

Pianist Cecil Lytle and Friends Will Perform Miles Ahead Jan. 27 to Benefit the Rebecca Elizabeth Lytle Scholarship at UCSD

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Miles Ahead, a concert celebrating the music and life of American jazz pioneer Miles Davis, will be presented by University of California, San Diego pianist Cecil Lytle and friends at 4 p.m. Jan. 27 in the Ida and Cecil Green Faculty Club on the UCSD campus.

Performing with Lytle will be Brett Sanders, drums, and Rob Thorsen, string bass. The concert is open to the public and will benefit the Rebecca Elizabeth Lytle Memorial Scholarship Fund at UCSD's Thurgood Marshall College. This is Lytle's 13th annual concert to benefit the fund. Tickets are \$40.

Calling Davis "the American Picasso" for his innovation and diversity, Lytle says Davis's music and his life are both archetypically an American folk tale as well as an American contradiction. "Unlike most celebrated jazz musicians, he was born into a middle class Midwestern family; he studied briefly at the Julliard School, and he is thought to have been jazz's first African American millionaire."

Lytle relates that despite bouts with drugs, Davis lived a long and productive life changing styles to fit the period from the esoteria of 1940's Bebop with Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie, to almost singly creating the "cool" styles of 1950's urban jazz, through a deep fascination with blues elements in instrumental jazz, and into an incorporation of psychedelic rock and roll as well as funk in the 1980s and 1990s.

"Throughout each period, Miles Davis composed and performed compositions that have become classics for all improving musicians around the world," says Lytle. "Why not celebrate Miles Davis, "the American Picasso" every now and then?"

Lytle is an award-winning artist who has been appearing in concert in the United States, Europe and Asia since 1968. An expert in the performance of 19th and early 20th century music, he has taught UCSD courses in classical music and black music history.

In addition to his teaching and concert career, Lytle is a recording artist, has performed on television and radio, and was nominated for an Emmy award for his performance/lecture series, *The Nature of Genius*, on public television.

At last year's benefit concert, Lytle presented *Religioso/Diabolique: Religious Piano Music from the East*, performing works by Scriabin, Liszt and Estonian composer Arvo Paert.

Previous Lytle concerts include *The Naked Gershwin* with UCSD Professor Emeritus Arthur Wagner. It explored the personal and professional lives of George and Ira Gershwin through their letters and their music. Other Lytle concerts have been *Tango!* in 2005 with Argentine performer Jorge "Coco" Trivisonno; *Hymns* in 2004; *Classicism and Impressionism - Works for Cello and Piano* performed by cellist Charles Curtis and pianist Aleck Karisin 2003; *Franz Schubert: An All-Schubert Piano Recital* in 2002; *2001 - A Ragtime Odyssey*, featuring Lytle on piano with guests musicians on bass, banjo, drums and violin; an *All-Liszt Piano Recital* in 2000; *100*

Years of Ellington featuring jazz and blues singer Barbara Morrison, Cecil Lytle and special music guests in 1999; an *All-Chopin Piano Recital* in 1998; *Gershwin at 99* in 1997, and an *All-Beethoven Piano Recital* in 1996. Past recitals by Lytle are available for viewing on UCSD-TV.

The Rebecca Elizabeth Lytle Memorial Scholarship Fund was endowed in 1995 to support and encourage a select group of first year students enrolled in UCSD's Thurgood Marshall College who are the first in their family to attend college. Since 2004, the REL scholarships have been awarded to graduates of UCSD's Preuss School whose college destination is Thurgood Marshall College.

Tickets for the 12th annual Rebecca Lytle Memorial Scholarship Concert, at which hors d'oeuvres will be served, are \$40 of which \$27 is tax deductible. Reserved tables are available. For tickets and further information call (858) 534-1507 or e-mail rels@ucsd.edu.

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