Pleasure is now available for live shows. The making and completion of “Now Is The Time” Pleasure’s most recent album release, was videoed in HD format, and along with videoed footage from their current live performances will eventually be edited into a full-length feature documentary film. Thus, the legacy and current innovations of Pleasure’s funk-jazz fusion are being captured for continued enjoyment by future generations of fans and musicians alike.

**Pleasure - History and Background**

Pleasure achieved national recognition and excellent record sales success between 1977 and 1981 with the release of 7 albums. Pleasure 1974 Accept No Substitutes 1975 Joyous 1976 Get To The Feeling1977 Future Now 1978 Special Things 1979 Give it Up1980 The bands success was visibly evidenced by the now well-established African-American classic cult film, “House Party,” the “Future Now” Lp, and, the single “Glide,” each which was a top ten single in1979 under the Fantasy Record label. The discography of Pleasure became the bedrock foundation of the present-day Hip Hop industry, as Michael Hepburn’s “Joyous” is one of the most sampled songs in the history of the Hip Hop genre. Sampled by Janet Jackson, LL Cool J, and the earliest crossover Rap group of the 1980’s, The Sugar Hill Gang. Many established Rap and Hip Hop artists have sampled Pleasure music over the last 30 years, and DJs worldwide continue to do so. Pleasure now is comprised of Michael Hepburn, Nathaniel Phillips, Douglas Lewis, Dennis Springer, and Brian Foxworth. Together Michael and Nathaniel are solely responsible for composing the title songs and principal hits for all of the Pleasure recordings that received the biggest sales and widest industry recognition. Dennis Springer is the band’s saxophonist, who is widely recognized for his stellar tone and virtuoso ability. Dennis is credited as an influence of Branford Marsaillis, one of the preeminent jazz saxophonists in the world. Brian Foxworth is Pleasure’s new drummer, replacing deceased original member Bruce Carter. Pleasure veterans Michael, Nathaniel, Douglas, and Dennis are world-class performers, having established a performance legacy that was forged from their having toured extensively alongside Kool and the Gang, Funkadelic, Parliament, the Bar-Kays, The Whispers, Tower of Power, Brothers Johnson, Confunkshun, The Gap Band, Maze Featuring Frankie Beverly, George Benson, and just about any other major touring RnB artist you can name. In addition, Nathaniel Phillips has now distinguished himself as an ensemble and solo performer. One simply can “Google” the band’s name, and be instantly directed to YouTube web postings of Pleasure’s music, which demonstrates the staying power of the band.The viewer can find YouTube postings of young bassists demonstrating the excitment to play one of Pleasure’s signature hits, “Glide,” evidencing the legendary inspirational impact of the Pleasure musical legacy on performers of RnB music around the globe. Indeed, you can now verify “Glide” has now enjoyed well over 700,000 views on YouTube. Go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3q3PsoWbW9I>.

Another testament to the lasting musical legacy of the music composed by Michael and Nathaniel is the fact that the Pleasure discography is currently celebrated in prominent print media publications. The bass performance of “Glide”was transcribed and featured in a 2011 issue of Bass Player Magazine and will be featured in the Hal Leonard’s Slap Bass Bible. Additionally, the November 2012 release of the African-American music publication Waxpoetics featured abiography of Pleasure.

**Nathaniel Phillips**

Nate managed to set a pace for bass players around the world and to this day they acknowledge his bass lines as the standard for learning the instrument. If a bassist could not play “Glide” then they were not a bassist. You Tube confirms this with the hundreds of players that honor him by displaying their interpretation of his classic works. Nate presently excites audiences around the world with some of the biggest names in Smooth Jazz – Richard Elliot, Peter White, Rick Braun, Jeff Lorber, Gerald Albright and Herb Alpert, however, the list of historic greats Nate has and continues to support - including , Marcus Miller,George Clinton, Bob James , Lee Ritenour, Bobby Caldwell and Jefferiy Osborne are too numerous to list here. After his major influential bass hook and performance in his composition, “Glide,” his signature sound was rendered virtually unforgettable by his catchy intro-hook that is now legendary in the global radio smash hit, “I Can’t Wait” by the group Nu Shooz. Nate also is a two time Oregon Music Hall Of Fame Award recipient.

