to providing a joyful and memorable experience.

**A COHESIVE BRAND STORY** that clearly and succinctly expresses the world-class experience and the positive impact we have on our community.

**OUR NEW LOGO** and evolved brand echoes our past while embracing a powerful position of strength for the future.



# “EVERYTHING’S A STORY”

## An Interview with Ferene Paris Meyer

BY JESSICA HANDRIK  
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION



**EVEN IN A CASUAL CHAT OVER COFFEE,** Ferene Paris Meyer’s gift for storytelling radiates through. When she recounts her journey from reluctant Flynn class participant to impassioned storytelling teacher, she crafts the arc of the story with a conversational ease, conveying depths of feeling. Ferene created and teaches the Flynn’s Voices of Color through Storytelling affinity class, currently in session again. But she started at the Flynn in a much different place.

**Flynn:** How did you learn about Flynn’s Moth-style Storytelling class?

**FPM:** In 2018, I attended a storytelling class performance at the Flynn and had two thoughts: I would love to do this and there’s only one person of color amongst all the storytellers. A year later, I am sitting in my first storytelling class with Sue Schmitt, and I’m like, “Am I going to be the only person of color?” as folx (*ed. note: folx, an alternative spelling of the word folks, is a gender-neutral collective noun used to address a group of people*) walk in. Living in Vermont, there’s a good chance you are the only person of color in some spaces.

**Flynn:** What was your first class like?

**FPM:** Sue starts with “Share a little bit about yourself. What should this room know about you?” She says storytelling is supposed to be vulnerable. I start getting anxious: “What will I say? What won’t sound too black?” At that time, I was still processing an incident from a UVM basketball game where SMC players taking a knee resulted in hateful responses from the community. We want to say we’re open minded. But then you do something folx don’t agree with and the ugliness comes out.

So when it got to me, I said something like, “I’ve just been trying to do some healing around being a woman of color in Vermont. It can take its toll on you.” As the next person speaks, I had this moment like, “Ferene, you’re the only person that talked about anything race-related. You’ve said too much.”

**Flynn:** Why is it important to have affinity-based classes for POC community?

**FPM:** After the class I asked Sue, “We have five minutes to tell a story? How do you talk about racism in five minutes to a white audience? How do I get them to understand my narrative? There’s so much explaining that I might have to do at the beginning.” She said, “That’s not your responsibility to hold them. Your story is for you. And that’s all that matters.” I ended up sharing about meeting my partner, who’s white, and what it meant to tell my family that I was dating a white person. I knew I could tell that

Photo Credit: Sally McCoy

story without feeling learning was happening at my expense. I also thought, "It would be awesome to take this class but with more people that look like me." Eventually I reached out to Sue and she immediately supported the idea, advocating to the Flynn to create this class and have me teach it.

## "AFTER THE CLASS I ASKED SUE, 'WE HAVE FIVE MINUTES TO TELL A STORY? HOW DO YOU TALK ABOUT RACISM IN FIVE MINUTES TO A WHITE AUDIENCE?'"

**Flynn:** Leading up to the first class you taught, what was it like?

**FPM:** As we started planning with the Flynn staff, I was struck by the creative license I had. The Flynn was being intentional in supporting how to make this class successful.

For the first class, I had crystals, books, snacks, and fresh flowers to create a space that gave good energy to folx versus being like, "Wow, that took so much from me." It was fun; it was healing; it was that heart work. Such unapologetic truth that was happening among us because we didn't have to worry about learning happening at our expense. People would share something and it wasn't like "You sure that happened?" or "No way!"

It was like "Of course!" We were affirming people: I see you, I hear you. It was more than about storytelling. It was about liberating voices.

**Flynn:** What did it feel like after the class?

**FPM:** I am still riding the energy of our Story Slam! I'd been hearing the students' stories in class, but to see them perform on the Flynn Space stage was so magical, beautiful, and empowering. Afterwards, folx were coming up to talk to us about our stories. Or days later, saying "Ferene, my partner and I went home and we just like sat with everything that we heard; it didn't leave us." That's what I want. I think as a person of color, you're like, "I need my narrative to just stay with you. I need it to go beyond this moment we had, for that hour."

