

# Grammy-Award Winning Mingus Big Band



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W13oSl4utzA>

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## MINGUS BIG BAND

The 14-piece Mingus Big Band is the best known of the repertory groups due to its long NYC residency and extensive travel. It not only attracts audiences that might not typically come to see jazz, it provides a home base for many of today's top performers and exciting new players. The Mingus Big Band regularly tops the lists in critics and readers polls. In 2009, NPR selected the Mingus Big Band to ring in the new year for their nationwide broadcast and podcast. The 2010 *Mingus Big Band Live at Jazz Standard* was awarded the 2010 Grammy Award for Best Large Jazz Ensemble Album.



## WHY MINGUS?

Charles Mingus — one of the most important figures in twentieth century American music — wrote music that is still far ahead of its time. A virtuoso bass player, accomplished pianist, bandleader and composer, Mingus recorded over a hundred albums and wrote over three hundred compositions, leaving the second-largest legacy in American music after Ellington. Mingus received grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, The Smithsonian Institute, and the Guggenheim Foundation.

The *New Yorker* wrote: "For sheer melodic and rhythmic and structural originality, his compositions may equal anything written in western music in the twentieth century."

Following his death in 1979 from ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease), the Library of Congress acquired his entire catalog of work including original scores, recording tapes, and personal effects. An NEH grant enabled the cataloging of all his compositions. Microfilm copies were donated to the New York Public Library. He has also been honored with a US Postage stamp.

The critical and popular success of the Mingus repertory bands testify to the power of Mingus compositions. The availability of his music through published arrangements, educational books, school courses, and workshops, coupled with the hugely successful new Charles Mingus High School Competition, have extended the reach of his legacy. Students, musicians, scholars, and fans are exploring and embracing Mingus in ever-increasing numbers.

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## THE CRITICS SAY:

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**“Mingus's music doesn't merely deserve to be heard; jazz needs it.”**

– *The New York Times*

“The weekly Monday Mingus show at Jazz Standard is **New York’s most transcendent weekly residency.** It’s probably the best in the entire world.” – *Lucid Culture*, 2009

**“The Mingus Big Band has taken a musical legacy and transformed it into a creative force that generates a contemporary originality and vitality all its own.”** – *AllAboutJazz-New York*

“The **lean, sharp** ten-piece band Mingus Orchestra features such uncommon instrumentation as a bassoon and a French horn, but this isn't staid chamber jazz. **When the spirit of the late, great one hits them, they steam.**” – *The New Yorker*

“Mingus Big Band revived Charles Mingus's repertory and the **brawling, muscular, hard-swinging, bluesy** way he wanted it played.” – Jon Pareles, *The New York Times*

**“The hippest big band in the universe - robust, earthy, sanctified.”**

– *Time Out New York*

**“An astonishingly telepathic ensemble.”** – *New York Daily News*

**“The jazz repertory event of the season.** . . . The Mingus Big Band captures the best parts of the Mingus legacy: **the muscle, the affection for history, the willingness to take chances, the guts and soulfulness.**”

– *The New York Times*

**“The Orchestra upholds the boisterous Mingus legacy while delving even deeper into his repertory.”** – *The New York Times*

**“The best jazz orchestra in the world** bears the name of the Mingus Big Band...a remarkable high standard of musicianship, energy and consistency.”

– Geoffrey Himes, *The Washington Post*



# CELEBRATE MINGUS!

## A TAILORED EXPERIENCE WITH THE MINGUS REPERTORY BANDS

The individual expressive artistry of the original **Mingus Dynasty** including vocalist Ku-umba Frank Lacy



The unique blend of jazz and classical instrumentation in the **Mingus Orchestra** featuring bassoon, French horn, bass clarinet, & harp



### MINGUS DYNASTY

The first band organized after Mingus' death, the nimble and expert 7-piece Mingus Dynasty invites more individual solo expression and experimentation within the rich complexity of Mingus compositions.

### MINGUS ORCHESTRA

The 10- or 11-piece Orchestra has created a distinctive Mingus sound that embraces jazz and classical forms. Its unique instrumentation includes bassoon, bass clarinet, French horn, and harp – instruments rarely heard in traditional jazz bands.