In 2024, a detailed phrase-by-phrase breakdown of the significance of Nate’s bass and guitar hook masterpiece was featured on the YouTube post: “Is This the ULTIMATE Slap Bass line – YEP. See and hear it here:

 https://www.bing.com/ck/a?!&&p=cf0feedf78f9bc33JmltdHM9MTcxNTM4NTYwMCZpZ3VpZD0yNmNjNGJmZS0xNmM0LTZhYTEtMTVkZi01ZmUwMTdlOTZiNjYmaW5zaWQ9NTE1NA&ptn=3&ver=2&hsh=3&fclid=26cc4bfe-16c4-6aa1-15df-5fe017e96b66&u=a1L3ZpZGVvcy9zZWFyY2g\_cT1Jcyt0aGlzK3RoZSt1bHRpbWF0ZStzbGFwK2Jhc3MrbGluZSt5b3V0dWJlJnFwdnQ9SXMrdGhpcyt0aGUrdWx0aW1hdGUrc2xhcCtiYXNzK2xpbmUreW91dHViZSZGT1JNPVZEUkU&ntb=1

**Michael Hepburn**

Michael, presently working as a Deputy Prosecuting Attorney in the King County Prosecutor’s Office, achieved worldwide professional recognition through Pleasure’s success. He was offered a world tour from Herbie Hancock as the supporting keyboard chair for Herbie’s 1980 “Monster” Lp release on Columbia Records. Michael's compositions have been featured in the soundtrack for the movie, “House Party”(“Kid vs. Play, the Battle”), Janet Jackson's 1997 release, "The Velvet Rope" (“Free Xone”) and, Will Smith’s 2002 release, “Born to Reign”(“1000 Kisses”).

**Douglas Lewis**

Douglas Lewis is the principal guitarist and a key composer of Pleasure content. His historic rock solo performances on “Space is the Place” (“Future Now” Fantasy Records), “Law of the Raw” (“Special Things” – Fantasy Records), and, “It’s so Hard” (“Give It Up” – RCA Records) are unmatched in the annals of legendary guitar performances in any genre. Doug’s creatively progressive funk, soul, and pop compositions that are featured in the current Pleasure production are extending his legacy as a foundational creative contributor to the Pleasure sound, and an artistic tour-de-force.

**Dennis Springer**

Saxophonist Dennis Springer, a Native American, was recently flown to Washington D. C. to perform playing the saxophone of the renowned Jazz legend Jim Pepper, at his memorial and dedication of his instrument into the Smithsonian’s Museum of the American Indian. Dennis now lives in Atlanta, where he performs locally, and tours throughout the South and Midwest. His signature sound, comparable only to the greatest to play the instrument, is inextricably part of Pleasure, as demonstrated by the jazz hits “Sassafras Girl,” “No Matter What,” and his fusionfunk solo masterpiece in the extended instrumental introduction of “Joyous.”

**Oliver Gene Lake, Jr.**

Gene Lake began playing drums when he was five years old, and took lessons with [Pheeroan akLaff](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pheeroan_akLaff%22%20%5Co%20%22Pheeroan%20akLaff) as a high schooler at [The High School of Music & Art](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_High_School_of_Music_%26_Art) in New York City. He attended [Berklee College of Music](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Berklee_College_of_Music), where he worked with [Tommy Campbell](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tommy_Campbell_%28musician%29), and played in local Boston bands in a variety of styles. He played with his father in New York in 1987 and 1988, then joined [Henry Threadgill](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry_Threadgill)'s ensemble in 1990.

