

International Jazz Day being celebrated today

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International Jazz Day is an International Day declared by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 2011 to highlight jazz and its diplomatic role of uniting people in all corners of the globe.

It is chaired and led by the UNESCO Director General and legendary jazz pianist and composer Herbie Hancock, who serves as a UNESCO Ambassador for Intercultural Dialogue and Chairman of the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz. The Institute is the lead nonprofit organization charged with planning, promoting and producing this annual celebration.

International Jazz Day is intended to raise awareness in the international community of the virtues of jazz as an educational tool, and a force for peace, unity, dialogue and enhanced cooperation among people. Many governments, civil society organizations, educational institutions, and private citizens currently engaged in the promotion of jazz music will embrace the opportunity to foster greater appreciation not only for the music but also for the contribution it can make to building more inclusive societies.



The 2018 All-Star Global Concert took place at the Mariinsky Theatre in Saint Petersburg, Russia. A series of free educational and outreach programmes took

place on April 28 culminating on April 30 in an extraordinary all-star concert at the historic Mariinsky Theatre, an event which is being streamed live worldwide.

Nearly three dozen acclaimed artists representing 14 countries including Unesco Goodwill Ambassador & iconic jazz pianist Herbie Hancock (USA) and renowned saxophonist Igor Butman (Russia) are serving as artistic co-directors of the all-star concert while John Beasley (USA) is serving as the evening's musical director.

Jazz has been played in Saint Petersburg since 1927, when Russia's First Concert Jazz Band was founded, at the Saint Petersburg State Capella, followed by the creation of the first jazz collective in 1929. It is also the only city in Russia to have a Jazz Philharmonic Hall, founded in 1989.

Celebrations will also take place in other cities across the Russian Federation and in more than 190 countries worldwide to mark the Day, which was established by UNESCO in coordination with the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz in 2011, recognizing the role of jazz in promoting freedom, creativity and intercultural dialogue, uniting people from all corners of the globe.

Why Jazz?

- 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 fosters gender equality;
- Jazz reinforces the role youth play for social change;
- 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.

Sydney, Australia, will serve as the Global Host City of International Jazz Day 2019 and next year's All-Star Global Concert will be performed in the iconic Sydney Opera House, a UNESCO World Heritage site.