



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



• International Jazz Day
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• THELONIOUS MONK
INSTITUTE OF JAZZ

International Jazz Day – Overview

In November 2011, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) officially designated April 30 as **International Jazz Day** in order to highlight jazz and its diplomatic role of uniting people in all corners of the globe. International Jazz Day is chaired and led by [Irina Bokova](#), 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 brings together communities, schools, artists, historians, academics, and jazz enthusiasts all over the world to celebrate and learn about jazz and its roots, future and impact; raise awareness of the need for intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding; and reinforce international cooperation and communication. Each year on April 30, this international art form is recognized for promoting peace, dialogue among cultures, diversity, and respect for human rights and human dignity; eradicating discrimination; promoting freedom of expression; fostering gender equality; and reinforcing the role of youth in enacting social change.

International Jazz Day is the culmination of [Jazz Appreciation Month](#), which draws public attention to jazz and its extraordinary heritage throughout April. In December 2012, the United Nations General Assembly formally welcomed the decision by the UNESCO General Conference to proclaim April 30 as International Jazz Day. The United Nations and UNESCO now both recognize International Jazz Day on their official calendars.

2014

Osaka, Japan has been selected to serve as the 2014 Global Host City. This year's celebration will kick off with a daylong series of jazz education programs, including performances, roundtable discussions, master classes, instrumental workshops and more conducted by world-renowned jazz musicians and educators at the [Osaka School of Music](#). The evening All-Star Global Concert at the famed outdoor Osaka Castle Park will feature performances by Toshiko Akiyoshi, John Beasley (Musical Director), Kris Bowers, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Terri Lyne Carrington, Theo Croker, Sheila E., Pete Escovedo, Roberta Gambarini, Kenny Garrett, James Genus, Roy Hargrove, Lalah Hathaway, Terumasa Hino, Earl Klugh, Marcus Miller, T.S. Monk, Gregory Porter, Claudio Roditi, John Scofield, Wayne Shorter, Esperanza Spalding, Lew Tabackin, Steve Turre and other internationally acclaimed artists, with further details to be announced shortly.

As in 2013, the Global Concert will be streamed live worldwide via the UNESCO, U.S. Department of State, and Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz websites. Individuals and organizations the world over are invited to screen the concert live or organize their own unique event in honor of International Jazz Day. Over 100 countries have been confirmed already; see what activities will be happening near you by visiting [the 2014 events page](#).

2013

Istanbul, Turkey was named the 2013 Global Host City for International Jazz Day. The city hosted a daylong series of jazz events including workshops and seminars, panels and roundtable discussions, film screenings, student master classes led by prominent musicians and educators, and – of course – live performances.

The crowning event of the celebration was the Global Concert in the *Hagia Irene*, a 4th-century Byzantine Church. The star-studded evening featured an extraordinary series of performances from Dale Barlow (Australia), John Beasley, Rubén Blades (Panama), Terence Blanchard, Igor Butman (Russia), Terri Lyne Carrington, Anat Cohen (Israel), Vinnie Colaiuta, Imer Demirer (Turkey), George Duke, James Genus, Robert Glasper, Herbie Hancock, Zakir Hussain (India), Al Jarreau, Bilal Karaman (Turkey), Ramsey Lewis, Pedrito Martinez, Hugh Masekela, Branford Marsalis, Keiko Matsui (Japan), John McLaughlin (Britain), Marcus Miller, Thelonious Monk, Jr., Milton Nascimento (Brazil), Eddie Palmieri, Alevtina Polyakova (Russia), Jean-Luc Ponty (France), Dianne Reeves, Lee Ritenour, Hüsnü Şenlendirici (Turkey), Wayne Shorter, Esperanza Spalding, Joss Stone, Joe Louis Walker, Ben Williams, and Liu Yuan (China).

Attendees also heard remarks from International Jazz Day Co-Chairs Herbie Hancock and Irina Bokova, and guest speaker Martin Luther King III, among others. The evening's festivities were broadcast live online and on public television stations worldwide, with "Listening Parties" organized in countries from the U.S. to Trinidad and Tobago to Georgia to Bhutan.

In the true spirit of the Day, citizens the world over showed their love for jazz by participating in jam sessions, concerts, flash mobs, lectures, and film screenings; producing video tributes; and taking the conversation digital on Facebook, Twitter, and beyond.

2012

[UNESCO](#) and United Nations missions, U.S. embassies and government outposts around the world hosted special events for the first annual International Jazz Day on April 30, 2012 to honor this revered musical art form. Universities, libraries, schools, community centers, performing arts venues and arts organizations of all disciplines around the world marked the day through concerts, education programs, seminars, lectures, book readings, public jam sessions, master classes, photo exhibitions, dance recitals, film and documentary screenings, theater presentations and spoken word performances. More than one billion people around the world were reached through 2012 International Jazz Day programs and media coverage.

In 2012, UNESCO and the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz presented three high-profile programs: a daylong celebration in Paris at UNESCO world headquarters; a sunrise concert in New Orleans' Congo Square, the birthplace of jazz; and a sunset concert at the United Nations General Assembly Hall in New York City. Among the world-renowned artists that participated were John Beasley, Tony Bennett, George Benson, Terence Blanchard, Richard Bona (Cameroon), Dee Dee Bridgewater, Candido, Teri Lyne Carrington, Ron Carter, Robert Cray, Jack DeJohnette, George Duke, Sheila E., Herbie Hancock, Antonio Hart, Jimmy Heath, Hiromi (Japan), Zakir Hussain (India), Chaka Khan, Angelique Kidjo (Benin), Lang Lang (China), Joe Lovano, Romero Lubambo (Brazil), Shankar Mahadevan (India), Ellis Marsalis, Wynton Marsalis, Hugh Masekela (South Africa), Christian McBride, Marcus Miller, Danilo Pérez (Panama), Wayne Shorter, Esperanza Spalding, Treme Brass Band and Stevie Wonder. Hosts included Robert De Niro, Michael Douglas, Morgan Freeman and Quincy Jones.

The Institute and UNESCO will continue their partnership to encourage schools, universities, libraries, arts organizations, community centers and other entities in UNESCO's 195 member states to host jazz concerts and educational programs on International Jazz Day. Our goal is to reach people of all ages and backgrounds, in order to include them in this global celebration of freedom, creativity, and – above all – jazz.