

# **God Particle Quartet:**

**Dr. Stephon  
Alexander,  
Melvin Gibbs,  
Jaron Lanier, and  
Will Calhoun**

**APRIL 10, 2022, 4PM**

The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA

Dr. Stephon Alexander, a world-renowned theoretical cosmologist, jazz saxophonist, and current president of the National Society of Black Physicists, together with acclaimed bassist Melvin Gibbs founded the collaborative duo, God Particle, in response to Alexander's 2016 book *The Jazz of Physics*. Their music is an exploration of the quantum concepts that are inherently embedded in jazz. Alexander and Gibbs identify theoretical physics constructs that have analogues in jazz, codify them, and create conceptualizations of those constructs that can be applied and used in music. In addition, Gibbs has developed and extended musical concepts directly inspired by *The Jazz of Physics*, in which Alexander speaks to how music informed the historical development of science and how his work as a scientist has been informed by his connection to jazz.

For their performance at MOCA, God Particle will perform as God Particle Quartet with special guests Jaron Lanier, the multi-instrumentalist and revered computer scientist often referred to as the father of virtual reality, and celebrated drummer Will Calhoun.

## BIOS

### **Dr. Stephon Alexander**

Dr. Stephon Alexander is the current president of the National Society of Black Physicists. He is a theoretical cosmologist who in 2001, drawing on key concepts of string theory, co-authored a new model that may explain the accelerating expansion of the universe, known as "cosmic inflation". Since 2016 Alexander has been a professor at Brown University. In 2017 he served as science advisor to Ava DuVernay's film adaptation of the children's classic *A Wrinkle in Time*. His latest book is titled *Fear of a Black Universe*.

### **Will Calhoun**

Will Calhoun is a two time Grammy winning interdisciplinary artist who graduated from the Berklee college of music. Although he's mostly known for his drumming/composing with the genre bending Rock Band Living Colour, he has recorded with, toured, and produced B.B. King, Mick Jagger, Pharaoh Sanders, Wayne Shorter, Lauryn Hill, Yassin Bey (Mos Def) Oumou Sangare, Philip Glass, and many others.

### **Melvin Gibbs**

Melvin Gibbs is a Grammy nominated composer, musician and writer who was the 2019 winner of *JazzTimes Magazine* Critics Poll in the category Electric Bass. His wide-ranging resume includes tutelage by Ornette Coleman and Gil Evans, time in Defunkt & the Sonny Sharrock Band, tenure in the alt-rock Rollins Band as well participating in the project *Power Tools* with Bill Frisell and Ronald Shannon Jackson. He is a member of the band Harriet Tubman, whose latest record *The Terror End of Beauty* was cited as “Best Jazz of 2018” by *The New York Times* and *Rolling Stone* magazine and whose performance at the Earshot Jazz Festival was cited as a “Best Jazz Performance of 2018” by NPR - National Public Radio. His latest release is “4 + 1 equals 5 for May 25”.

### **Jaron Lanier**

Jaron Lanier is known as the “father of virtual reality” and for his humanistic books about tech (*Wired* declared him one of the 25 most influential figures in tech of the last 25 years), but here he is as a musician. Lanier is obsessed with learning the most obscure acoustic instruments and has played in recent years with Philip Glass, Sara Bareilles, T Bone Burnett, Amanda Palmer, and in the Stay Human band on Colbert’s show with Jon Batiste. He also writes orchestra music and plays the very weirdest piano style.

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