

EVENTS/CAUSES

## Cunard adds jazz line-up to trans-Atlantic voyage

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*Cunard ocean liners*

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By NANCY BUCKLEY

Global cruise line Cunard is teaming with jazz label Blue Note Records to bring passengers aboard the Queen Mary 2 for intimate performances during its trans-Atlantic journey.

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**Luxury Daily**

On Oct. 29, 2015, the ship will leave New York for Southampton, United Kingdom with the Blue Note 75th anniversary all star band, "Our Point of View." The celebration of the record label's anniversary coincides with Cunard's 175th anniversary and the duo celebration will likely attract attention as music and boating enthusiasts come together for the week-long journey across the sea.

"The partnership between Cunard and Blue Note Records is ideal because it celebrates the history and innovation behind both iconic brands," said Richard Meadows, president of [Cunard Line North America](#), Seattle.

"As industry leaders, these companies are known for many 'firsts' in their respective fields and we are both celebrating milestone anniversaries this year," he said. "Cunard is marking 175 years since the first Transatlantic Crossing and it is still the only line to offer

regularly scheduled trans-Atlantic service since 1840; and Blue Note Records turns 75 – the longest running jazz label in the world.

"Cunard is also known for our storied history of sailing notables, from heads of state and royalty to iconic Hollywood actors, and having Blue Note Records aboard only continues that tradition. It makes perfect sense that these two celebrated brands come together to offer patrons a memorable experience like no other."

#### Musical boats

Global cruise line Cunard is celebrating its 175th anniversary with a series of on board events pointing to its history.

From retracing the original transatlantic crossing to remembering the sinking of the Lusitania, Cunard is involving consumers in both the highs and lows of its heritage through special packages and online content. Commemorating a milestone can help prompt booking from loyal travelers, who want to experience the special time with their favorite brand ([see story](#)).

Blue Note Records' band will feature young jazz artists such as Robert Glasper, Keyon Harrold, Marcus Strickland, Lionel Loueke, Derrick Hodge and Kendrick Scott. The president of the label, Don Was, will also be on board.



*Don Was, president, Blue Note Records*

Mr. Was is a Grammy-winning producer for songs with Bonnie Raitt and the Rolling Stones. He will hold question and answer sessions with the passengers throughout the week.

Performances will be held in the Queen Mary 2's Royal Court Theatre and the Illuminations theater during the voyage.

Rooms on board the Queen Mary 2 for this trip range from \$1,498 to \$5,198

#### Jazzy partners

Luxury travel brands have looked at their consumer's jazz interests before with different collaborations around the United States.

For instance, Mandarin Oriental, New York joined The Juilliard School and high-end audio specialist Bowers & Wilkins to showcase emerging talent by providing guests and music enthusiasts with weekly evening jazz sessions.

The “Evening Sessions” featured young jazz musicians from the eminent music school every Thursday night through December. Establishing a recurring event that brings together multiple organizations and supports local talent was likely to increase both core guests’ and visiting outsiders’ loyalty to the hotel ([see story](#)).

Private aviation company XOJet partnered with Jazz Aspen Snowmass to offer its private-air concierge access service, likely in an attempt to increase visibility in a younger market.

The concierge access service allowed Jazz Aspen Snowmass National Council and Board members to fly to and from Aspen year-round for exclusive prices for any JAS music event or festival. Getting the attention of affluent tastemakers surrounding an event populated by a younger generation can appeal to both sets of demographics and increase visibility of XOJet ([see story](#)).

Mixing with top musicians allows luxury brands to offer unique experiences to their consumers.

"Our passengers know that Cunard is committed to providing one-of-a-kind access to some of the world’s most beloved entertainment, always making sure we offer our guests a truly unforgettable ocean travel experience," Mr. Meadows said.

## **Final Take**

*Nancy Buckley, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York*

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