



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 23, 2018

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THELONIOUS MONK INSTITUTE BRINGS ALL-STAR HIGH SCHOOL JAZZ SEXTET TO FARGO AND SIOUX FALLS PUBLIC SCHOOLS AS PART OF NATIONAL PEER-TO-PEER EDUCATION INITIATIVE, APRIL 16-20 FEATURING INTERNATIONALLY RENOWNED RECORDING ARTISTS **DON BRADEN** AND **LISA HENRY**

WEEKLONG SERIES OF EVENTS INCLUDES A PERFORMANCE
OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AT **FERNSON ON 8TH** IN SIOUX FALLS ON APRIL 20

Washington, DC – With lead funding from United Airlines and the National Endowment for the Arts, the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz will bring its “Peer-to-Peer” jazz education program to Fargo and Sioux Falls public schools April 16-20. Combining performance with educational information, these “informances” will be presented by six of the country’s most gifted high school music students who comprise the National Peer-to-Peer Jazz Sextet. They will be accompanied by internationally acclaimed jazz saxophone recording artist **Don Braden**, Kansas City jazz and blues vocalist and a former winner of the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz International Vocals Competition **Lisa Henry**, and renowned jazz educator **Dr. JB Dyas**. Each school visit will include an assembly program featuring musical performances for all students, followed by jazz workshops for each school’s jazz band and choir in which the visiting student performers play alongside and share ideas with their North and South Dakota counterparts.

“We’ve found that sometimes young people can learn about certain things better from kids their same age, and one of them is jazz,” said jazz great **Herbie Hancock**, Chairman of the Institute, NEA Jazz Master, and Goodwill Ambassador for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). “And when you hear how accomplished these musicians are at such a young age, you know their peers are going to listen.” The April Peer-to-Peer tour will serve as a prelude to International Jazz Day, a worldwide celebration held every year on April 30 that is organized by UNESCO and the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz and co-chaired by Hancock and UNESCO Director General Audrey Azoulay.

Besides playing jazz at a level that belies their years, the students will talk with their Fargo and Sioux Falls peers about what jazz is, why it’s important to America, and how a jazz ensemble represents a perfect democracy. They also will discuss important American values that jazz represents: teamwork, freedom with responsibility, unity with ethnic diversity, the correlation of hard work and goal accomplishment, and the importance of finding a passion early in life, being persistent, and believing in yourself. When young people hear this important message from kids their same age, they are often more likely to listen.

The members of the all-star sextet selected nationwide to participate in the Dakotas tour include trumpeter **Stéphane Clément**, 17, and alto saxophonist **Julian Gonzalez**, 17, from Miami; guitarist **Jordan Reifkind**, 17, and bassist **Dario Bizio**, 16, from Los Angeles; pianist **Tyler Henderson**, 16, from Houston; and drummer **Jeremiah Collier**, 17, from Chicago. “We’ve had a ball the last couple of months working on Mr. Braden’s jazz arrangements of Earth, Wind and Fire and Stevie Wonder tunes from his new album *Earth, Wind, and Wonder*” said Reifkind, who recently returned to L.A. from New York, where he performed with this year’s GRAMMY National High School Jazz Band. “Those great tunes from the ’70s and ’80s are really destined to become the next generation of great jazz standards.”

Immediately following the informances, Braden, Henry, and Dyas will conduct jazz workshops for each host school’s jazz band and choir in which the visiting students will play side-by-side with their North and South Dakota counterparts, providing tutelage peer to peer. In so doing, they will teach and learn from one another not unlike Thelonious Monk did with his fellow musicians during the bebop era some 70 years ago. They’ll also learn about each other’s cities and culture.

“We’re eager to hang out and play jazz with the students in Fargo and Sioux Falls,” added Gonzalez. “While I’m sure there’s a big difference between the Dakotas and Miami, I bet that we [as teenagers] really aren’t all that different.”

The weeklong tour, coinciding with Jazz Appreciation Month, celebrated across the United States each April, will conclude with a performance open to the public on **April 20** at Sioux Falls’ premier listening venue, **Fernson on 8th, 201 N. Weber Ave.**, where Sioux Falls residents and visitors are invited to enjoy an evening of music with Braden and Henry alongside jazz’s future “young lions.” The octet will perform standards, jazz classics, and contemporary jazz, including compositions from Braden’s and Henry’s latest recordings. Shows begin at 8:00 & 10:00 pm. For further information, call 605-789-2012 or visit www.fernson.com/on8th.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS & EDUCATORS



