

# Mimi Jones

Mimi Jones, multi talented bassist, vocalist and composer, brings her beacon of musical light to the world while embracing a positive future with her inspiring messages. Mimi's elegant sound is an eclectic mix of genres based on a strong jazz foundation that leaves room for funky bass grooves, world beat rhythms, gentle textures and the soulful cries of the Wurlitzer. "My music taps in directly to the senses using elements of jazz, folk, rock, blues and different sounds from around the world which have all had such a profound effect on me."

Miriam Sullivan (aka Mimi Jones) was born in New York City and raised in the Bronx by parents that descended from Barbados and St.Croix, which explains why Mimi has so many musical influences that flow easily through her compositional style. "As a child my parents always played music around the house," remarks Mimi, "besides their traditional roots they had tons of records from the greats like Gene Ammons, Miles Davis, James Brown, Gloria Lynn, Ray Charles, John Coltrane, Willie Nelson, Frank Sinatra, The Doors, Beatles, BeeGees, Barbara Streisand, Al Green, Michael Jackson, Earth Wind & Fire, Peter Paul and Mary. Every Sunday we had a ritual of cleaning while the music blasted through the house." Mimi started buying her own records and showed such enthusiasm to play the guitar that her father enrolled her in the Harlem School of the Arts. There she learned the classical guitar and eventually the instrument of her choice, the electric guitar. By the age of twelve she was studying guitar with her first teacher, Jim Bartow, taking classes in dance, chorus, drums, music theory, piano and composition which all helped her secure a spot at Fiorello La Guardia High School of Music and Performing Arts. Once there she realized that the school didn't have a guitar program so she was quickly switched to cello and placed into the orchestra. However, during cello practice time she could be found in the mirror spinning her comrade's bass and playing the "Barney Miller" theme. "I was spotted doing this one afternoon by the band director, Justin Diccio, and he asked if I played the bass. I said no and he responded saying "well you do now because we need a bassist for the jazz band." This was an exciting experience because for the first time I found my own musical voice." \_ Mimi began her relationship with the bass by receiving classical lessons from Linda McKnight and attending the Jazz Mobile Workshop to study with world-class bassist Lisle Atkinson who became her first mentor and even supplied Mimi with her first bass, a Juzak. "I've often said that the bass chose me," said Mimi "and there were so many early experiences that confirmed that feeling."

Miriam's determination and talent helped her to receive a full scholarship to the Manhattan School of Music Conservatory where she completed her Bachelor's Degree in Music. While at the Manhattan School she continued off campus to

study, attend workshops or mentor with saxophonist Charles Davis, Barry Harris, Ron Carter, Milt Hinton, Dr. Billy Taylor, Yusef Latif, Max Roach, and Latin bass techniques with Guillermo Edgehill. "I even missed my own graduation at the Manhattan School because I got my first music tour days before the graduation and had to fly to Japan, and you know, I've been doing music ever since."

Since then "side man" Miriam Sullivan (aka Mimi Jones) has gone on to share the stage with such talents as the great Lionel Hampton, Roy Hargrove, Rachel Z, Sean Jones, Kenny Barron, Jesse Davis, Ingrid Jenson, Kevin Mahogany, Denis Charles, Joshua Redman and Onaje Allan Gumbs, just to name a few. More recently she is performing in bands led by Tia Fuller, Mala Waldron, Luis Perdomo, Pauline Jean, Lynette Washington, Tamar-Kali to mention, and made a special appearance at Beyonce's private birthday party for Jay-Z's 40th.

She has even toured extensively throughout Europe and the United States. In 2003, Miriam Sullivan co founded the group "Jazz Sabroson" with drummer Antonio De Vivo and was commissioned by the Kennedy Center and Department of State to participate in the international program of cultural exchange performing in Brazil, Uruguay, Ecuador, Barbados, Jamaica, Nevis and the Dominican Republic. These Jazz Ambassadors were elected in 2006 by the Department of State and Jazz at Lincoln Center to participate in the Rhythm Abroad Program, this time traveling to the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco and Algeria. Later on Miriam returned to Mali with guitarist Steve Bloom, where the two diligently worked with Malian students of all ages, exploring the possibilities of musical expansion, and gladly partaking in the cultural exchange. Miriam explains that going into the motherland of Africa is always a heart-felt experience and continues to change her outlook on life. She constantly looks for new opportunities in which to aid her brothers and sisters abroad as well as at home with her own organization "The Girls Group" located in the South Bronx.

In September 2009 Mimi Jones emerged and her debut recording, "A New Day" was born. The title of the CD speaks of embracing a changing world with a positive point of view while maintaining the courage to move forward just as the new persona and alter ego, Mimi Jones, was transformed from "side man" Miriam Sullivan in order to fully express her individual messages of change and personal evolution. "A New Day," is bursting with original compositions seamlessly melting from one song to another and caressed by the warmth of Mimi's sultry voice. The music is a statement of grooves, musical textures, and compositional variations all flawlessly executed by Mimi Jones (acoustic bass, electric bass, vocals, composer, arranger, and assistant producer), Marvin Sewell (acoustic and electric guitars), Miki Hayama (piano, key board and Wurlitzer), Marcus Gilmore (drums), Lucianna Padmore (drums on tracks 1 and 11) and Ambrose Akinmisure (trumpet). The title of the CD speaks of embracing a

changing world with a positive point of view while maintaining the courage to move from our old habits. Songs like "Fast Lane," "Spiral," "Watch Your Step" and "Mighty Time" send those messages by allowing the music to take shape without fear of definition and genre restriction. The concept is to cross borders and to reach out to a broader perception of time, space and rhythm. Mimi's philosophy is profound, yet simple, "It's important to me that this music is for everyone. I believe that I have a calling to heal and make people feel good so I want to pass on what comes to me musically. Hopefully this music will make our world a little bit better."

A recurring face since 2000 at the Kennedy Center's annual Mary Lou Williams Women in Jazz Festival as Miriam Sullivan (playing in bands led by pianist Rachel Z and Joanne Brackeen), Mimi Jones Band was featured on the stage on May 14, 2009 premiering her debut release, "A New Day." The Mimi Jones Band has also appeared at the Kitano Hotel, Dizzy's Club Coca Cola, the Puffin Foundation, Symphony Space, the Zinc Bar, and the Blue Note. In the future Mimi Jones plans to incorporate multimedia performances and collaborations with other artists. She wants to find more diverse ways to reach out to the public by making her music accessible while maintaining the integrity of the music that has propelled her on her journey.

Although Mimi plays acoustic bass, baby bass, electric bass, and numerous styles of music (including jazz, funk, hip hop, Cuban, free, folk, and pop) she thrives on remaining open to learning unfamiliar sounds. "I hope that my music sends a message of unconditional love and encouragement in order to let people know that we all experience the same things but in different ways. If we find the joy within eventually it will be all around us." For more about Mimi Jones: [www.MimiJonesMusic.com](http://www.MimiJonesMusic.com)