**Flynn:** What's next for you?

**FPM:** This class reunited me with a part of myself I had lost touch with. The art of storytelling, creating space for folx to be vulnerable and share aspects of themselves, has always been a part of my core. So for me, the storytelling does not stop here. I feel like it has a vibrant place in our community in so many other ways. The fire ignited for me around storytelling is so bright! I don't want to just wait for a class to be a storyteller. We can storytell at meals, school, checking in with one another, events, and more! There's room for it in so many different ways in our life. I just want people to breathe it in more. 🌱



**The Voices of Color Through Storytelling** group at their **Story Slam**: "I'm still riding the energy of that night," said Ferene. "To see them perform on the Flynn Space stage was so magical, beautiful, and empowering."

# DOUBLE TAKE

## AN UNDERRATED NEA JAZZ MASTER & “THE PEOPLE’S DIVA”

BY STEVE MACQUEEN, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



Carlos Santana is more succinct than I'll be, but he gets to the heart of the matter when he says, ***“Charles Lloyd is an international treasure.”*** True enough. The 81-year-old jazz saxophone legend has impacted American music in a variety of delightful ways. He brings his stellar band of virtuosos, The Marvels, and the great American roots singer/songwriter Lucinda Williams to the Flynn for what will be a season highlight, as well as a show that will whet the appetite for the Burlington Discover Jazz Festival in June.

Obviously, an artist like Lloyd attracts top talent, and The Marvels is an astonishing aggregation of A-list players. Guitarist Bill Frisell is one of the most influential players on his instrument, a leader in his own right. Drummer Eric Harland and bassist Ruben Rogers comprise one of the top rhythm teams in jazz.

And then there's Lucinda Williams, one of the great songwriters of her generation, whose masterpiece *Car Wheels on a Gravel Road* assures that people will talk about her long after she's gone.

Still, at first glance, roots-rock and improvisational jazz do not seem like the most perfect bedfellows. Yet the album *Vanished Gardens* belies that impression, as the musicians continually find common ground on a deep, soulful level within music that defies easy categorization. Rather than limiting either artist, their collaboration seems to set them free. Word has it the live performances reach levels only hinted at in the recording.

“I think it was fated to be, because Southern crossroads met,” Lloyd explained. “It was a coming-together of two different forces, and a third force happened.”

Photo Credits: (left) D. Darr (right) Timothy White

## CHARLES LLOYD’S FASCINATING MUSICAL JOURNEY

### The roots of his muscular style

The Memphis feel is always in Lloyd’s playing, even when he visits the outer reaches of the stratosphere during free improvisations. It’s a compelling aspect of his artistry.



As a teenager, Lloyd backed such Memphis blues greats as Johnny Ace, Howlin’ Wolf, and B.B. King.

Hailing from the musical mecca of Memphis, he attended Manassas High, which boasts one of the first jazz programs in the country, founded by big-band maestro Jimmie Lunceford.

### Expanding his sound on the West Coast

His first regular gigs were with the bands of Chico Hamilton and Cannonball Adderley.



He moved to L.A. to study classical music, listening to Bartok by day, then sitting in with jazz visionaries such as Ornette Coleman and Eric Dolphy.

### The rise of his classic quartet

His quartet was the first jazz group to play the Fillmore West in San Francisco, alongside Jimi Hendrix, Cream, and the Grateful Dead.

Anticipating the world-music movement, he was one of the first jazz artists to incorporate multi-cultural cadences and motifs in his compositions.



The first Charles Lloyd Quartet is the stuff of legend, featuring Jack DeJohnette on drums, Keith Jarrett on keys.




Renée Fleming is, quite simply, one of the great singers of any kind of music anywhere in the world. She resides at that unique intersection of technique, talent, soul, and artistry. There are few pleasures as pure and intimate as seeing her sing in recital with just a piano behind her.

I first saw her sing at a 400-seat recital hall in Atlanta some years ago. It remains one of the most indelible performances I've ever seen. Every note, every gesture, every breath seemed weighted with emotion and importance. When she concluded the last of Strauss' *Four Last Songs*, I expected her to take flight and ascend to her home in the clouds.

Every casual opera fan knows her name, as she has sung in all the major concert halls and opera houses worldwide. She's the only classical singer to have sung the National Anthem prior to the Super Bowl. She killed it. She's also performed at the Nobel Peace Prize, the 9/11 Commemoration, the Beijing Olympics, the 2012 Obama Inauguration, and the funeral of John McCain. She was awarded the National Medal of Arts in 2012.

