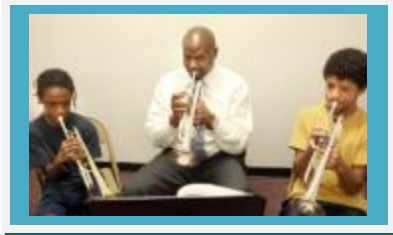




“The Impact of the August, 2009 Pittsburgh Jazz Camp for Youth”



November, Pittsburgh, PA

From the opening note to the closing community concert, the 2009 AMCC/AAMI Jazz Camp (America's Music Crossroads Center/Afro- American Music Institute) for urban youth provided an intensive two week experience to learn from the greats of Pittsburgh Jazz. This camp was produced by AMCC/AAMI and directed by Dr. Johnson and Sean Jones and served youth grades 5 through 12. The children performed with professional artists and participated in three audience-packed concerts in Homewood, in the Hill District and at The New Hazlett Theater on the North Side.

“Our hope is that this camp can become an annual camp. An annual camp will help us to preserve our rich Pittsburgh and innovative jazz tradition,” explains Dr. Johnson. “Through this camp, we will be able to strengthen the creative abilities of not only Afro-Americans but people of all races. Perhaps a return to a strong music tradition in the Pittsburgh community taught by personal mentors, will not only offer a deterrent to crime among young people, but will also present an alternative avenue for activities that are healthy and positive.”

It is estimated that there were 200 years of combined jazz performance experience among the instructors...each one a Pittsburgh icon in jazz...just look at this list: **Dr. James T. Johnson** (Founder and Executive Director of the Afro-American Music Institute), **Sean Jones** (Professor at Duquesne and lead trumpeter with Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis), **Roger Humphries** (World renowned drummer, founder and leader of RH Factor, the Roger Humphries Big Band), **Howie Alexander** (senior piano instructor and Asst. Director of the AAMI Boys Choir and member of The Pogie Bell Band), **Dwayne Dolphin** (a veteran player of the acoustic, electric, and piccolo bass). **Tony Campbell** (professional jazz saxophonist), **Chris Hemingway** (Chris performs regularly with the New Century Saxophone Quartet, Roger Humphries, Sean Jones, and other jazz legends), **Dr. Nelson Harrison** (clinical psychologist; educator, ASCAP composer/lyricist/ publisher; arranger, playwright, jazzologist, speaker, inventor of the trombetta, author, veteran trombonist of the Count Basie Orchestra, Board Member of the African American Jazz Caucus, Inc.)

What a faculty!!!...Can you imagine the development of our Pittsburgh youth in music, live performance, school, and in career development if we could have this type of interaction between the greats of Pittsburgh Jazz and the aspiring young musicians? Well guess what? This is what the Pittsburgh music scene was all about when the Crawford Grill, the Hurricane Lounge, the Musician's Club, and Doves on 9th were open for business.

Roger Humphries expressed, "That it was truly a worthwhile program which gave students the opportunity to perform with such talented legendary musicians. I really enjoyed sharing my knowledge and expertise with them."

Dr. Johnson opened the camp with an uplifting speech filled with the spirit of encouragement for brotherhood and sisterhood that is forged through the practice and live performance of jazz. Jessica Lee, co-director of the America's Music Crossroads Center, wished that everybody could have witnessed the kids hanging on every word that bass player Dwayne Dolphin used to describe his personal memories as an inspiration for song writing and performance.

As jazz mentor Dr. Nelson Harrison stated:

"This Jazz Camp provided an in-depth and fun experience for over 40 youth who received their first exposure to the mentorship tradition that has made Pittsburgh jazz musicians stylistic and cultural leaders throughout the entire history of jazz. This 'million-dollar faculty' of jazz spanning 3 generations brought their skills, stories and techniques up-close and personal to accelerate the transmission of this cultural National Treasure to a diversified group of eager aspirants. The camp emphasized the 'experiential' aspects of performance which involves skills in "conversational sound production" not just the didactic, academic approach that is used in most formal music programs. Performance and creation involve conceptual understanding at a visceral level while instilling confidence, self-esteem, collective awareness and communication among performers and between group and audience. The camp culminated in a live performance with student and faculty playing together in various configurations for an appreciative audience of family and friends."

In the final concert, the professional mentors encouraged the children to join them on stage. To their surprise a tiny young flutist walked to the microphone with the confidence of a master and began to play. Her command of the stage caused the other children to join the live performance.
A standing ovation confirmed the magic!

Sara Radelet, Executive Director of the New Hazlett Theater, expressed her views by saying, "We were impressed by the culminating performance of the students enrolled in the Afro-American Music Institute and America's Music Crossroads Center summer camp. We were especially impressed by the generosity of Pittsburgh's top jazz musicians in teaching during the two-week run of the camp. It was clear that the students had developed rapport with their teachers and had much respect for them. It's hard to know if the students fully understand who they were working with and the talent of their teachers - Dwayne Dolphin, Roger Humphries, Sean Jones, and others. I couldn't stop smiling as they performed. The summer camp is a great program and a great opportunity for young musicians."

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