Later in the 1990s Gene worked with [Steve Coleman](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steve_Coleman), [Lunar Crush](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Lunar_Crush&action=edit&redlink=1) (with [David Fiuczynski](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Fiuczynski) and [John Medeski](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Medeski)), [Marcus Miller](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marcus_Miller), [Brandon Ross](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brandon_Ross), [David Sanborn](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Sanborn), the [World Saxophone Quartet](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Saxophone_Quartet), and [Joe Zawinul](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joe_Zawinul). Outside of jazz, Lake also played with [R&B](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/R%26B) musicians such as [Maxwell](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maxwell_%28musician%29) and [Me'Shell Ndegeocello](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Me%27Shell_Ndegeocello%22%20%5Co%20%22Me%27Shell%20Ndegeocello). Gene has recorded several albums as a leader, including "The Oliver Lake Quartet" (1990), "Dedication" (1998), and "At This Time" (2009).

**Nick Rolfe**

Nick Rolfe has played piano/keyboards for numerous musicians including: Aretha Franklin, Sting, Bruce Springsteen, James Taylor, Idina Menzel, Annie Lennox and The Eurythmics, Hip-Hop luminary Busta Rhymes, Ricky Martin, Earth, Wind and Fire legend Verdine White, vocal sensation Ledisi, Lizz Wright, and many others.   Both as a leader and a sideman, Nick has toured extensively, nationally and internationally. He has received critical acclaim for performances in support of his own projects, as well as his work as a highly sought-after piano player/keyboardist for other artists.

You can visit Nick on IG @nickrolfemusic to keep up with his adventures.”

**Darrius Willrich**

Darrius Willrich is a singer, songwriter, pianist, and educator from Seattle, WA. He is a Cornish College of the Arts graduate with a degree in jazz piano. He has taught at Seattle Prep, Seattle Central College, North Seattle Continuing Education, JazzEd, Off The Wall Music and Seattle Drum School (Lake City) as a piano and vocal instructor. He is the creator of the online course Jazz Piano Pro Essentials. [www.jazzpianopro.com](https://na01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.jazzpianopro.com%2F&data=05%7C01%7C%7C0d6eda6602994fb9fe9f08db9e62fc29%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C638277920196283462%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=COS8XuxTEUwWuaWXMPO3T8rv2Ur12CbeoRL%2BRGXqK8M%3D&reserved=0)

Darrius is currently the keyboard player for Digable Planets and Shabazz Palaces. He sings in the Michael Jackson v Prince Band (MVP). He is a featured vocalist on Wiz Khalifa’s “Rolling Papers 2” album on the song “Never Hesitate” and co-produced South African rapper Nasty C’s song “Overpriced Steak” along with Jake One and Sam Wish. (Sam is a former music student of Darrius’ when he taught band at his alma mater Seattle Prep)

“Stay Here With Me” is his latest album. HIs other solo albums are “Darrius”, “Love WIll Visit”, and “Can’t Get Enough”.  His latest single “Be Mine” is a collaboration with prolific producer Chazz Oliver. More new music is on the way. Stay tuned…

**Pablo Rivarola**

As a composer and as a trumpet player, Pablo commands a resonant, warm, encompassing sound that reaches beyond the aesthetic of jazz while still remaining deeply rooted in the tradition. He is an artist by its truest definition and music is his medium. To him, the listener’s emotional experience is the highest priority as he carefully curates each piece inviting the listener to feel, and to feel intensely. Through his work, he demonstrates an unwavering commitment to that artistic vision. From the first note he plays you are captivated by his warm, voice-like sound that takes the listener on a journey while still being reminiscent of his heroes, Miles Davis, Freddie Hubbard and Clifford Brown.

**Adriana Wagner**

Based in Portland, Oregon, Trombonist and composer Adriana Wagner draws inspiration from a wide array of influences, combining traditional and modern jazz sounds. Her original compositions weave styles together under a decided jazz banner, submerging the listener in visionary storytelling. As a performer, Wagner uses lyrical elements to create melodies combined with a soft, rich tone that can resonate above or become immersed within the composition’s harmonic structures.

Please find out much more about Adriana’s dynamic rise and artistic achievements here: Instagram: @goldie\_\_music

Facebook: Adriana Wagner

https://www.instagram.com/goldie\_\_music/  (https://www.instagram.com/goldie\_\_music/)

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