Her recital at the Flynn marks her first-ever visit to Vermont to perform, so I am totally unclear why anyone would choose to miss it.

While in town, she'll also pursue another of her passions: arts education. As part of the Kennedy Center's Sound Health initiative, Ms. Fleming created a program called *Music and the Mind* which explores the power of music as it relates to health and the brain. At the Flynn, she'll host a presentation and panel discussion that will feature UVM's Dr. James Hudziak, an expert on the correlation between music and brain development, particularly in children, and members of the Me2 Orchestra, the world's only classical music organization created for individuals with mental illnesses and the people who support them. 

## His enduring creative resurgence

A near-death experience in the mid-'80s led to a rededication to music and a string of 16 fantastic albums on the ECM label.



He dropped out in the '70s, surfacing to play with the Beach Boys (!) and a Mike Love offshoot called Celebration (their 1979 disc *Celebration* Disco is best avoided).



2020 PREVIEW

# BURLINGTON DISCOVER JAZZ FESTIVAL

## JUNE 5-14

BY CHELSEA LAFAYETTE  
MANAGING DIRECTOR

The Burlington Discover Jazz Festival is thrilled to welcome back legendary saxophonist **Pharoah Sanders** as the festival headliner. Prolific for over 50 years, Sanders has pressed on until his playing turned transcendent; he's now recognized as a towering icon in the history of the art form.

Starting in the '60s, he followed his bandleader and mentor John Coltrane through the enigmatic twists of the avant-garde. Through the '70s and beyond, he charted his own singular cosmic path, filtering non-western music styles through free and spiritual jazz. Last year, just weeks before the 2019 festival, an injury forced the cancellation of his scheduled performance. Since then, he has been on the mend, while still continuing to deliver unparalleled performances. He'll now make his long-awaited return to the Flynn Main Stage on Saturday, June 6 at 8 pm.

**"He's probably the best tenor player in the world."**

—ORNETTE COLEMAN



Pharoah Sanders



Fed Russell

Fantastic Negrito



Jaimie Branch

Dawid Laskowski



Nubya Garcia

Fabrice Bourgeois

This year's 37<sup>th</sup> annual Discover Jazz Fest kicks off the day before with **Levitate Live**, a free block party event on the Top Block of Church Street, on June 5. This first day of the fest culminates with an evening show by the soulful **Delvon Lamarr Organ Trio**, a Seattle-based group of groove aficionados that has taken off over the past year. DLO3 will follow the opening night Main Stage performance by gritty blues-rockers, two-time Grammy-winner, and NPR Tiny Desk contest champ **Fantastic Negrito**.

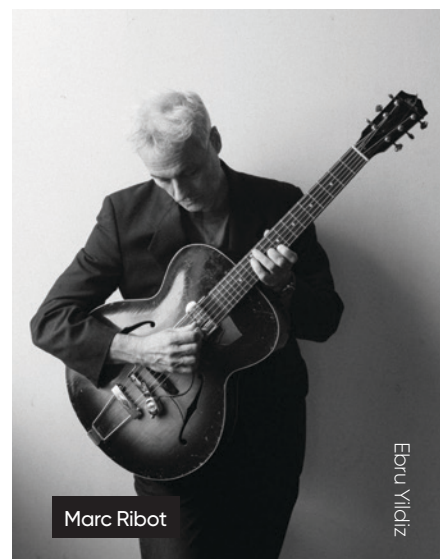
And that's just the first two days...The rest of the fest doesn't let up, with can't-miss performers scheduled each day. From intrepid left-field guitarist **Marc Ribot** to rising UK sax modernist **Nubya Garcia** to fiery Chicago trumpeter **Jaimie Branch** to Afro-Cuban fusion player **Yosvany Terry**, this year's lineup is especially stacked. The 2020 lineup presents an excellent cross-section of what jazz looks like right now, and a glimpse of where it's heading. From up-and-coming artists to established icons, the Burlington Jazz Fest is a great opportunity to see many sides of this evolving art form all at once.

Throughout the week, nightly performances in Flynn Space will continue to be the go-to spot for serious jazz fans and anyone looking to discover some of the best artists on the scene. This 180-seat black box transforms into an intimate jazz club—an ideal setting for experiencing emerging and established artists alike. If you have never been to Flynn Space during the festival, add it to your list. It's a must.

