

Nguyễn Lê
Guitars & Bass, Guitar Synthesizer, Programming,
Composition & Arrangements

Nguyễn Lê is a masterful, inventive player who has cultivated a wholly unique voice on the instrument; he ranks right up there with Frisell, John Scofield, Mike Stern & Allan Holdsworth in the post-Hendrix world of jazz guitar." – *Jazztimes*

Born in Paris from Vietnamese parents, Nguyễn Lê is a self-taught musician with a wide scope of interests that range from rock, funk and jazz, to African, Caribbean, Vietnamese and Indian music. In 1983, he founded Ultramarine, a multi-ethnic band whose second album, "Dé" was named "1989's Best World Music Album" by *Libération*.

Some of his other musical accomplishments include performing with the French National Jazz Orchestra (O.N.J.) in 1987, for which he wrote "Processor" and "Lunik" with Dominique Borker. He played for or with greats like Ray Charles, Carla Bley, Gil Evans, Quincy Jones, Peter Erskine, Vince Mendoza, Trilok Gurtu, Dave Liebman, Ornette Coleman, Cassandra Wilson, Jack Bruce, Michel Petrucciani, Uri Caine, Hariprasad Chaurasia and many others.

In 1995, Nguyễn Lê created "Tales from Việt-Nam," an eight-piece band blending jazz and traditional Vietnamese music. Since then, several projects were built: a score for "Sheitan," a movie by Kim Chapiron with Vincent Cassel; for "Saigon Eclipse," a Vietnamese film by Othello Khanh. Nguyễn Lê was commissioned to write two "classical" compositions for the Ahn Trio & the Laguna Beach Fest in LA. He was unanimously awarded as the "Guitar Django d'Or" 2006 and "Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres" in 2010 by French Cultural minister.

"Signature Edition," a lengthy album showing 20 years of music creation was released in 2010. Nguyễn Lê has published 14 albums as a leader, the most successful being "Purple, Celebrating Jimi Hendrix" which sold 25 000 copies.

His last album, "Songs of Freedom," released in 2011, is an exotic, electric and eccentric reading of pop hits from the 70's. The album received a fantastic welcoming from international press and was on top jazz charts of iTunes and Amazon

Van-Anh Vanessa Vo
Dan Tranh, Dan Bau, Dan T'rung,
Percussion, Vocals, Dan Da

Van-Anh Vanessa Vo dedicates her life to creating music on the dan tranh (16-string zither) and fusing her traditional Vietnamese foundation with a freshness of new structures and compositions. Since settling in California, she has been a collaborator and solo artist with such musicians and groups as Kronos Quartet, SOMEI Taiko Ensemble, Wobbly World, Nguyễn Lê, Paul McCandless, Ali Ryerson, Charles Loos, as well as lending her talents to fundraising events for several non-profit organizations.

Vo continually cultivates the beauty and versatility of her beloved instrument the dan tranh within the international music genre. She was a co-composer and an arranger for the

Oscar® nominated and Sundance Grand Jury Prize for Best Documentary, *Daughter from Danang* (2002); the Emmy® Award-winning film and soundtrack for *Bolinao 52* (2008), and the multiple award-winning film *A Village Called Versailles* (2009). Recently, Vo released her newest album “She’s Not She” with award-winning composer Do Bao.

Van-Anh Vanessa Vo began studying dan tranh when she was four years old. She graduated with distinction from the Vietnam Academy of Music, where she later taught. In 1995, Vo won first prize for Best Solo Performance of Modern Folk Music in the Vietnam National Dan Tranh Competition. She has since performed in more than 14 countries and recorded in many broadcast programs inside and outside of Vietnam.

She lives and teaches dan tranh and other Vietnamese traditional instruments in Fremont, California. For further information regarding dan tranh, traditional Vietnamese traditional music, or future albums, please visit: www.vananhvo.com.

Jimi Nakagawa
Taiko

Jimi Nakagawa started playing drums when he was in high school. He performed with local bands in Japan and San Francisco. In 1987, Jimi joined the San Francisco Taiko Dojo, Directed by Grand Master Seiichi Tanaka and became a performing member and instructor to adults and children. Nakagawa returned to Japan in 1997 to continue his study of Taiko and to perform with Sukeroku Daiko Hozonkai and Master Kenjiro Maru, two musicians who played the Wakayama style festival music.

In 2009 and 2010, Jimi Nakagawa studied a Japanese hand drum called the “tuzumi,” with a Master Saburo Mochizuki in Tokyo. In addition to studying Japanese traditional music, he has also studied jazz with celebrated drummer Robert Kaufman, a former professor at the Berkley College of Music.

In 1999, he and three other members founded a San Francisco Bay Area based Taiko group, Somei Yoshino Taiko Ensemble, and started his own Taiko school in Oakland, OH-IN TAIKO.

Currently, Nakagawa is performing in Somei Yoshino Taiko Ensemble, as well as Essence, which is led by a Shakuhachi player, Masayuki Koga. He has also collaborated with Robert Moses and Robert Moses Kin, Dr. Anthony Brown and the Asian American Orchestra, Steven Kent of Ancient Future, Habib Kahn and jazz/fusion guitarist, Nguyễn Lê.

Jimi Nakagawa’s refined but driving stick work has been featured in film, video and on stage.

Aaron Germain
Electric Bass and Up-Right Bass

“Aaron Germain has carved out a solid career as one of the busiest bassists on the jazz scene. His debut CD, “Before You Go,” shows off not only his sublime proficiency on stand-up and electric bass, but also his dazzling compositional skills.” - David Wiegand, *San Francisco Chronicle*

Aaron Germain's philosophy has always been to be picky about quality, but never about music genres. A master of both upright and electric bass, he adeptly plays diverse genres of music: straight-ahead jazz, cabaret, modern jazz, R&B, funk, salsa, Brazilian, west African, Indian, odd-meter, country and pop.

Though Germain grew up in Massachusetts, he has lived in the San Francisco Bay Area since 2000, showcasing his talents across the globe at venues like the Blue Note (New York), Zanzibar Blue (Philadelphia), Le Club Jazz (Kyoto), Z Imagine (Tokyo), The San Francisco Jazz Festival and the New Millennium Festival in front of the Great Pyramids of Egypt.

Germain is also a composer; his debut album, "Before You Go" can be found on his website at: www.aarongermain.com.