

Kick-off of "Harlem Nights" year-long series of concerts to celebrate the spirit of Harlem

Written by



On Friday, October 26, Manhattan School of Music kicks off its year-long "Harlem Nights" Concert Series with "Harlem Hothouses," a concert tribute to The Greater Harlem Chamber of Commerce by MSM's Grammy®-nominated Afro-Cuban Jazz Orchestra, led by the renowned percussionist Bobby Sanabria, and featuring the National Endowment for the Arts Jazz Masters Award Honoree, the legendary Cuban-born conguero, Candido. The Concert takes place at 7:30 p.m. in the school's Borden Auditorium, 120 Claremont Avenue at West 122nd Street near Broadway. A minimal ticket price is required for admission.

This season Manhattan School of Music Jazz Arts Program showcases two exciting events – the 30th Anniversary of Jazz at MSM and "Harlem Nights," a year-long concert series celebrating Harlem. "Harlem Nights" has been designed to capture the musical spirit and heart of our Harlem community by spotlighting the music, musicians and performance venues that have called Harlem "home," and have helped define Harlem as a center of the musical and cultural universe.

Manhattan School of Music and the Greater Harlem Chamber of Commerce have enjoyed more than a decade of collaborations on HARLEM WEEK and on the Harlem Jazz and Music Festival. In 2001, a 'Master of Music' concert at the school featured performers Joe Cuba and Gloria Lynne and attracted legendary visitors such as Ornette Coleman, Lionel Hampton, then-State Senator David Paterson, and Isaac Hayes among other notables. Manhattan School of Music students have performed at GHCC events such as "A Great Day in Harlem" at US Grant National Memorial Park, the "Harlem Miles" portion of the ING-New York City Marathon, and at free outdoor concerts at the Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. State Office Building. For its 90th anniversary year, Manhattan School of Music was honored by the Greater Harlem Chamber of Commerce at the 2007 HARLEM WEEK Gracie Mansion kick-off.

In the 1940s and '50s, when jazz innovators such as drummer Max Roach, and John Lewis, pianist/composer, were already creative forces in bop and post-bop jazz, they were students at Manhattan School of Music. Lewis (1920-2001) began his studies at MSM in the mid-'40s, when he was pianist for Dizzy Gillespie's forward-thinking big band, and also a key member of the Miles Davis Nonet, which created the music for the now-classic Birth of the Cool recordings. By the time Roach (1924-2007) enrolled as a student, he had recorded with Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Miles Davis, Thelonious Monk and started working with Clifford Brown, in the

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legendary Max Roach Clifford Brown Quartet.

In those years, long before MSM had a jazz department, or the internationally recognized Jazz Arts Program, the school had the resources, faculty and atmosphere conducive to educating "the complete musician." Ron Carter aspired to be a classical bassist when he attended MSM in the early 1960s, a goal that was still unrealistic for black classical musicians in the 1960s and '70s. Instead, while pursuing his degree, his jazz career blossomed quickly—he became one of the most sought after bassists in the studios and as a jazz artist.

Trumpet player Joe Wilder completed his degree in classical trumpet in 1963, when he was a seasoned big band veteran, an A-list studio player and a highly sought jazz musician. Donald Byrd also attended the school then as a totally accomplished musician. Among others who studied at MSM before 1982, the year a jazz program was first offered, included Dave Grusin, Larry Rosen, Hugh Masekela and Yusef Lateef, to name just a few.

In the fall of 1982, Manhattan School of Music became one of the first conservatories in the United States to acknowledge the prime importance of jazz as an art form by creating a jazz/commercial music department. Courses were offered toward a master of music degree in 1984, and a bachelor of music degree was added in 1987.

Justin DiCioccio became the department's Chair in the fall of 1999 and under his leadership MSM's jazz curriculum was completely restructured, including the creation of a new jazz DMA program in 2002, and most recently the Jazz Institute at Manhattan School of Music. He put into action his own approach to educate the "Complete Artist Musician" – as a performer, composer/arranger and teacher -- by developing partnerships with public schools, community organizations, cultural institutions, and the music industry. He initiated the addition of a jazz component to the Precollege Division, making MSM one of the few institutions in the country to offer jazz programs at all levels. Mr. DiCioccio also directs international jazz programs, in partnership with Manhattan School of Music.

The awards and accomplishments of the MSM Jazz Community--alumni, former and current faculty and students, as well as many long-standing colleagues -- boasts numerous Grammy® Awards as well as Grammy® nominees, new compositions, commissions, and ensembles of all description.