Don Braden is one of the top tenor saxophonists and jazz flutists on the scene today. Appearing on more than 100 albums (including 20 as leader), Braden has recorded and performed around the globe with such eminent jazz artists as Randy Brecker, Betty Carter, Gerald Clayton, Tom Harrell, Roy Haynes, Freddie Hubbard, Dave Liebman, Wynton Marsalis, Christian McBride, Terell Stafford, Dave Stryker, Jeff “Tain” Watts, and Tony Williams. He is also a prolific and versatile composer, writing for ensembles ranging from duo to full symphonic orchestra in all styles of jazz, pop, and world music for recordings, film, and television. Besides being an internationally acclaimed performer and composer, Braden is a renowned jazz educator and enjoys working with up-and-coming young jazz artists. He has served on the faculties of Harvard, Montclair State, and William Paterson universities, as well as the Jamey Aebersold Summer Jazz Workshop. Formerly the artistic director of New Jersey Performing Arts Center’s Jazz for Teens program, Braden currently serves as music director for the Litchfield Jazz Camp and presents workshops and master classes around the world. His most recent recording, *Earth, Wind, and Wonder* (Creative Perspective Music, 2018) – comprising his big band and small group jazz arrangements of Earth, Wind and Fire and Stevie Wonder tunes – has been highly lauded by jazz fans and critics alike. www.donbraden.com



Lisa Henry is a dynamic vocalist with a combination of swingin’ cool and down home class. A Kansas City native, she began by singing gospel music in the Baptist church, and by age 12 was singing the music of Billie Holiday and Miles Davis. Henry was a winner of the 1994 Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz International Vocals Competition and was later named an International Jazz Ambassador to Africa. She toured Chile, Argentina and Peru with the Institute in the 1990s, performing for 34 Heads of State at the Summit of the Americas. In 2006, she participated in a U.S. State Department-sponsored tour of India and performed for an esteemed presidential dinner at the White House celebrating the Institute’s 20th Anniversary. Over the past 20 years, Henry has toured the globe, sharing the stage with such artists as Ambrose Akinmusire, Kenny Barron, Don Braden, Gerald Clayton, Robin Eubanks, Kenny Garrett, Herbie Hancock, Roy Hargrove, Antonio Hart, Ingrid Jensen, Kevin Mahogany, Delfeayo Marsalis, Lou Rawls, Wayne Shorter, Terell Stafford, Dayna Stephens, Clark Terry and Bobby Watson. Her *Live from 18th and Vine* recording has received critical acclaim. www.lisahenryjazz.com



Dr. JB Dyas has been a leader in jazz education for the past two decades. Formerly the Executive Director of the Brubeck Institute, Dyas currently serves as Vice President for Education and Curriculum Development at the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz. He oversees the Institute’s education and outreach programs including *Jazz in America: The National Jazz Curriculum* (www.jazzinamerica.org), one of the most significant and wide-reaching jazz education initiatives in the world. Throughout his career, Dyas has performed across the country, taught students at every level, directed large and small ensembles, developed and implemented new jazz curricula, and written for *DownBeat* magazine and other national music publications. He has served on the Smithsonian Institution’s Task Force for Jazz Education in America and presented numerous jazz education events worldwide with such artists as Dave Brubeck and Herbie Hancock. Dyas received his master’s degree in Jazz Pedagogy from the University of Miami and PhD in Music Education from Indiana University, and is a recipient of the *DownBeat* Achievement Award for Jazz Education. His *How to Teach Jazz to High School and College Students* video series is available free of charge at www.artistshousemusic.org.

ABOUT THE THELONIOUS MONK INSTITUTE OF JAZZ

The Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz is a nonprofit education organization established in 1986. Its mission is to offer the world’s most promising young musicians college level training by internationally acclaimed jazz masters and to present public school-based music education programs for young people around the world. The Institute preserves, perpetuates and expands jazz as a global art form, and utilizes jazz as a means to unite people of all ages, backgrounds and nationalities. All of the Institute’s education programs are provided free of charge to students, schools and communities worldwide. The Institute’s programs help fill a tremendous void in arts education left by budget cuts in public school funding, and use jazz as the medium to encourage imaginative thinking, creativity, a positive self-image, and respect for one’s own and others’ cultural heritage. Jazz great **Herbie Hancock** serves as the Institute’s chairman. www.monkinstitute.org.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL PERFORMING ARTS HIGH SCHOOL JAZZ PROGRAM

The Institute’s *National Performing Arts High School Jazz Program* facilitates the education of gifted music students who attend public performing arts high schools across the nation. The Program offers them the opportunity to participate in pre-conservatory, highly specialized, performance-based jazz curricula; study with some of the world’s most eminent jazz artists and educators; perform in jazz combos comprising their peers; and prepare for entry into the country’s most distinguished conservatories and university schools of music. Included is instruction in Jazz Improvisation, Theory, Composition, History, and Styles and Analysis. The Institute works with each school in developing jazz curricula and instructional methodology; provides ongoing private and group instruction with Institute teaching staff, visiting artists and educators; offers special residences with jazz masters; and arranges high-profile performance opportunities for the student ensembles.

