

## **Eileen Horowitz: Aaron Diehl, the Real Diehl**

Aaron Diehl is a classically trained pianist and composer and performer. He has made his mark on the Jazz field for the last 15 years. He plays jazz and mid century “third stream music, which is a term coined in 1957 by Gunther Schuller it is a synthesis of jazz and classical music, and now he is tackling modern classical works.

Diehl has played Gershwin with the New York Philharmonic, the Cleveland orchestra and the Los Angeles Philharmonic in the last year. And now he will be playing for those of us who are very lucky to see and hear him on October 20<sup>th</sup>.

Aaron Diehl was born in Columbus Ohio in 1985. His father was a funeral director and his mother was a former Olympian who became an education administrator Aaron grew up in a musical environment and his talent was nurtured from an early age.

His grandfather Arthur Baskerville was a pianist and trombonist, and he was an early influence. He began his study of classical piano at the age of 7. His love of jazz was further developed while attending Interlocken arts camp as a preteen where he met the piano prodigy Eldar Djangirov, who made a lasting impression on him and who exposed him to Oscar Patterson and Art Tatum.

At 17 Diehl was a finalist in jazz-at Lincoln center’s Essentially Ellington competition where he was noticed by Wynton Marsalis. Marsalis was the one who named Diehl “the real Diehl. Soon after he was invited to tour Europe with the Wynton Marsalis septet on their European tour. Diehl would graduate from the Juilliard school where he studied with professional jazz musicians Kenny Barron, Oxana Yablonskaya and Eric Reed.

In the fall of 2011 Diehl was the winner of the American pianist’s association’s Cole Porter Fellowship, which included \$50,000 for his career development and a recording contract with the highly respected Mark Avenue Records. Diehl released his first album in 2009, a solo concert recorded at the Caramoor Festival. In 2010 his album Live at the players featured two of his trios Dave Wong and Paul Skivie bass and Quincy Davis musician and Lawrence Leathers drums. The Bespoke Mans Narrative 2013 was Diehl’s debut album on Mack Avenue Records. It reached number 1 on the Jazz Week Jazz chart. It is described as honest music that invites you back in to discover new wonders with each listening.

In 2017 Diehl embarked on a new venture. He played at the New York Philharmonic and Cleveland Orchestra as a featured soloist on George Gershwin’s piano *Concerto in F*. Diehl played in the NY Phil’s opening gala performance of the 2016-17 season. A reviewer wrote, “Mr. Diehl had brilliance when called for during jazz tinged passages of Lisztian runs and octaves. The roomy freedom of his playing in bluesy episodes are especially affecting. He folded short improvised sections into the score and it’s hard to imagine Gershwin would not have been impressed.”

When he isn’t on tour or recording Diehl loves to fly planes.