

## **“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 served 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</i>
	<i>Them There Eyes</i>
	<i>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</i>
	<i>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>
Stevie Wonder	<i>Sir Duke</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.”

Drummer **Kevin Gianino** has served as Adjunct Professor of Jazz Percussion at Webster University since 1983. A native of St. Louis, Professor Gianino attended St. Louis Community College-Meramec, the University of Missouri-St. Louis, and Webster University. He has served as a faculty member for the International Summer Jazz Academy in Poland and for the Webster Summer Jazz Combo Camp, and the Jim Widner Summer Jazz Camps. He is in demand as a clinician, adjudicator, and performer on a national basis. He is a member of the Webster Faculty Jazz Ensemble, Brilliant Corners, the Sessions Big Band, and the Hard Bop Heritage Quintet. Among the numerous artists with whom he has performed are Diana Krall, Maynard Ferguson, Louie Bellson, Nancy Wilson, Diane Schuur, Michael Buble, Bob Newhart, and Don Rickles. He has toured the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. Kevin has made numerous appearances at jazz festivals as adjudicator, guest artist and clinician.

### **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 several years include 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, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Dave Brubeck, Wayne Shorter, Jane Monheit, Pat Metheny, Clark Terry, Diana Krall, Bucky and John Pizzarelli, Herb Ellis, Kenny Burrell, the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra and more!

St. Louis boasts 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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*Bibliography prepared by St. Louis Public Library staff, September 2005*