ABOUT THE PEER-TO-PEER JAZZ EDUCATION INITIATIVE

Through the national *Peer-to-Peer Jazz Education Initiative*, which receives lead funding from the National Endowment for the Arts and United Airlines, the Institute invites outstanding music students from select public performing arts high schools across the nation to participate in weeklong *peer-to-peer jazz informance tours*. The young musicians gain invaluable performance experience playing as a jazz combo alongside internationally acclaimed artists while they, in turn, help educate young audiences in public schools throughout the U.S. about jazz, America’s indigenous musical art form. In so doing, they not only help develop jazz audiences for the future, but also exemplify the important American values that jazz represents: teamwork, unity with ethnic diversity, democracy, persistence, and the vital importance of really listening to one another.

ABOUT JAZZ APPRECIATION MONTH

Jazz Appreciation Month (JAM) was created by the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History in 2002 to herald the extraordinary heritage and history of jazz for the entire month of April. JAM is intended to stimulate and encourage people of all ages to participate in jazz – to study the music, attend concerts, listen to jazz on radio and recordings, read books about jazz, and more. The month-long jazz celebration culminates with International Jazz Day on April 30.

ABOUT INTERNATIONAL JAZZ DAY

In November 2011, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) officially designated April 30th as International Jazz Day in order to highlight jazz and its diplomatic role of uniting people in all corners of the globe. The annual event, celebrated in more than 190 countries worldwide, is chaired and led by **Audrey Azoulay**, UNESCO Director General, and legendary jazz pianist and composer **Herbie Hancock**, who serves as a UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador and Chairman of the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz. The Thelonious Monk Institute serves as the lead nonprofit organization charged with planning and promoting this annual worldwide celebration. The culmination of Jazz Appreciation Month, which draws public attention to jazz throughout April, International Jazz Day brings together communities, schools, artists, historians, academics and jazz enthusiasts from 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. St. Petersburg, Russia is serving as the International Jazz Day 2018 Global Host City. www.jazzday.com

Fargo and Sioux Falls Peer-to-Peer Jazz Informance, Concert, and Workshop Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>
Monday, April 16	Vocal Workshop	8:00 am	North High School
	Assembly Program/Concert	9:30 am	801 17 th Avenue North, Fargo, ND 58102
	Jazz Band Workshop	1:00 pm	701-446-2400 • Andy Dahlen, Principal
Tuesday, April 17 *	Assembly Program/Concert	9:15 am	Davies High School
	Jazz Band and Vocal Workshops	11:15 am	7150 25 th Street South, Fargo, ND 58104 701-446-5600 • Troy Cody, Principal
Wednesday, April 18	Assembly Program/Concert	9:45 am	Lincoln High School 2900 Cliff Avenue, Sioux Falls, SD 57105 605-367-7990 • Robert Grimm, Principal
Thursday, April 19	Assembly Program/Concert	9:15 am	Washington High School
	Jazz Band and Vocal Workshops	11:15 am	501 N. Sycamore Avenue, Sioux Falls, SD 57110 605-367-7970 • Dan Conrad, Principal
Friday, April 20 **	Assembly Program/Concert	10:05 am	Roosevelt High School
	Jazz Band and Vocal Workshops	11:30 am	6600 West 41 st Street, Sioux Falls, SD 57106 605-362-2860 • Tim Hazlett, Principal
	Concerts Open to the Public	8:00 pm 10:00 pm	Fernson on 8th 201 N. Weber Avenue, Sioux Falls, SD 57103 605-789-2012 • Patrick Engel, Manager

EDITORS:

* **Media Day/Press Concert for Fargo** with special guest **Mayor Tim Mahoney, City of Fargo**

Tuesday, April 17, 9:15 am – Davies High School, 7150 25th Street South, Fargo, ND 58104 • (701-446-5600)

** **Media Day/Press Concert for Sioux Falls** with special guest **Mayor Mike Huether, City of Sioux Falls**

Friday, April 20, 10:05 am – Roosevelt High School, 6600 W. 41st Street, Sioux Falls, SD 57106 • (605-362-2860)

For more information, full-length bios, and photos, or to schedule an interview with one of the artists and/or students, please contact: **JB Dyas** at jbdyas@monkinstitute.org or 323-270-3904.