Stoking audience engagement beyond the main venues has been a hallmark of the festival since it began in 1984. We are pleased to continue this tradition in 2020 with a number of exciting satellite events, especially a series of free **meet-the-artist interviews** hosted by leaders of the local music scene. These events will let festivalgoers connect with marquee acts in a more accessible setting. Stay tuned for more information on meet-the-artist interviews to come, plus details about listening sessions, workshops, and much more.

The Burlington Discover Jazz Festival also has a history of presenting music in unexpected places, inviting attendees to explore the city and take part in diverse listening experiences. In addition to the headline events at the Flynn, join us this year for **10 days of free live music** at venues all over town. Given the festival's timing at the beginning of June, the Jazz Festival has also become an annual celebration of warmer weather after the long winter months. Two large-scale concerts in Waterfront Park will make the most of that sentiment. Combining live music and a beautiful setting: what could be better? See you in June! 🎷

For the latest information on the Burlington Discover Jazz Festival, visit [discoverjazz.com](https://discoverjazz.com).



Marc Ribot

Ebru Yildiz



Yosvany Terry

Nicola Diacoulis



Delvon Lamarr Organ Trio

Bebe Labre Besch



BY LAUREN GENTA,  
EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT MANAGER

# A MULTILINGUAL DANCE RESIDENCY AT WINOOSKI HIGH

A call-and-response chant echoes out of Nellie Maley's classroom at Winooski High School, tracing the word "dance" from English to Nepali to Swahili.

**"WHAT IS IMPORTANT?  
DANCING IS IMPORTANT.  
WHAT IS IMPORTANT?  
NĀCA IS IMPORTANT.  
WHAT IS IMPORTANT?  
KUCHEZA IS IMPORTANT."**

For the group of students in this class—newcomers to Vermont and the United States—dance is a shared value and a common language. And, thanks to a residency collaboration with the Flynn, dance was a weekly touchstone for these students throughout the fall semester.

Plans for this residency first began last June. A small group of educators and students from Winooski High School met with us to brainstorm a dance-based arts integration

unit for their Newcomers class. Using the school district's graduation expectations and graduation proficiencies (GX/GP) as a guide, we envisioned a residency that incorporated dance education, personal expression, and language development. Funded through the Vermont Arts Council's Artists in Schools grant, our residency



launched in the fall. It comprised a series of 10 sessions with Flynn teaching artist Tracy Martin, who has experience with both theater and language development. In January, they performed on stage at the school for their peers. They will perform again on the Flynn stage in May during our bi-annual community dance showcase.

Having joined the class for one of their final sessions of the semester, I can attest to the pure joy that Tracy and these students created together. The room was practically bursting with laughter and playful joking. From moment to moment, the mood would swing as the dance styles shifted. One second, students were recreating a dance club—freestyling or working in pairs for the kid n' play, a hip-hop move popularized in the '80s and inspired by the Charleston—and the next, they'd tighten up to practice their set choreography.

As the class rehearsed each week, Tracy reminded the students of their spoken mantra before each piece. They'd all turn to the board and recite, helping one another to pronounce each language. Each time through, they'd chant these final lines: *"What is good? School is good. Friendship is good."* Then, with respect for each other and their experiences, they'd dance. 🎶

# TEACHING ARTIST SNAPSHOTS



**Taryn  
Noelle**

## SHOW CHOIR

"I've been here for about three seasons and it's a blast. The Flynn name, it's so powerful, and it's beautiful. It's just really cool to be a part of it. Show Choir is really about building confidence and building up a toolkit for these kids—voice, diction, speech work, singing, vocal work, acting technique, lots of different dance techniques, and choreography. The students have shared with us is that they really feel like they're being heard, which is really wonderful—to have agency."



**Annalisa  
Ledson**

## MUSICAL THEATER DANCE & SHOW CHOIR

"I came from New York City where I was studying musical theater and dance, working as a choreographer and performer professionally, and teaching in the NYC public schools. My approach for teaching is really trusting that the students are a part of the process, and making sure that if there are ideas that are coming up, that those are all being honored. We really work together to make it a fun process. It's been an awesome experience to be welcomed into the Flynn. It's really exciting to see the community coming together around the arts so strongly, and especially in terms of education."