## WHY MINGUS REPERTORY BANDS?

The **Mingus Big Band**, the **Mingus Dynasty**, and the **Mingus Orchestra** are three repertory bands created to celebrate the music of the composer and bassist, Charles Mingus. Under the artistic direction of Sue Mingus, these bands have performed regularly since the first tribute concert at Carnegie Hall in 1979. They have enjoyed a weekly residency in New York City since 1991, currently performing to sold-out audiences at Jazz Standard. The bands tour extensively in the United States and abroad, headlining major jazz festivals, universities and arts centers. The bands have released ten recordings, six of which have been nominated for Grammys. In 1989, 1991, 1999, and 2007, its members were featured in international presentations of *Epitaph*, Mingus' masterwork conducted by Gunther Schuller.



## CREATE YOUR OWN PACKAGE

Add value for your patrons and students.

- We can customize the lineup to fit your venue and budget size
- Pre-concert Artist discussions
- Master classes with Mingus musicians and educators: whole band or individuals
- Lecture/demonstrations at high school and colleges
- Sue Mingus Q&A:  
About her life with Mingus, her acclaimed memoir *Tonight at Noon*, her creation of the repertory bands
- Radio broadcast or podcast
- To reduce expenses, we can help you work in conjunction with other schools or venues in your area

## CREATE YOUR OWN THEME

Mingus' compositions include a wide variety of styles, themes, and moods.

Together we can create a customized program such as:

- Special anniversary years
  - 1959: Material from the landmark albums *Mingus Ah Um*, *Mingus Dynasty*, and *Blues and Roots*
  - 1960: Celebrate the albums *Pre-Bird* and *Charles Mingus Presents Charles Mingus* (Candid)
  - 1961: Mingus *Oh Yeah* and *Tonight at Noon* (Atlantic)
- *Mingus Love Songs: The Gentle Side of Charles Mingus*
- *Chamber Mingus*: 10 musicians of the Mingus Orchestra (including bassoon, bass clarinet, French horn, and harp) combine classical and jazz
- *Blues and Politics*: Celebrations and Complaints about Rights, Race and Justice from Jazz's Angry Man.
- *Mingus and Poetry*: with Walt Whitman, Langston Hughes, excerpts from Mingus' own autobiography
- *Lyrical Mingus*: Elvis Costello, Joni Mitchell, Mingus himself, and others have written lyrics to many Mingus songs that can be incorporated into our program with a vocalist
- *The Gospel of Mingus*: Featuring Mingus' roots in the blues and the Holiness Church

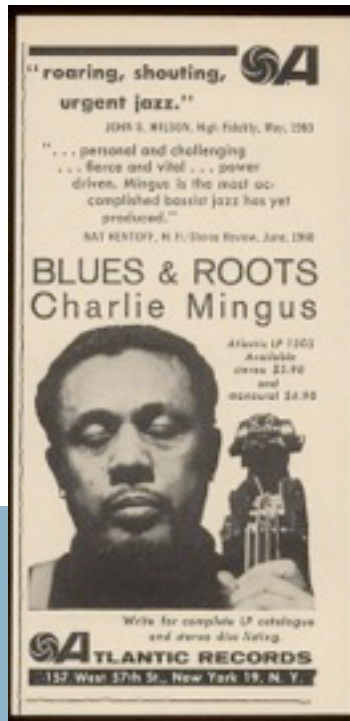
## WE HELP PROMOTE WITH SOCIAL NETWORKING

Mingus music is attracting an increasingly diverse audience. More young people are playing and listening to Mingus music than ever before: in high school and college jazz bands, or in their own rock and jazz groups. We constantly find new ways to connect with them.

