

# JAZZ

## Taylor Ho Bynum takes jazz back to the future



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Taylor Ho Bynum is widely regarded as one of the most forward-thinking musicians in jazz. Known for his composing as well as his cornet playing, Bynum has often performed with the legendary saxophonist Anthony Braxton — an artist so unique that the titles of his tunes bring to mind mathematical equations.

But while Bynum is definitely interested in pursuing the new — as evidenced by the sounds he generates in concert and on recordings, including his most recent “Apparent Distance” — some of his influences on cornet are trumpeters with links to old-school jazz and St. Louis.

“Miles Davis, Lester Bowie, Clark Terry, Baikida Carroll — a large percentage of my trumpet-playing heroes come from the area,” says Bynum, who will lead a sextet on Saturday evening in a New Music Circle concert.

Bynum also cites trumpeters and cornet players of the swing era as inspirations, including Rex Stewart, Cootie Williams and James “Bubber” Miley of Duke Ellington’s big band.

“Similar to some of the postmodern guys that I’m into, Stewart and Williams were playing with the manipulation of sound, in a way that I find really exciting,” he says. “I love bebop, and I love the bebop masters. But for me, the prioritization of harmonic improvisation left out some of the timbral exploration that was in earlier jazz, and that I’m deeply attracted to.”

At the Luminary Center for the Arts, Bynum will share the stage with guitarist Mary Halvorson, saxophonist Jim Hobbs, trombonist/tuba player Bill Lowe, bassist Ken Filiano and drummer Chad Taylor.

“We’re going to be doing a whole new body of music,” Bynum says. “A follow-up piece to ‘Apparent Distance’ called ‘Navigation Abstract.’”

On the four-part composition “Apparent Distance,” Bynum says, “someone might improvise, and that would lead into some composed materials. Essentially, it was a fixed roadmap.”

The idea behind the new piece, “Navigation Abstract,” is “to let the musicians decide where

we go next, even with the composed material,” he says. “It becomes a more complicated web of possibilities that we navigate through.”

And through it all, listeners can expect to hear Bynum getting the most out of the cornet — an instrument that isn’t as popular as the trumpet these days but has become his horn of choice.

“It lacks some of the brightness and accuracy of the trumpet,” Bynum says. “But it gives you more room to maneuver between the notes.”

**What** Taylor Ho Bynum Sextet • **When** 7:30 p.m. Saturday • **Where** The Luminary Center for the Arts, 4900 Reber Place • **How much** \$10-\$20 • **More info** 1-888-662-7851, [newmusiccircle.org](http://newmusiccircle.org)