

International Jazz Day 2015 to be celebrated in 196 countries

Jazz Day will bring a positive message to Paris after Charlie Hebdo attacks, says pianist Herbie Hancock

By Martin Chilton
30 April 2015 • 10:38am



Dee Dee Bridgewater, performing here at The Barbican in London, will perform as part of the 2015 International Jazz Day celebrations CREDIT: Photo: Mark Winpenny/Live

Herbie Hancock says that scores of top musicians will gather in Paris to celebrate [International Jazz Day](#) 2015 and use the music they love as "a bridge for bringing people together" in a city still recovering from the Charlie Hebdo terrorist attacks.

The centrepiece of the celebrations will be an All-Star Global Concert at UNESCO's Paris headquarters on April 30, to be live streamed around the world, featuring Hancock and fellow Americans Wayne Shorter, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Dianne

Reeves, Al Jarreau and Marcus Miller. To show the international reach of jazz, there will be guest musicians from around the world, including pianist A Bu (China); trumpeters Hugh Masekela (South Africa), Ibrahim Maalouf (Lebanon) and Claudio Roditi (Brazil); saxophonists Igor Butman (Russia), Femi Kuti (Nigeria) and Guillaume Perret (France), and oud player Dhafer Youssef (Tunisia).

The deadly January attacks on the French satirical newspaper Charlie Hebdo and a Jewish food market have given this year's Jazz Day added significance, according to pianist Hancock. "Jazz has been a bridge for bringing people together," UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador Hancock told Associated Press. "It's not sectarian and it's not just for people of a particular ethnic group. It's for human beings. We need to recognise that which makes us similar, while at the same time honoring that which makes us different. It will bring a positive message."

UNESCO Director-General Irina Bokova added: "Jazz is not simply music. Jazz is about civil rights, human dignity and dialogue among cultures. Jazz emphasises the importance of creativity and freedom of expression."

More than 50 concerts and performances will take place across Paris, and Jazz Day events are planned in nearly all 196 UN member states. It is the fourth year of the celebrations.



Herbie Hancock performing in New York in April 2014 GETTY IMAGES

Paris has been a thriving centre of jazz for almost a century. In the Thirties, the Hot Club of France Quintet featuring guitarist Django Reinhardt and violinist Stéphane Grappelli became the first European jazz group to make a major impact. After the Second World War, American jazz artists such as soprano saxophonist Sydney Bechet, drummer Kenny Clarke and pianist Bud Powell made Paris their home.

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"The French people really look up to jazz as being a great art music," said Hancock. "It's a music recognised by people from all walks of life and all age ranges."

There will be 15 International Jazz Day events in the UK, including a celebration of the music of Billie Holiday.

Jazz Day events in the UK

- City of Derry Jazz and Big Band Festival, 6pm (98 Strand Road, Derry), and event also featuring Ambient Forces – Free Jazz, featuring Alan Niblock, Rachel Musson and Roger Turner, 8pm (Playhouse Theatre, Derry)
- Ribble Valley Jazz Festival, 7pm (featuring guitarists Mike Walker and Stuart McCallum at Grindleton Pavilion, Clitheroe, Lancashire)
- Sam Healey Quartet, 7.30pm (The Cinnamon Club, Altrincham, Cheshire)
- Jazz Day Family Music Workshop and The Mike Brown Trio, 6pm (Starbucks Fiveways, Hagley Road, Birmingham)
- International Jazz Day Concert, featuring Brass Jaw, Fraser Fifield & Graeme Stephen and the Ken Matheson Classic Jazz Orchestra, 7.30pm (Glasgow Royal Concert Hall)
- J-Night presents Christine Tobin – I Love Elis, a concert dedicated to Brazilian vocalist Elís Regina, 8pm (Hull Truck Theatre, Hull, Humberside)
- Interplay Jazz Group plus special guest Claude Deppa, 7.30pm (Royal Pump Rooms Parade, Leamington Spa)
- Ode to The Human Spirit 2015, featuring The Human Revolution Orchestra with Robin Eubanks, 7pm (Union Chapel, Islington, London)
- Shez Raja with Arun Ghosh & Monika Lidke, 8pm (606 Jazz Club, Chelsea, London)
- Ronnie Scott's International Jazz Day Screening of the Gala Concert live from Paris. The screening will be followed by a one-off International Jazz Day Jam led by Andy Davies & featuring Benet McLean (piano), Lorenzo Bassignani (bass) & Saleem Raman (drums). From 5.30pm (Ronnie Scott's, Soho, London)
- Eleven Flames – Nick Weldon Sextet, 8.30pm (Lauderdale House, Highgate, London)
- 'In A Different Mood: Billie Holiday at 100!', featuring Jean Toussaint, Kate Williams, Neville Malcolm, Winston Clifford and Liberty Gospel Ensemble, 6pm (Edward Boyle Auditorium, Jacqueline du Pre Music Building, Oxford)
- After Dark Fonksters Celebrate International Jazz Day, 8pm (Granvilles Brasserie, Stone, Staffordshire)

- Gilmore n' Jaz, 7pm (The Weighbridge Brewhouse, Restaurant, Bar & Micro Brewery, Swindon)

- Jazz Jam (The Wine Barrel, Truro, Cornwall)

For full details about the events, see jazzday.com