

Thursday, March 27, 2003 – Bezanson Recital Hall

**Charles Tolliver and Music, Inc.**

Charles Tolliver - trumpet  
Stanley Cowell – piano  
Cecil McBee – bass  
Carl Allen - drums

Charles Tolliver is “a superb technician with an utterly distinctive voice,” wrote Richard Cook, as well as a bandleader, composer, arranger, record company executive, and educator of the highest order. Since launching his professional career in the 1960s, Charles Tolliver has quietly become one of the premier trumpeters and musical organizers in jazz. “A trumpeter of such flow, tone, control, lyricism and creativity is, by definition, a major musician,” said veteran producer Michael Cuscuna.

Born in Jacksonville, Florida, in 1942 and raised in New York, Mr. Tolliver taught himself to play jazz from listening to the radio, and began playing trumpet and drums in his school band. he left New York to study pharmacy at Howard University (1960-63) before moving back to New York to immerse himself in the jazz scene. In 1964, Charles Tolliver began playing with saxophonist Jackie McLean, with whom he made his first recording, “It’s Time” (Blue Note). He spent 1965 with Art Blakey’s Jazz Messengers before traveling to the west coast to work with Willie Bobo and Gerald Wilson. In 1967, Mr. Tolliver joined Max Roach’s quintet, during which time he also recorded “Paper Man”, his debut as a leader. Then, in 1969, he left Roach’s band to form, Music, Inc., a quartet with pianist Stanley Cowell, bassist Cecil McBee, and drummer Jimmy Hopps. Music, Inc. also evolved into a big band, which toured widely. In 1971, Charles Tolliver and Stanley Cowell formed Strata-East, a label that has continued to bring to market important artist-produced recordings.

Stanley Cowell is “one of the most attentively listened to players of his generation,” wrote Richard Morton. Cowell, born in Toledo, Ohio in 1941, met Charles Tolliver while in the employ of Max Roach, and has since worked with Stan Getz, the Heath Brothers and Bobby Hutcherson. A tenured professor at Rutgers University, Mr. Cowell has recorded for Steeplechase, Concord and Strata-East Records.

Cecil McBee is “a masterful bassist with an authoritative sound and a thoughtful but adventurous style,” wrote The All Music Guide, “(he) uplifts every session he is on.” Jackie McLean, Wayne Shorter, Charles Lloyd, Yusef Lateef, Sam Rivers, Alice Coltrane, Abdullah Ibrahim and Sonny Rollins are some of the luminaries Mr. McBee has recorded with. He has led his own sessions for Enja, India Navigation, Palmetto and Strata-East.

"Billy Drummond's playing exudes a wealth of jazz history along with a surprisingly adventurous approach...he arrives as one of the most promising leader-drummers in jazz," says Modern Drummer magazine. Mr. Drummond joined Horace Silver's Sextet in 1988,

and has since toured and recorded with Sonny Rollins, Pat Metheny, Joe Henderson, J.J. Johnson, Bobby Hutcherson, Andrew Hill and Steve Kuhn. Mr. Drummond has released [three CDs](#) as a leader including **Dubai**, voted # 1 on New York Times jazz critic Peter Watrous' Top Ten List of 1996.