- NEA Jazz Masters include Max Roach, John Lewis, Joe Wilder, Yusef Lateef, Dave Liebman, MSM Artist in Residence, and the legendary Candido Camero, who at 91 is a regular soloist with the Grammy-nominated MSM Afro-Cuban Jazz Orchestra directed by Bobby Sanabria
- MacArthur Fellows include Max Roach, Miguel Zenon and Jason Moran
- The 2012 60th Anniversary DOWNBEAT Critics Poll Winners included Vijay Iyer for Jazz Artist, Piano, and Jazz Album Accelerando; Jazz Group -- Vijay Iyer Trio; Ambrose Akinmusire, trumpet; Wycliffe Gordon, trombone
- Rising Stars: Jamie Baum, flute; Linda Oh, bass; and Dan Weiss, percussion

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- 2012 Jazz Journalists Awards named Ambrose Akinmusire, Trumpeter of the Year; Wycliffe Gordon, Trombonist of the Year; and Vijay Iyer, Pianist of the Year
- Monk Institute Winners: 2008 Saxophone -- Jon Irabagon, 1st place; 2007 Trumpet -- Ambrose Akinmusire, 1st place; Jean Caze, 2nd place; and Michael Rodriguez, 3rd place; 2006 Piano -- Gerald Clayton, 2nd place, and Aaron Parks, 3rd place; 2005 Guitar -- Miles Okazaki, 2nd place; 1999 Piano -- Eric Lewis, 1st place; Jacob Sacks, 2nd place; 1998 Voice -- Jane Monheit, 2nd place; 1996 Saxophone -- Jon Gordon 1st place; 1990 Trumpet -- Ryan Kisor, 1st place; 1998 Piano -- Ted Rosenthal, 1st place
- Among other notable MSM jazz graduates are saxophonists Chris Byars, Bob Mintzer, Chris Potter, and Steve Slagle; trombonists Luis Bonilla and Steve Turre; bassists John Benitez, and Tom Morgan; Stefon Harris, vibes; drummers Obed Calvaire, John Riley, Kim Thompson, and Dan Weiss; pianists Fabian Almazan, Garry Dial, and Jason Moran; vocalists Theo Bleckmann, Hilary Kole, and Charenee Wade as well as the composers/arrangers Mike Abene, David Berger, Dick Katz, Rich DeRosa, Don Sebesky, and Richard Sussman.

THE JAZZ ARTS PROGRAM

Manhattan School of Music is one of the first conservatories in the United States to acknowledge the importance of jazz as an art form by establishing undergraduate and graduate degree programs in jazz. It is also one of the richest programs of its kind, thanks to systematic and rigorous conservatory training combined with a myriad of performance and networking opportunities in New York City. In addition to a variety of small combos, student performing ensembles include the Afro-Cuban Jazz Orchestra, Concert Jazz Band, Jazz Orchestra, Jazz Philharmonic, and Chamber Jazz Orchestra. Under the leadership of longtime faculty member and eminent jazz artist-and-educator Justin DiCioccio, the program strives to produce students who perform, compose, and teach with equal facility and passion. Notable alumni include Ambrose Akinmusire, Jon Benitez, Stefon Harris, Ryan Kisor, Jane Monheit, Jason Moran, Chris Potter, Kim Thompson, Steve Turre and Miguel Zenon.

The Jazz Arts Administrative team includes Justin DiCioccio, Associate Dean and Chair; Chris Rosenberg, Manager of Jazz Administration; Stephanie Crease, Coordinator; and Andrew Neesley, Assistant Coordinator.

JAZZ ARTS PERFORMING ENSEMBLE

The MSM Afro-Cuban Jazz Orchestra has been internationally recognized for its performances at prestigious jazz conferences and by its recordings on the Jazzheads label. This past March saw the release of their critically acclaimed CD, *Tito Puente Masterworks Live!!!* Audiophile Audition said about this recording, "The Manhattan School of Music Afro-Cuban Jazz Orchestra is unrecognizable as a student ensemble ... the soloists are of such a high level that none of them emerge as more memorable than the others." In 2009, they released the critically acclaimed Grammy®-nominated CD, *Kenya Revisited Live!* This recording, that also features NEA Jazz Master Candido Camero, is from a historic concert held at MSM (2008) that celebrated the 50th anniversary of Machito & The Afro-Cubans 1957 jazz masterwork, *Kenya*.

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The MSM Afro-Cuban Jazz Orchestra, now in its twelfth year under the direction of Bobby Sanabria, has performed in such NYC jazz venues as Birdland, the Jazz Standard, Jazz@Lincoln Center's Dizzy's Club Coca-Cola, as well as on the plaza of the Harlem State Office Building in an outdoor concert celebrating MSM's 90th anniversary. They have performed with a who's who of jazz giants from Tom Harrell to David Sanchez and Arturo O'Farrill to Sonny Fortune and Ray Barretto, among many others. The MSM Afro-Cuban Jazz Orchestra and Bobby Sanabria are dedicated to performing the music of 'la tradition' and pays homage to these legends while continuing to pass on and advance the tradition to the next generation.

THE GREATER HARLEM CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Greater Harlem Chamber of Commerce (GHCC), originally incorporated in 1886 as the Harlem Board of Trade, is now celebrating its 116th year continued service to the Upper Manhattan area in general and the New York region in particular.

