International Jazz Day 2015

30 April 2015
A worldwide celebration of jazz

In November 2011, UNESCO officially designated April 30 as International Jazz Day. It is recognized on the official calendars of both the United Nations and UNESCO.

The goal of International Jazz Day is to highlight jazz and its diplomatic role of uniting people in all corners of the globe.

As the lead nonprofit organization charged with planning and promoting this annual celebration, the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz coordinates events and programs with partners from the public, private and nonprofit sectors worldwide.

“From its earliest days, when the pianist Jelly Roll Morton spoke of a ‘Spanish tinge,’ jazz has been extraordinarily open to international influences. Now it’s official. Last fall UNESCO…designated jazz ‘a universal music of freedom and creativity.’” – The New York Times, April 29, 2012
The values of jazz

International Jazz Day is intended to raise awareness of the virtues of jazz as an educational tool and a force for peace, unity, dialogue and enhanced cooperation among people. The Day brings together communities, schools, artists, historians, academics and jazz enthusiasts throughout the global UNESCO network to celebrate and learn about the art of jazz, its roots, its future and its impact.

- **Jazz breaks down barriers and creates opportunities for mutual understanding and tolerance**
- **Jazz is a vector of freedom of expression**
- **Jazz is a symbol of unity and peace**
- **Jazz reduces tensions between individuals, groups and communities**
- **Jazz encourages artistic innovation, improvisation, new forms of expression and inclusion of traditional music forms into new ones**
- **Jazz stimulates intercultural dialogue and empowers young people from marginalized societies**

“On International Jazz Day, the world comes together in peace and harmony, to share a passion for music and to join forces for freedom and creativity. Jazz draws roots from a great mix of people and cultures – from Africa, Europe, and the Caribbean...Jazz provided the soundtrack for past struggles for dignity and civil rights. It remains today a force for social transformation, because it tells a story of freedom that all people share.” – **Director-General Bokova**
A model of success for a truly global celebration

• All 195 Member States celebrated International Jazz Day 2014 with concerts, education programs and events.

Posters created by Jazz Day organizers from around the world

• To date, partners in nearly 190 countries have committed to join the 2015 observance

“There is, it seems, one thing that the nations of the world can agree upon: jazz.”
– JazzTimes, July 24, 2013
Stories from around the world in 2014

- In war-torn Bangui, Central African Republic, the Alliance Française taught students about the history of jazz
- A nightclub in Damascus, Syria screened the 2013 All-Star Global Concert for patrons
- A jazz club in Bangkok, Thailand hosted a free concert featuring local musicians— the Director of UNESCO’s office in Bangkok even joined in as a special guest!
- The Peruvian National Commission for UNESCO coordinated multiple educational and performance events in Lima

“...jazz music is a universal medium for breaking down barriers between people and bridging the distances, both geographical and emotional ones. Back in the dawn of its existence, jazz emerged as a certain far cry for freedom, tolerance and unity of people of United States...that idea has expanded and eventually embraced the entire world.” - Dimitrije Vasiljevic, Serbian jazz pianist

- The Ahliah School in Beirut, Lebanon – part of the UNESCO Affiliated Schools Network – held a jazz concert featuring professional and student groups
- A youth development program in Mercedes, Uruguay produced a concert at the municipal theatre with two local bands
A glimpse of select worldwide activities planned for April 30:

- **Nigeria**: Satchmo’s Live Events in Lagos will produce a four-day festival featuring more than 50 different concert performances, workshops, film screenings, jam sessions and more.
- **Latvia**: The Wise Music Society in Riga will organize concerts and jam sessions in public and private venues across the city.
- **Republic of Korea**: The Seoul Jazz Academy and the Crazy Horse Jazz Club in Seoul will host concert programs with students and patrons.
- **Australia**: Venues in Tasmania and Melbourne will produce concerts and an awards show recognizing top native talent.
- **China**: The Shanghai Culture Square will host an educational and performance program.
- **Chile**: The Jazz Orchestra Hualpén Big Band in Concepción will sponsor a master class followed by a concert and open jam session.
- **Uzbekistan**: The UNESCO Office in Tashkent will coordinate a month-long festival with the cooperation of multiple foreign embassies and the State Conservatory of Uzbekistan/State Jazz Orchestra of Uzbekistan.
- **South Africa**: In Johannesburg, organizers will present a daylong program of performances, workshops, seminars and other educational activities like “Changing South African Educational Outcomes Through Jazz Education.”
- **USA**: The University of Central Oklahoma’s Jazz Lab in Edmond, Oklahoma will hold an afternoon master class and evening concert with two jazz masters.
- **Bahamas**: The Bahamas National Commission will organize a waterfront festival in Nassau featuring eight hours of continuous music by professional and student musicians

“For us, jazz is very important as it is a sip of freedom.”
– Karla Makatova, organizer in Almaty, Kazakhstan
What you can organize

National Commissions can support a variety of initiatives on or around April 30

• Proclamation or press release disseminated via existing web/press apparatus affirming the Commission’s moral support of the International Jazz Day initiative.

• Listening session of classic jazz recordings organized in affiliated school, library, or related educational institution. A suggested selection of recordings can be provided by the Thelonious Monk Institute staff.

• Public viewing of the All-Star Global Concert webcast from UNESCO Headquarters in Paris (19h local time). The concert will be available for viewing live, as well as on-demand later in the evening, via unesco.org/jazzday and jazzday.com.

• Workshop/lecture by academic or jazz musician focusing on the cultural and diplomatic features of jazz music, including its potential to facilitate peace-building, dialogue and integration/expression of diverse viewpoints and traditions.

• Free public concert at cultural center or performance hall with local or international artists/groups. Many organizers choose to include a jam session that is “open” to attendees or other groups at the conclusion of the concert. This can help maximize inclusivity and capitalize on the social aspect of the celebration.

• Multi-day festival including educational and performance programming, free and open to the public. These celebrations frequently include substantial emphasis on raising awareness of the unique musical/cultural contributions to jazz made by native musicians and/or thought leaders.
For more information, please contact

Ms. Mika Shino  
Director, International Jazz Day Program and Outreach

mika@jazzday.com

+1 202 364 7272