

MIDDLE TENNESSEE

STATE UNIVERSITY.

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Eastern Boundary Quartet

Balázs Bágyi

Drums

Mihály Borbély

Saxophone

Joe Fonda

Bass

Michael Jefry Stevens

Piano

Wednesday, March 4, 2026

7:30 p.m.

T. Earl Hinton Music Hall, Wright Music Building

The **Eastern Boundary Quartet** is a collaborative quartet featuring Hungarian master musicians, drummer Balazs Bagyi and saxophonist Mihaly Borbely, and the long-standing bass/piano partnership of American bassist Joe Fonda and pianist Michael Jefry Stevens (co-leaders of the Fonda/Stevens Group and Conference Call). Since 2007, the quartet has toured Europe and the United States numerous times and is currently touring in the eastern U.S. The group has released four CDs, which will be available for purchase in the lobby after the concert.

The Eastern Boundary Quartet performs original music by all members of the group. The group uses Hungarian folk rhythms and melodies in combination with jazz harmonies and rhythms to form an original “hybrid” improvised music. The band was formed with the imagination of connecting two worlds of the jazz scene today. This unique collaboration is a mixture of avant-garde jazz and ethno-music from Hungary, forming a cultural bridge between the U.S. and Eastern Europe. This bridge is made of talent, respect, brotherhood, and friendship, built by the common language of jazz and improvised music.

Drummer **Balázs Bágyi**, born in 1973 in Pécs, Hungary, is a respected figure on the international music scene. His work spans collaborations with prominent American musicians, theater music, mainstream jazz, world music, and avant-garde jazz. He serves as director of the Dr. Lausmann Jazz School, president of the board of the Hungarian Jazz Federation, and central European representative for Ayotte Drums of Canada.

Mihály Borbély specializes in a wide range of wind instruments—including tárogató, folk flutes, kaval, dvojnice, fujara, ocarina, bombard, and zurna—as well as soprano and tenor saxophone. He has appeared on countless recordings and has performed throughout Hungary, Europe, and the United States with artists such as Paul Bley, Steve Coleman, Trilok Gurtu, John Hollenbeck, Herbie Mann, Bob Mintzer, the ROVA Saxophone Quartet, Saxophone Summit (Michael Brecker, David Liebman, Joe Lovano), the Budapest Big Band, and the Budapest Jazz Orchestra. Borbély has been on the faculty of the Béla Bartók Conservatory since 1986 and the Jazz Department of the Ferenc Liszt Music Academy since 1990.

The quartet is completed by Asheville, N.C.–based pianist **Michael Jefry Stevens** and New York City bassist **Joe Fonda**, who have performed together since the 1970s.

Pianist Michael Stevens’ appearance is supported in part by a generous donation from the Steinway Piano Gallery of Nashville. MTSU has the distinction of being an “All-Steinway” university.

No More War	Michael Jefry Stevens
When We Hear Miles Sing	Michael Jefry Stevens
E.B. Rhapsody	Joe Fonda
Fogócska	Mihály Borbély
Tűzugrás	Balázs Bágyi
Pörgetős	Balázs Bágyi
The Last Question	Mihály Borbély
Fish Soup	Joe Fonda
Hermeto	Michael Jefry Stevens
Icicles	Michael Jefry Stevens

Thanks

Dr. Jennifer Snodgrass, Chair, MTSU School of Music
Dr. Leah Lyones, Dean, MTSU College of Liberal Arts
Steinway Gallery of Nashville
The MTSU Jazz Faculty
Chris Click, School of Music Concert Production



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Upcoming Event

MTSU Illinois Jacquet Jazz Festival on March 28 is a full-day event featuring school ensembles, the Establishment Big Band, MTSU groups, educational sessions, and a **5:30 p.m. headline performance** by Spanish jazz saxophonist **Jesús Santandreu**. For ticket reservations, email James.Simmons@mtsu.edu.

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