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Music News

American jazz dazzles audience



Herbie Hancock (1st, L), Wayne Shorter (R), Nnenna Freelon (3rd, L) and the musicians of the Thelonious Monk Institute perform at Ben Thanh Theater on Saturday evening
(Photo: Binh Nguyen)

The entire Ben Thanh Theater audience was on its feet, clapping and cheering for an encore by Herbie Hancock, Wayne Shorter, Nneena Freelon and the musicians of the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz at a concert in HCMC Saturday night.

World-renowned pianist and composer Hancock, legendary saxophonist Shorter, lovely vocalist Freelon and the institute's gifted musicians answered the call and returned to the stage to win the audience's hearts one last time with their strong, smooth jazz rhythms.

Hancock told reporters on Friday afternoon that Saturday night's program would include a spectrum of simple to sophisticated songs to give the audience a better understanding of the diversity of jazz and a real sense of the genre.

The multi-Grammy award winner said that it was his first time performing with the other musicians, all of whom seemed to share the same enthusiasm for traveling and appearing in Vietnam.

Vietnamese children, who Freelon interacted with during a master class for jazz students at the HCMC Conservatory that the musicians hosted, especially impressed the internationally acclaimed vocalist.

"We could all learn from children, who taught me a Vietnamese song that I will remember forever."

She stressed the importance of music as a bridge where language fails. "There is no separation when I'm inside the music," she said before expressing her hope to return to Vietnam.

Mong Binh