

What eventually became the JOE POLICASTRO TRIO took shape in 2010 when bassist Joe Policastro landed a 3-night a week gig at Pops For Champagne in downtown Chicago. What many would have treated as a “background gig” quickly developed into an incubator for its members to write, arrange, and develop a collective voice in the way that only a band can over time. Early versions of the group were successful, but it wasn’t until guitarist Dave Miller relocated back to Chicago from New York at the outset of 2015 that the group truly coalesced. While firmly rooted in jazz, the band’s open-minded, inclusive nature draws upon a wide array of musical styles and sources while still keeping the aesthetic of an acoustic trio intact. Bassist Joe Policastro, guitarist Dave Miller, and drummer Mikel Avery regularly perform throughout the United States and Canada having even performed for President Barack Obama in October of 2016. On August 12, 2022, the band released its fifth album entitled *Sounds Unheard 2012-2022* assembling new recordings and unreleased material from a decade’s worth of recordings: *West Side Story Suite* (2013), *POPS!* (2016), *Screen Sounds* (2017) and *Nothing Here Belongs* (2019). The band’s highly-developed, personal sound and collective approach is front and center whether showcasing their original or highlighting the trio’s ability to remake unlikely songs in its own raw, highly idiosyncratic fashion.

Chicago bassist, composer, and arranger JOE POLICASTRO grew up in the fertile jazz, classical, and popular music scene of Cincinnati, OH. He earned his Bachelor of Music in Jazz/Studio Music from the College Conservatory of Music at the University of Cincinnati and his Master of Music in Jazz Studies from DePaul University in Chicago. After performing and recording in Germany, he settled in Chicago quickly establishing himself an in-demand musical voice as both performer and arranger/composer in jazz, theater, and beyond. He has performed and recorded with a wide array of artists such as Sheila Jordan, Diane Schuur, Pat and Debby Boone, Harry Allen, Jeff Hamilton, Howard Levy, Phil Woods, Ira Sullivan, Howard Alden, and David "Fathead" Newman among others. He leads the Joe Policastro Trio, and the group has released five albums since 2013. The band extensively tours, has been featured at numerous jazz festivals, and has even performed for President Obama. He also leads and co-leads the Gerry Mulligan tribute ensembles, Jeru, and the Mulligan Mosaics Big Band and Nonet, both for which he has extensively written and arranged. As composer/arranger, his work can be heard on recordings by artists including Ira Sullivan and the Rob Parton Big Band. As an educator, he has been a Ravinia Jazz Mentor, a Lecturer of Jazz Studies at DePaul University, a bass instructor at Morton College and the Chicago Academy For The Arts, a jazz director at the Midwest Young Artists Conservatory, and he is currently on the string faculty at North Park University.

Now residing in Philadelphia, multidisciplinary artist MIKEL PATRICK AVERY had been actively working out of Chicago and then New Orleans for the past 16 years. Established as a jazz drummer, he is commonly recognized for his orchestral and melodic style of drumming that often involves the use of unconventional "non-musical" objects. Adjacent to being a performing musician, Avery is a dedicated filmmaker, composer, photographer, designer, and educator, whose body of work invariably draws

upon the ideas of 'unstructured-play' commonly applied to learning environments found in early education. In recent years, Avery has become an integral voice in varying ensembles, including Rob Mazurek's Exploding Star Orchestra, Joshua Abrams' Natural Information Society, The Chicago Jazz Philharmonic, the Joe Policastro Trio, and Theaster Gates's Black Monks of Mississippi as well as leading several of his own projects, including 1/2 Size Piano Trio, Wazella, Sore Thumb, PARADE, and Mikel Patrick Avery PLAY. Mikel has had the privilege to perform and exhibit at the Art Institute of Chicago, Pritzker Pavilion at Millennium Park, the Museum of Contemporary Art (Los Angeles), Documenta 13 (in Kassel Germany), Drunk Lunch Gallery, Pitchfork Music Festival, White Cube (London), MCA Chicago.

Combining major stints in both New York City and Chicago and numerous tours abroad, DAVE MILLER has cultivated a truly unique, exciting, and inviting approach to songwriting, jazz improvisation, and the guitar. Each of Miller's solo offerings tend to occupy its own individual stylistic and sonic universe, the through lines being Miller's singular, melody-driven songwriting and his emotionally-fueled, instantly recognizable guitar playing. His latest album, *Daughter of Experience* (Tompkins Square, 2022) follows suit, but is distinct in that it is his first specifically solo guitar album and his first playing acoustic guitar, exclusively. All the while, he has maintained a role in many active bands such as Greg Ward's Rogue Parade, the Joe Policastro Trio, and has served as a consummate sideperson to such luminaries as jazz songwriter, Patricia Barber, Brazilian composer, Clarice Assad, and as guitarist in Terence Blanchard's masterful opera, *Fire Shut Up In My Bones* at the Lyric Opera of Chicago. Grammy winning music journalist, Neil Tesser, cites Miller "among my favorite modern guitarists" ([chicagomusic.org](http://chicagomusic.org)). The broad-minded musician's "impressive flexibility" can range "from carefully structured improvisations to complementary texture and color" (Peter Margasak, Chicago Reader) while still "making a listener feel inches from the guitar" (Mark Keresman, New York City Jazz Record).