

Mendocino

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Whales, Jazz and Memories of Brubeck

The spacious halls of the Gualala Arts Center are buzzing with activity in preparation for the 12th Annual Sonoma-Mendocino Coast Whale and Jazz Festival.

This year's widely acclaimed festival takes place in April, May and June, culminating in a special September performance on the Arts Center's Main Stage.

According to festival coordinator Fred Adler, attendees are in for an amazing experience. The event's theme: "A Season of Brubeck—To Dave, with Gratitude," says it all. Three months of music, food, fundraising and film will celebrate the life, works and music of Dave Brubeck, iconic jazz pianist, composer and humanitarian, who died in 2012.

Adler has been the lead coordinator for the past eleven years and has helped shape the festival since its inception. "The original idea was to bring jazz to the Arts Center. It seemed logical to follow up the Whale Festival during a slower tourist time," he explains. "The festival isn't limited to music. It's film. It's poetry. It's lecture, with over a dozen events scheduled throughout Festival Season at multiple locations up and down the south coast."

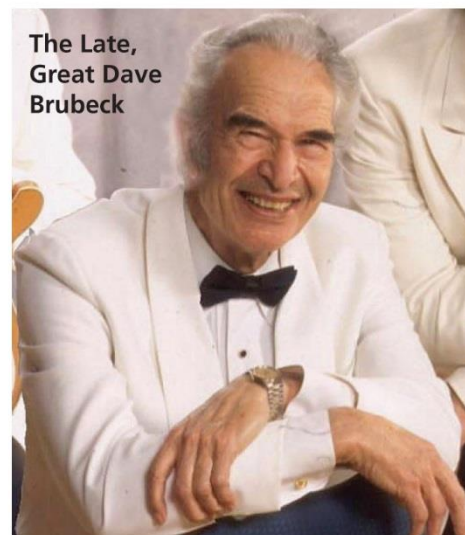
Along with Brubeck-themed documentaries, Brubeck's bass player Eugene Wright, who played with the quartet during the group's Time Out Sessions, will be joining attendees via Skype. Adler has contacted the Brubeck Institute and is working toward an installation of a portion of their photo and memorabilia collection. "We're hoping to highlight some of Dave's humanitarian and egalitarian activities. It's not just about his music; it's about what he did for the world," Adler explains.

Music is matched to venues, and Adler encourages those new to jazz to open their



**Mads Tolling's Jazz Europa,
Gualala Arts Center, 2014**

minds and their ears. "Jazz is so important in our culture. Many people say they don't like jazz. Do you like Sinatra? You like jazz. Do you like Roots Music? You like jazz. We offer all kinds of events—from traditional New Orleans jazz to James-Brown-style rhythm and blues. There's something here for everyone, and almost every musical group will perform at least one Brubeck piece."



One of the most celebrated festival events is the Chowder Challenge, scheduled for April 18, which combines music with the best chowder imaginable. This year's free concert features the return of Barnebey's Hot Four, a very popular traditional New Orleans Jazz quartet. Master soprano sax and clarinet

player Richard Hadlock will join the quartet. The Grammy nominee has performed with New Orleans pioneers Kid Ory and Pops Foster, Chicagoans Muggsy Spanier and Joe Sullivan, vocalist Barbara Dane, pianist Larry Vuckovich and many more. Hadlock is the author of the acclaimed *Jazz Masters of the Twenties* and is known for his multi-decade career as a broadcaster for several Bay-Area radio stations.

"While guests enjoy Barnebey's Hot Four, they may also purchase one-price tasting tickets for the Chowder Challenge," notes Mark Hancock, publicity coordinator for Gualala Arts. Guests wait all year to taste traditional and non-traditional seafood and vegetarian chowders as local restaurateurs vie for the coveted "Best Coast Chowder of 2015" award. "It's hard to pass up the food, but people are invited to enjoy the jazz free of charge. It's one of the festival's cornerstones," Hancock continues.

The Festival Youth Discovery is another signature event. For the past six years, Adler has located gifted, young virtuoso performers to perform on the Arts Center stage. "This year we're featuring a young drummer who will be part of our final concert. I'm crossing my fingers and hoping they might trade off on 'Take Five,'" Adler smiles. Middle and high school students will also be invited to a special afternoon youth concert.

Two stellar Brubeck events will bring

the Season to a stunning finish. On June 13, the Brubeck Brothers, featuring Dave's sons Chris and Dan will perform on the Arts Center's Main Stage. Chris Brubeck, a multi-instrumental performer, composer, orchestral arranger and lyricist has been called "a 21st century Leonard Bernstein" by the Chicago Tribune.

Drummer Dan Brubeck has toured the international music circuit for more than two decades, leading his own group and performing as a featured soloist with the Dave Brubeck Quartet and many other world-class jazz artists. He receives international acclaim for his original drumming style, distinctive polyrhythmic solos, and use of unique time signatures.

