

“The Jazz Story” at The Sheldon Concert Hall Handbook for Teachers

WELCOME

We look forward to welcoming you and your students for the presentation of “The Jazz Story” at The Sheldon Concert Hall. We hope that the perfect acoustics and intimacy of the hall will make this an important and memorable experience.

ARRIVAL AND PARKING

We urge you to arrive at The Sheldon Concert Hall half an hour before the start of “The Jazz Story.” This will allow you to be seated in time for the performance and will allow a little extra time in case you encounter traffic on the way. Seating will be on a first come-first serve basis as schools arrive. To accommodate school schedules, we will start “The Jazz Story” promptly at show time.

The Sheldon is located at 3648 Washington Boulevard, just around the corner from the Fox Theatre. A map is enclosed. Parking for school buses will be available on Washington near The Sheldon.

CONCERT MANNERS

Please coach your students on good concert manners before coming to The Sheldon Concert Hall. Good audiences love to listen to music and they love to show their appreciation with applause. Urge your students to take in and enjoy the great music being performed. Also, a “cool” jazz audience member knows that at a jazz concert you can and should applaud after a good solo by one of the musicians.

Food and drink are prohibited in The Sheldon Concert Hall.

Any device (telephone, alarm watch or toy) that makes noise is a distraction for both the musicians on stage and your fellow audience members and should not be brought into the hall.

DEFINITIONS

There are key words that help to understand jazz. Here are definitions of the most important concepts.

Ragtime

A blend of African-American and European music, known for syncopated rhythm. Ragtime became very popular piano music about 100-years ago and was the music that came right before jazz. Scott Joplin, who lived for awhile right here in St. Louis, was known as the “King of Ragtime” and was one of the most popular composers and performers of ragtime.

Syncopation

Accents on what would normally be weak beats (beats two and four are weak beats in four/four time). Ragtime and jazz make extensive use of syncopated rhythm.

Improvisation

The art of changing and expanding upon a melody or chord progression to express the musical ideas of the soloist. A jazz player “taking a solo” is improvising on the tune.

Blue Notes

Lowered third, fifth and seventh notes in a scale are the “blue notes” used by blues singers and later by jazz singers and instrumentalists to give a special blues feeling to a song.

Swing

A type of rhythm that became popular in the 1930's and 1940's. Eighth notes are not played evenly but “swung” in a rhythm closer to a triplet feel. During the “swing era” from 1935 to 1945, swing music was popularized by the big bands.

Scat Singing

Singing nonsense syllables instead of words. Made popular by Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald and many other jazz singers.

Big Bands

The popular bands of the 1930's and 1940's (and beyond) that played swing music, featuring sections of trumpets, saxophones, trombones and a rhythm section of piano, bass and drums. Big bands played for dances and often featured a singer or a vocal group.

Bebop or Bop

A type of jazz not for dancing, usually for a small combo, that took melody and harmony to new levels of complexity and freedom. There are lots and lots of notes on fast solos and great freedom on slower tunes. Partly a reaction to the commercial big bands.

Trading Fours

An exchange between two jazz musicians in which first one player and then another player improvise for four measures at a time.

Riffs

A short musical phrase that is imitated by another player or section in the jazz ensemble. Riffs can become set and a written-out part of a jazz composition.

Cool Jazz

A by-product of bop, “cool jazz” was used to describe an unexcited, quiet, behind-the-beat playing that felt like relaxed swing.

Fusion

A combination of jazz and rock and roll. Jazz improvisation is added to a rock and roll rhythmic feel of even eighth notes.

MUSIC IN “THE JAZZ STORY”

You may wish to play some of the music from “The Jazz Story” before or after your students come to The Sheldon. Familiarity with a particular composer or style of music is a very important factor in the enjoyment and understanding of that music.

Here is the music that will be performed during “The Jazz Story”:

Scott Joplin	<i>Maple Leaf Rag</i>
Jelly Roll Morton	<i>Wolverine Blues</i>
Traditional Spiritual	<i>Wade in the Water</i>
W.C. Handy	<i>St. Louis Blues</i>
Louis Armstrong	<i>Struttin’ with Some Barbecue</i>
Billie Holiday	<i>God Bless the Child, Them There Eyes, Ooh, What a Little Moonlight Can Do</i>
Duke Ellington	<i>It Don’t Mean a Thing If It Ain’t Got That Swing</i>
Ella Fitzgerald	<i>A Tisket, A Tasket</i>
Dizzy Gillespie	<i>Groovin’ High, Night in Tunisia</i>
Miles Davis	<i>Someday My Prince Will Come</i>
John Coltrane	<i>My Favorite Things</i>
Dave Brubeck	<i>Blue Rondo a la Turk</i>
Herbie Hancock	<i>Cantaloupe Island</i>
Joe Sample	<i>Burnin’ Up the Carnival</i>

Suggested Classroom Activity

NICKNAMES

Many jazz musicians are known by nicknames. See how many nicknames on the left side you can match to names on the right by drawing a line from one side to the other.

