

Singer-songwriter Alec Gaston due at Stoltz

EASTON — Before he even graduated from high school last year, Alec Gaston's musical resume was impressive.

The aspiring singer-songwriter already has released a CD and an EP of original music. He also has attended Grammy Camp in Los Angeles, one of the most prominent, invitation-only music camps in the country.

Now in his first year at the prestigious Berklee College of Music Boston and with another independently released CD under his belt (last year's "Facing the Fight"), Gaston continues to shine as a fresh, new talent that's on the rise.

You can catch this rising star at 8 p.m. Saturday in the Stoltz Listening Room.



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Tickets for the show are \$15, and available by calling the Avalon box office (410-822-7299) or visiting www.avalontheatre.com.

Gaston plays an array of instruments ranging from piano, guitar and bass to the ukulele and djembe.

His sound combines classical piano riffs, liquid phrasing and intricate lyrics that transcend the boundaries of classical music, rock and pop.



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Monty Alexander scores Grammy nom

Internationally acclaimed jazz pianist Monty Alexander, namesake and artistic director of the Monty Alexander Jazz Festival held annually on Labor Day weekend in Easton, has received a Grammy nomination for best reggae album for his recording, "Monty Alexander Harlem-Kingston Express: Live!"

Alexander, whose music bridges the worlds of American jazz, popular song and Jamaican reggae, twice topped the U.S. and world jazz charts with his recordings this past fall.

James Hall, in reviewing the Monty Alexander Jazz Festival at Jazzabout.com, said, "With a pedigree to rival any jazz musician's — including stints with the likes of Milt Jackson and Ray Brown — Monty Alexander's credibility is undisputed. What

sets his music apart, though, is not its excellence, but its exuberance. After just over two hours of music, it was not the complexity or beauty of the music that had the audience raving, but the overwhelming experience of having encountered a personality whose joys and sorrows, past and present, were so eloquently and convincingly expressed in his music as to evoke empathy in an audience for a man they'd never met."

Al Sikes, chairman of the Monty Alexander Jazz Festival, said, "Chesapeake Chamber Music is exceedingly fortunate to be collaborating with a legendary jazz artist."

This year's Monty Alexander Jazz Festival is set for Aug. 31 through Sept. 2. For more information, visit ChesapeakeChamberMusic.org/jazz.