

Good News: Jazz 'Informance' at Savannah Arts Academy



Published: Apr. 11, 2016 at 9:39 PM EDT | Updated: May. 11, 2016 at 9:48 PM EDT

SAVANNAH, GA (WTOC) - The Savannah-Chatham County Public School System got a very rare opportunity on Monday that only five school districts across the country get.

They were selected for a special jazz performance. However, it was so much more than that.

This wasn't just a jazz performance at Savannah Arts Academy. It was a jazz "informance."

"Part information, part performance," said Dr. J.B. Dyas, The Thelonius Monk Institute of Jazz. "Once people understand how jazz works, they're much more willing to listen to it and check it out."

The Thelonius Monk Institute of Jazz is touring five school districts nationwide, and selected the Savannah-Chatham County Public School System to be included. They play music, but also talk about what jazz is.

"Jazz is America's music," said Dr. Dyas. "It was born in this country, and we want American kids to know about their music."

Accomplished Jazz musicians were part of the "informance."

"I was pretty amazed by the response we had, today especially," said Dayna Stephens, Jazz Musician.

High school jazz musicians were also there.

"A lot of people our age, they don't listen to jazz, and that's okay," said Nelson Armstrong, High School Student, Houston, TX. "But for us, it's spiritual; it has meaning."

"When these kids go in, who look like them, talk like them, dress like them, and they say, 'Hey, you need to check out jazz; it's exciting, it's fun, you tap your foot to it, it makes you feel good,' then they're going to listen," said Dr. Dyas.

Their main goal was simply sharing the love of jazz.

"It just gets in your soul, and you don't have a choice, you have to play," said Amir Lee, High School Student, Houston, TX.

The jazz informance was free for the school.

This tour is here through Wednesday, then the group is off to Charleston.

Copyright 2016 [WTOC](#). All rights reserved.