Satchmo
Duke
Dizzy
Lady Day
Jelly Roll

Billie Holiday
_____ Gillespie
Louis Armstrong
_____ Morton
_____ Ellington

Bonus: Additional nicknames and names to match

Prez
Yardbird (or Bird)
Count
Buddy Charles
King

Charlie Parker
Joe Oliver
Lester Young
_____ Bolden
_____ Basie

Suggested Classroom Activity

JAZZ MUSICIANS AND THE MUSIC THEY PLAYED

Name a musician who played or sang the style of music listed on the left. A list of musicians mentioned in "The Jazz Story" is included at the bottom.

Ragtime _____

Dixieland and early Jazz _____

Blues _____

Scat singing _____

Swing _____

Bebop or Bop _____

Cool Jazz _____

Fusion _____

Latin Jazz _____

- Louis Armstrong
- Herbie Hancock
- Count Basie
- Billie Holiday
- Dave Brubeck
- Joe Sample
- John Coltrane
- Scott Joplin
- Chick Corea
- Carmen McRae
- Miles Davis
- Jelly Roll Morton
- Ella Fitzgerald
- Glenn Miller
- Dizzy Gillespie
- Sarah Vaughan

THE MUSICIANS

Pianist **Carolbeth True** has appeared as soloist or with her own trio in every important St. Louis jazz club and has also performed with the St. Louis Symphony and other orchestras. Carolbeth has backed artists such as Mel Torme and Bill Watrous and is a very active piano teacher, both privately and at Webster University.

Vocalist **Mardra Thomas** is well-known to St. Louis audiences for her work with her husband Reggie Thomas and the OGD Trio. She has performed on the "Jazz at The Sheldon" series, at the St. Louis Jazz Festival and at concert halls and clubs around the country.

Trumpeter **Randy Holmes** is a founding member of the Webster Jazz Repertory Ensemble which recreates classic traditional jazz from the 1920's and 1930's. He is a soloist and member of the Legacy Big Band, the Kim Portnoy Ensemble and the Sessions Big Band. Randy has performed with David Brubeck, Clark Terry and Louis Bellson and has backed soloists such as Ella Fitzgerald and Nancy Wilson.

Bassist **Eric Foreman** is a native St. Louisan and has been a part of the local performing arts scene since the early 1970s. Eric has nationally toured and performed with Albert King, Rufus & Carla Thomas and James Moody participating in countless recording sessions of local and national acclaim. Eric has also co-produced, co-written and released two self-titled CD's with partner Margaret Bianchetta. Currently Eric performs with soul group, "The Mighty Big Band."

Percussionist **Alan Schilling** has performed professionally since the age of eleven when he was a timpanist for the St. Louis Philharmonic. A graduate of the St. Louis Conservatory of Music, Schilling performed with the St. Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra, and served as Director of Music in the Performing Arts Area Dance Program at Washington University. As a free-lance percussionist, he has performed with the Fox Theatre Orchestra, the Muny Orchestra and Opera Theatre of St. Louis. He currently performs and records with jazz, classical and contemporary Christian groups throughout the St. Louis area.

THE SHELDON CONCERT HALL

The Sheldon, designed by the noted 1904 World's Fair architect Louis C. Spiering, was built in 1912 as the home of the Ethical Society of St. Louis. Well known singers and ensembles such as Jose Carreras and the Budapest String Quartet have performed at The Sheldon and speakers such as Albert Einstein, Dwight Eisenhower and Ernest Hemingway have spoken from its stage. The Sheldon was saved from the wrecking ball and purchased by the non-profit Sheldon Arts Foundation in 1991 and now annually hosts over 300 concerts and other cultural and community events. The Sheldon is known around the world for its perfect acoustics and has been voted by touring musicians as one of the ten best concert halls in the country.

JAZZ ARTISTS AT THE SHELDON

The Sheldon presents many outstanding jazz musicians, including Dave Brubeck and Herbie Hancock who are featured in "The Jazz Story." Other jazz artists presented at The Sheldon over the last three years are the Ramsey Lewis Trio, Preservation Hall Jazz Band, The Glenn Miller Orchestra, Charlie Byrd, Chick Corea, Wynton Marsalis, Gary Burton and Makoto Ozone, Banu Gibson and The New Orleans Hot Jazz Band, The Jimmy Dorsey Orchestra, Wayne Shorter, Clark Terry, Diva, Bucky and John Pizzarelli, Herb Ellis, Kenny Burrell, Billy Cobham, Jon Faddis and the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra.

St. Louis can boast many wonderful jazz musicians and The Sheldon has been honored to present Carolbeth True, Jeanne Trevor, Randy Holmes, Darrell Mixon, Ptah Williams, Kim Portnoy, Reggie and Mardra Thomas, Denise Thimes, Dave Black, Rob Block and many others.

The Jazz Story—A Selected Bibliography

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