- 400,500 Facebook and MySpace fans, and Twitter followers
  - <http://facebook.com/charlesmingus>
  - <http://myspace.com/charlesmingus>
  - <http://twitter.com/mingus>
- Cross promotions related to recordings released with The Orchard digital distributor
- Weekly mailing list sent to several thousand fans
- Regular press coverage in national publications and cultural blogs



Gunther Schuller



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## MINGUS MUSICIANS

### TRUMPETS

Avishai Cohen, Earl Gardner, Greg Gisbert, Tatum Greenblatt, Philip Harper, Ryan Kisor, Lew Soloff, Alex Norris, Jeremy Pelt, Alex Sipiagin, Lew Soloff, Jack Walrath, Walter White

### TROMBONES

Luis Bonilla, Robin Eubanks, Joe Fiedler, Clark Gayton, Conrad Herwig, Ku-umba Frank Lacy, Earl McIntyre, Dave Taylor

### SAXOPHONES

Seamus Blake, Abraham Burton, Ronnie Cuber, Wayne Escoffery, Alex Foster, Mark Gross, Craig Handy, Vincent Herring, Jason Marshall, Scott Robinson, Lauren Sevian, Jaleel Shaw, Brandon Wright, Douglas Yates

### PIANO

Orrin Evans, David Kikoski, Jim Ridl, Helen Sung

### BASS

Hans Glawischnig, Boris Kozlov, Joe Martin, Andy McKee, Ugonna Okegwo, Mike Richmond, Ben Wolfe

### DRUMS

Tommy Campbell, Adam Cruz, Donald Edwards, Gene Jackson, Jeff "Tain" Watts

*Special to the Orchestra:*

### BASSOON

Janet Grice, Michael Rabinowitz

### BASS CLARINET

John Ellis, Scott Robinson, Douglas Yates

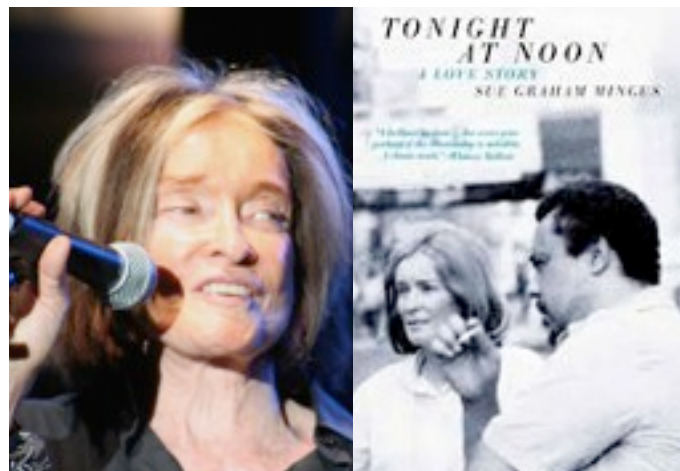
### FRENCH HORN

Vincent Chancey, John Clark, Bobby Rouch

### GUITAR

Freddie Bryant, David Gilmore, Lage Lund, Ben Monder, Jack Wilkins, Mark Whitfield

## SUE MINGUS, PRODUCER



Since Charles Mingus' death in 1979, Sue Mingus has created and continues to direct repertory ensembles that carry on the music of her late husband. The most well known is the Mingus Big Band, a New York institution, which performs weekly to packed crowds at Jazz Standard, alternating with the Mingus Dynasty and the Mingus Orchestra. In 1989, she produced Mingus' monumental three-hour *Epitaph* in its premiere at Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall and many subsequent performances. Conductor Gunther Schuller has called it the Götterdämmerung of jazz.

In 2002, Pantheon (Random House) released Sue's memoir of her life with Mingus entitled *Tonight At Noon*, which was a *New York Times* Notable Book and a *Los Angeles Times* Best Book of the Year. It was released in paperback by DaCapo press and has been translated into several languages.

She has produced numerous Grammy-nominated recordings with Mingus repertory bands and one Grammy winning album in 2010 as well as several legacy recordings, including a previously unavailable Mingus concert with Eric Dolphy at Cornell University in 1964, recently released on Blue Note.

Sue Mingus has published educational books, starting with the ground-breaking *Charles Mingus: More than a Fake Book*, as well as the series *Charles Mingus: More than a Play Along*, distributed by Hal Leonard Publishers, along with a dozen Mingus Big Band charts, a book of guitar charts arranged by Jack Wilkins and, most recently, a new series for younger students called *Simply Mingus*.

