

## Jazz Series comes to an end

The Tbilisi Jazz Series concluded on May 5 with a performance by contemporary jazz musician Lee Ritenour and his band. Within the framework of the Jazz Series, Tbilisi joined the —celebration of International Jazz Day on April 30 with non-stop programs on Jazz FM, a concert at the Tbilisi Events Hall and live streaming of a Gala concert from Istanbul.



Since 2001, the month of April has been assigned Jazz appreciation month and in 2011, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) officially designated April 30 as International Jazz Day to highlight jazz and its diplomatic role of uniting people in all corners of the globe.

“Jazz is not only a unique genre, but is raised to a political level,” says Kakha Kandelaki, one of the organizers of Eastern Promotion.

International Jazz Day was celebrated in 196 nations around the world via different events and culminated in an All-Star concert at Istanbul’s Hagia Irene. “Thanks to our partners, we had the possibility to broadcast a live performance with high definition and sound,” says Kandelaki.

“Concerts at Tbilisi Event Hall were very sophisticated,” he said. “Jazz artists from two generations met each other on one stage and gave the audience a 40-minute amazing performance. This included Zura Ramishvili, Pauka Kvatchadze, Tamaz Kurashvili, Papuna Sharikadze and several other younger jazz professionals to name a few,” he noted.

Later, Tbilisi Municipal Big Band and Friends enchanted the audience with their special program prepared specifically for Jazz Day. For an hour and a half, the band and their vocalist friends performed pieces from different genres so that everyone could enjoy the show.

The event was non-commercial so it was attended by 500 guests invited by partner organizations; among them were students, students of musical schools and soldiers who served in Afghanistan.

“The video coverage of Jazz Day was also uploaded on the official web-page of International Jazz Day, who thanked us for the event,” noted Kandelaki, adding that he doesn’t rule out the fact that one day Georgia will host International Jazz Day.

On May 5, Lee Ritenour and his band consisting of Jesse Miller on keyboards, Melvin Lee Davis on bass and Roger Biwandu on drums, came directly from Jazz Day and continued his tour in Tbilisi.

“The concert was simply amazing,” said Kandelaki. “Not only me, but the whole audience was astonished,” he noted, adding that his drummer has worked with Marcus Miller and Joe Zawinul.

Ritenour brought several guitars— classical, rock and jazz – enabling him to perform different genres on different instruments. “The concert was quite interesting and featured the classical genre, pop-instrumental and funk. It was a well-deserved grand finale for the Jazz Series,” Kandelaki said.

However, this is not the end, as the Black Sea Jazz Festival is just around the corner. Currently, the organizers say that Victor Wooten Ban and Mike Stern will perform on June 19 and the whole festival will be planned around this date. According to organizers, it’s an innovative project and should be quite interesting for the audience, as it will feature funk rock melodies with a jazzy touch.

The final list of performers and dates will be published at [www.batumijazz.ge](http://www.batumijazz.ge) until the end of May.

**By Baia Dzagnidze**

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