**Sara  
McMahon**

## MOVEMENT FOR PARKINSON'S & WELLNESS

"We started the class in 2014 and we've been continuing on every year. So many people see a disability as a limitation and so I'm always working on the students' potential—really stretching the limits of those boundaries. Mark Morris has a saying: 'Anybody can dance.' And that's so true, given this population. It's just been such a gift as a teacher to teach such a willing and courageous group of dancers. We don't talk about PD symptomology, because dancers focus on all the same things that people with Parkinson's have to focus on: flexibility, range of motion, strength, endurance, performance, and the mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual aspects of life."



## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

### ANDREA & STEVE CHAREST

PETRA CLIFFS CLIMBING CENTER &  
MOUNTAINEERING SCHOOL

#### HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN MEMBERS?

We have been members for four years, since our first involvement with Over the Edge for the Flynn in 2016.

#### WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO BECOME A MEMBER?

When the Flynn asked us to become a main sponsor for the event, it seemed like a natural partnership. We were able to provide training to give more confidence to Edgers, and our knowledge of the vertical world helped the process run more smoothly the day of the event. With our partnership/membership we get to support a great event that benefits the Flynn, and in turn, the community.

#### WHAT ROLE DO YOU THINK THE FLYNN PLAYS IN THE COMMUNITY?

Every time I see a school bus in front of the Flynn, I think about how lucky those kids are to have a field trip that day. Even as an adult, my worldview has expanded from sitting in a seat at the Flynn. We are fortunate to have a connection to the arts, and the Flynn's focus on accessibility makes our community much richer.

#### WHY ARE FLYNN PERFORMANCES ESPECIALLY MEANINGFUL FOR YOU?

All Flynn performances for us spark joy, wonder, and so much fun. We will never forget one performance in particular: Hot Brown Honey. The show had been recommended by Flynn staff but we had no idea what to expect. Steve had been struggling with double vision and nerve damage in one eye. During the performance he turned to me and said, "You know, this is the first time I have felt normal in a very long time." Within a couple days, his double vision had gone away. Who knows if it was a coincidence, but we'll always associate a healing moment with that show!

## MARCH

- 2** Altan
- 3** *Finding Neverland*
- 6** The Robert Cray Band
- 7** O'hAnleigh
- 14** Green Mountain  
Cabaret
- 15** Flip Fabrique
- 17** Peking Acrobats
- 19** *Sleeping Beauty*
- 15** Celtic Woman
- 20-21** *Broadway's Next  
Hit Musical*
- 21** VSO: Epic Mozart
- 23** *The Snowy Day*
- 25** Bob Weir and Wolf Bros
- 27** Alex Cuba
- 28** *Stand Up, Sit Down,  
& Laugh*

## APRIL

- 2-4** *Matilda: The Musical*  
**3** SFJAZZ Collective  
**4** Green Mountain  
 Cabaret  
**10-11** Expressing  
 Motherhood  
**12** The Westerlies  
**15-16** Wild Kratts Live 2.0  
**17** Charles Lloyd &  
 the Marvels  
**17-18** Sara Juli  
**23** Peppa Pig Live!  
**24** *Stand Up, Sit Down,  
 & Laugh*  
**25** Green Mountain  
 Cabaret  
**29** Renée Fleming  
**30** Improvised  
 Shakespeare  
 Company

## MAY

- 1** Improvised Shakespeare Company
- 2** VSO: Hymns of Happiness
- 3** Elisapie
- 3** VYO Spring Concert
- 9** TURNmusic
- 12-13** *Chicago*
- 23** *Stand Up, Sit Down, & Laugh*

## JUNE

- 5** Fantastic Negrito
- 6** Pharoah Sanders
- 7** Bill Charlap Trio
- 8** Joel Ross Quintet
- 9** Jaimie Branch's  
*Fly or Die*
- 10** Yosvany Terry Quartet
- 11** Lakecia Benjamin  
Quintet, *Pursuance:  
Coltranes*
- 13** Marc Ribot,  
*Songs of Resistance*
- 14** Nubya Garcia



## NEW FACES AT THE FLYNN

**AMY KIRSCHNER**

Amy grew up in Vermont and returned after graduating with a degree in Business Management from Purdue University. She also received a master's degree in Natural Resources from the University of Vermont. Amy has worked for local nonprofits, socially responsible businesses, and entrepreneurial ventures. She is thrilled to connect foundations and local businesses to great programming and opportunities as the Flynn's new **Manager of Grants and Corporate Giving**.