The Chamber has served as an ongoing anchor of continued stability bridging the periods ranging from rural development to urban neglect and now to its place as a national and international tourism magnet. The Greater Harlem Chamber of Commerce has, over the past four decades, particularly focused on the business, arts and culture, education and housing renaissance and revitalization of upper Manhattan.

Today, the Chamber's mission is to improve the quality of life for all who reside, work, worship or are educated in upper Manhattan, as well as to develop and attract quality business and professional services to complement the needs of its target areas.

We are pleased that the Chamber dramatically continues to attract an ever-growing local, regional, national and international support base, ranging from professional service providers to fortune 200 Corporations.

The Chamber's membership consists of those who wish to contribute to and thrive from Harlem's world-renowned vitality and recognition as a worldwide tourist, entertainment, sports, arts, cultural, educational, historic, religious and health services destination of international diversity.

The Chamber's motto is "The Business of Business is People", and its theme is "You Haven't Done This Town 'Til You've Done It Uptown – So Do It Up In Harlem!"

JAZZ ARTS PROGRAM PRINCIPALS

Justin DiCioccio, Associate Dean and Chair of MSM's Jazz Arts Program, is internationally recognized as one of the foremost jazz educators of our time. He was inducted into the Jazz Education Hall of Fame in January 2001. His inventive approach has earned him the title "the musician's teacher," and his many performances, conducting appearances, jazz and percussion clinics, and workshops are widely recognized in the professional and educational fields.

Mr. DiCioccio has served as program director and clinician for Carnegie Hall Jazz Education

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and acts as a consultant to Jazz at Lincoln Center and Wynton Marsalis. He developed and directed the LaGuardia High School of the Arts jazz program, the first fully accredited secondary jazz program in the United States. Mr. DiCioccio is active with the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts, the Music for Youth Foundation, and the National Foundation for Jazz Education. He is a three-time recipient of the Presidential Scholars Teacher Recognition Award in the jazz field by the U.S. Department of Education. On March 1, 2010, he was confirmed as the State Department Appointed Cultural Envoy Jazz Ambassador to Tbilisi, Georgia.

Mr. DiCioccio's performing and conducting credentials include concerts, commercials, Broadway shows, and recordings with jazz, orchestral, rock, and new music groups. Over the years he has worked with acclaimed artists, including Arturo Sandoval, Randy Brecker, Chuck Mangione, Phil Woods, Stan Gets, and Clark Terry, among others. Mr. DiCioccio is a former member of the Rochester Philharmonic and for five years was a member of the Marine Band "The President's Own," in which he served as the official White House drummer during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations.

Justin DiCioccio was named Chair of MSM's Jazz Arts Program in 1999 and has been a member of its faculty since 1984.

Bobby Sanabria, the Multiple Grammy nominated drummer, percussionist, composer, arranger, conductor, producer, educator, film-maker, bandleader, and multi-cultural warrior, has performed and recorded with such legends as Dizzy Gillespie, Tito Puente, Mongo Santamaría, Paquito D'Rivera, Ray Barretto, Candido, Henry Threadgill, Larry Harlow, and Afro-Cuban Jazz Godfather, Mario Bauzá. His first solo recording, NYC, Aché,' has become a cult classic. His first big band recording, Live & in Clave!!!, was nominated for a mainstream Grammy® in 2001. In 2003 he was nominated for a Latin Grammy® for, "50Years of Mambo", A Tribute to Damaso Perez Prado.

His 2005 Quarteto Aché' disc was hailed by the critics as giving a new vision to the standard jazz quartet. The readers of DRUM! magazine named him Percussionist of the Year in 2006. His recording "Big Band Urban Folktales," a 2008 Grammy nominee. This South Bronx native of Puerto Rican parentage is a 2006 inductee into the Bronx Walk of Fame where he has a street named after him. His 2009 CD, "Kenya Revisited Live!!!" is a re-imagining of the legendary "Kenya" album by the Machito Afro Cubans with incredible new arrangements with Bobby conducting the Manhattan School of Music Afro-Cuban Jazz Orchestra that has astounded critics and fans and was nominated for a Latin Grammy for Best Latin Jazz recording. He is on the faculty of MSM and the New School. He leads several ensembles: Quarteto Aché', Ascensión, and the Bobby Sanabria Big Band. He was associate producer of the TV documentaries "The Palladium: Where Mambo Was King" and "From Mambo to Hip Hop." Mr. Sanabria is featured in the documentary, LATIN MUSIC USA, which aired on PBS in October 2009.

Tickets

A minimal ticket price is required for selected jazz concerts. To see which jazz concerts are ticketed, please visit the MSM website at concertinfo@msmnyc.edu or call the MSM Concert

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Office at 917 493 4428. The MSM Concert Office is open Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Tuesday and Thursday from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., and one hour before curtain for ticketed events. Manhattan School of Music is located on the northwest corner of 122nd Street and Broadway, and is easily accessible by public transportation.

For more information about Manhattan School of Music and a full roster of performances, including the year-long "Harlem Nights" concert series, please visit <http://www.msmnyc.edu> .