Guitarist Mike DeMicco has performed and recorded with the Brubecks since the late 1980's and has worked with many celebrated artists including Jack DeJohnette, Mose Allison, Nick Brignola, Garth Hudson, and Rory Block. Dave Brubeck called pianist Chuck Lamb, who rounds out the quartet, "an extremely creative, harmonically interesting, rhythmically exciting pianist and one of the best improvisers I've heard in recent times!"



Chris and Dan Brubeck

Finally, on September 26, The Eric Mintel Quartet will close out the Season of Brubeck with an unprecedented performance at the Arts Center. A composer of orchestral and choral music, Eric performs with symphonies throughout the country, incorporating jazz and classical music. He performed at the White House in 1998 and again following the death of his creative mentor Dave Brubeck. With more than ten concerts at the Kennedy Center

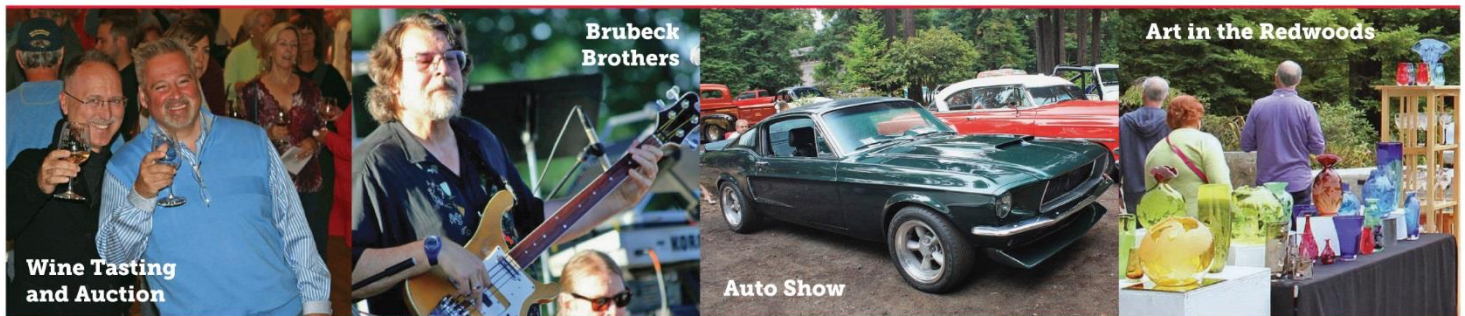
and his commitment to bringing jazz to different regions, the quartet connects and communicates with audiences of all ages throughout world. To that end, the Festival Youth Discovery performance will also take place that evening.

Events will be held at the Annapolis Winery, the Garcia River Casino, the Arena Theater, Bones Roadhouse, St. Orres Inn and Restaurant, The Black Point Grill at Sea Ranch and other coastal locations. Check out the complete event lineup on the Gualala Arts website, and feel free to call staff with questions.

Restaurants will accept reservations for scheduled concerts. Tickets for Arts Center events and the Chowder Challenge may be purchased from the Arts Center. Lodging packages including tickets for the Main Event will be available, and because of the Center's rural location and anticipated sell-out concerts, visitors are encouraged to book accommodations in advance. For information, call 707-884-1138, or click the Festivals link on the home page at: www.gualalaarts.org

*Story by Carole Brodsky
Photos Courtesy Gualala Arts*

Gualala Arts Promises Exciting Slate of 2015 Events



Gualala Arts has been dedicated to promoting public interest and participation in the arts since 1961. Spring/Summer 2015 will see exciting

events, festivals, workshops, exhibits and performances at the Gualala Arts Center that will appeal to a wide variety of ages, tastes and interests.

The Sonoma-Mendocino Coast Whale & Jazz Festival returns in April for its 12th year, and will feature the ever-popular Chowder Challenge on

April 18 and events from Timber Cove to Point Arena throughout the month and into May.

The 31st Annual Architectural Tour, Wine Tasting & Auction happens on May 9, with 25 award winning wineries pouring their premium wines and donating wine related auction lots.

Memorial Day weekend sees the **Fine Arts Fair** fill the grounds of the Arts Center with 25+ artists and craftsmen selling their creations.

A special **Brubeck Brothers** concert will be presented on June 13.

July brings the popular **Gualala Arts Auto Show** and "**Summernationals**" **Pinewood Derby** races on July 18 and **Automobilia** fine art exhibit all month.

Finally, the 54th annual **Art in the Redwoods** festival closes out the summer with the Top Hat Dinner August 13, Champagne Preview August 14 and the AIR festival itself August 15 and 16.

Come to the **Gualala Arts Center** at 46501 Old State Highway, Gualala for all of these events and many more. Event information is available online at GualalaArts.org or (707) 884-1138.