

# All-woman jazz orchestra kicks off Castleton in Performance

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Shannon Gunn and the Bullettes, the only allwomen jazz orchestra in the Washington, D.C., area, kicks off the fall-winter season of Castleton in Performance at 4 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 20, with a concert ranging from big-band renditions of jazz classics to world premieres of new music at Castleton's Theatre House.

Shannon Gunn and the Bullettes is a full jazz orchestra composed completely of women, a group that came together in 2010. Since that time, they've been entertaining audiences with jazz sounds of the past, present and future. The concert will benefit the music department of Fauquier High School, in Warrenton, enabling the school and its 150 student musicians to benefit from new sheet music, guest conductors and master classes.

The concert at Castleton includes old-time favorites and new music, "which might even include a new tune composed on the spot," Gunn says. The former includes tunes made famous by Benny Goodman, Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Ella Fitzgerald, Nat King Cole and Thad Jones. The latter is by composers from D.C., New York and Australia, including compositions by band members as well as groove arrangements of popular tunes, such as an arrangement of a Radiohead tune that switches between 12/8 and 10/8 each measure.

"Our group is all about mentoring women and young people in jazz," says Gunn. "We want to uplift women in jazz, to create networking opportunities for female and young jazz performers, and to provide inspiring role models for the future generations of jazz."

"Shannon Gunn and the Bullettes have a way of bringing together generations of jazzloving audience members and of attracting new, young audiences to this classic American style of music," says Burnett Thompson, director of programming for Castleton in Performance.

Trombonist and bandleader Gunn is also heard on stage frequently with Bohemian Caverns Jazz Orchestra and has performed with Harry Watters, Jim Carroll, Kenny Rittenhouse, Billy Taylor, Wycliffe Gordon and other jazz greats. She is the music technology teacher at Woodbridge Senior High School in Woodbridge, Virginia.

Castleton in Performance's 2015-2016 season includes an Oct. 11 show by Margaret Leng Tan — named "queen of the toy piano" by the New York Times — performing on toy pianos and all manner of toy instruments. Nov. 8 brings the Smithsonian Jazz Masterworks Orchestra, joined by Ellington biographer Edward Hasse, in a multi-media performance about the life, times and music of Duke Ellington.

Tickets for the Sept 20 benefit concert (\$20 to \$40) available at 866-974-0767 or castleton-

