


Home > News

## Jazz is the music of freedom, human rights: UNESCO

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Jazz is the music of freedom, human rights: UNESCO. Image Source: IANS News

NEW DELHI, APRIL 30 : Terming Jazz "the music of freedom, human rights and liberation", UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay has given a call to turn to jazz now more than ever; to get closer to one another on this ninth International Jazz Day, marked on April 30.

Established by the General Conference of UNESCO in 2011 and recognised by the United Nations General Assembly, International Jazz Day brings together countries and communities worldwide every April 30, to celebrate jazz and highlight its role in encouraging dialogue, combating discrimination and promoting human dignity. International Jazz Day has become a global movement, reaching billions of people annually.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, this year's annual International Jazz Day global celebration and the event's flagship Global Concert, initially scheduled to take place in South Africa's Cape Town will take place online. This will also be the case with the many other events planned around the world for the day.

UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador for Intercultural Dialogue Herbie Hancock, is the host of the Global Concert this year, which features artists from across the globe, and will be streamed live on the Organisation's site. Artists scheduled to perform at the concert include John McLaughlin, Jane Monheit, Alune Wade, John Beasley, Ben Williams, Lizz Wright, John Scofield, Igor Butman, Evgeny Pobozhiy, Youn Sun Nah, A Bu, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Dianne Reeves and Joey DeFrancesco, among others.

Closer home, the popularity of jazz seems to be growing in India, as does its active listenership and practice.

NCR-based The Piano Man Jazz Club founder and Fulbright music scholar Arjun Sagar Gupta believes that Jazz, like another other form of art and culture, needs exposure to grow and gain popularity.

"The last five-six years has seen a renewed push towards the promotion of jazz in India, which is creating an ever increasing base of patrons and lovers of the art form. We hope that in the years to come this continues to grow, spurred on by more and more artists performing the music and more people supporting and listening to it," Gupta told IANSlife.

During the lockdown, The Piano Man is also live streaming an online six-artiste concert to mark the occasion. Featured artistes are Bhavya Raj, Vatsal Bakhda, Manta Sidhu, Tatyana Shandrakova, Arjun Sagar Gupta and Elena Friedrich. "Jazz, for me, is at a point in India, where it is growing and we have people who want to explore this art form, both as musicians and as listeners," Bakhda said.

Jazz as a genre has been in the spotlight, thanks to endorsements by music's biggest stars like Kendrick Lamar, whose album "To Pimp a Butterfly" prominently featured contemporary names from the new-age jazz world.

In celebration of the International Jazz Day, social music streaming app Resso has added a station to their latest song tab channel 'QuaranTunes' called 'Jazz At Home'. In addition to that, they will launch 10 mood-based playlists for every hour curated as per the vibe and time of the day. The station covers the pioneers as well as new age artists in the genre that include Nina Simone, Miles Davis, Wes Montgomery to Kamasi Washington, Snarky Puppy and Flying Lotus among others.

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