

Center for the Performing and Cinematic Arts Boyer College of Music and Dance

Jazz on Broad Melissa Aldana, saxophone

Wednesday, September 4, 2024
Temple Performing Arts Center Lobby

4:30 PM Master Class
7:30 PM Performance

About the Artist

Saxophonist and composer MELISSA ALDANA was born in Santiago, Chile and grew up in a musical family. Both her father and grandfather were saxophonists and she took up the instrument at age six under her father Marcos' tutelage. Aldana began on alto, influenced by artists such as Charlie Parker and Cannonball Adderley, but switched to tenor upon first hearing the music of Sonny Rollins. She performed in Santiago jazz clubs in her early teens and was invited by pianist Danilo Pérez to play at the Panama Jazz Festival in 2005.

Aldana moved to the U.S. to attend the Berklee College of Music, and the year after graduating she released her first album *Free Fall* on Greg Osby's "Inner Circle" label in 2010, followed by *Second Cycle* in 2012. In 2013, at 24, she became the first female instrumentalist and the first South American musician to win the Thelonious Monk International Jazz Saxophone Competition, in which her father had been a semi-finalist in 1991. After her win, she released her third album *Melissa Aldana & Crash Trio* (Concord).

Aldana's celebrated 2019 album *Visions* (Motéma) earned the saxophonist her first-ever GRAMMY nomination for Best Improvised Jazz Solo. In naming *Visions* among the best albums of 2019 for NPR Music, critic Nate Chinen wrote that Aldana "has the elusive ability to balance technical achievement against a rich emotional palette."

Aldana was one of the founding members of ARTEMIS, the all-star collective that released their debut album *ARTEMIS* on Blue Note in the Fall of 202. The album featured Aldana's simmering composition "Frida," which was dedicated to Mexican painter Frida Kahlo, who inspired the musician through "her own process of finding self-identity through art."