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ART-AND-CULTURE Updated: Apr 30, 2020 12:27 IST



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Hindustan Times, Delhi



International Jazz Day 2020: Jazz goes virtual this year to bring music lovers together during coronavirus pandemic. (Unsplash)

International Jazz Day is observed to connect artists, communities, schools, academics, historians and jazz enthusiasts from around the world to celebrate [jazz](#). The day also raises awareness about intercultural dialogue and the immense history and heritage of Jazz, which is an over a century-old music genre.

The day was declared by the UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) in 2011. The idea to commemorate this day came from jazz pianist and UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador Herbie Hancock. International Jazz Day also aims at highlighting the immense role the youth can play in enacting social change across the globe.

Audrey Azoulay, Director-General of UNESCO on the occasion of the International Jazz Day says, “In the peculiar circumstances of this International Jazz Day, as the world faces the COVID-19 pandemic, music is bringing people together and helping to keep hope alive.”

The official UNESCO site quotes Nina Simone: “Jazz is not just music, it is a way of life, it is a way of being, a way of thinking.”

“This Day is intended to raise awareness of the virtues of jazz as an educational tool, and a force for empathy, 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 official site says.

What to expect on International Jazz Day 2020:

On account of the ongoing **coronavirus pandemic**, artistes from around the world will be uniting virtually this year. A virtual global concert, hosted by Herbie Hancock, will also feature artists from across the globe and will be streamed live on jazzday.com.

Cape Town, South Africa was initially chosen as the prime location of International Jazz Day which has now moved into the virtual universe.

The concert is scheduled to begin at 1500 hours US eastern time and will feature performances by Marcus Miller, Lang Lang, Charlie Puth, Cécile McLorin Salvant, John McLaughlin, Dianne Reeves, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Sibongile Khumalo, Alune Wade, John Beasley, Ben Williams, Lizz Wright, John Scofield, Igor Butman, Evgeny Pobozhiy, Youn Sun Nah, A Bu, Jane Monheit, and Joey DeFrancesco, among others. A free series of educational masterclasses, children’s activities and discussions via web conference featuring renowned educators and jazz artists will also be available for jazz aficionados.

To mark the 9th year of **International Jazz Day**, here’s a list of quotes by famous musicians that you can share with fellow jazz lovers:

- “Jazz is not just music, it’s a way of life, it’s a way of being, a way of thinking.” ~ Nina Simone
- “Jazz stands for freedom. It’s supposed to be the voice of freedom: Get out there and improvise, and take chances, and don’t be a perfectionist — leave that to the classical musicians.” ~ Dave Brubeck
- “Life is a lot like jazz — it’s best when you improvise.” ~ George Gershwin
- “Jazz is a feeling, more than anything else. It isn’t music, it’s language.” ~ Enos Payne
- “As far as playing jazz, no other art form, other than conversation, can give the satisfaction of spontaneous interaction.” ~ Stan Getz
- “That’s the thing about jazz: it’s free-flowing, it comes from your soul.” ~ Billy Crystal
- “Jazz is the only music in which the same note can be played night after night but differently each time.” ~ Ornette Coleman