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THELONIOUS MONK INSTITUTE BRINGS ALL-STAR HIGH SCHOOL JAZZ QUINTET TO CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS AS PART OF NATIONAL PEER-TO-PEER EDUCATION INITIATIVE, MAY 18-22 FEATURING WORLD-RENOWNED JAZZ RECORDING ARTISTS **ANTONIO HART** AND **KELLYLEE EVANS**

WEEKLONG SERIES INCLUDES PUBLIC PERFORMANCE AT **THE JAZZ SHOWCASE** ON MAY 21

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 Chicago public schools May 18-22. Combining performance with information, these “informances” will be presented by five of the country’s most exceptionally gifted high school music students along with internationally acclaimed jazz saxophonist and GRAMMY nominee **Antonio Hart**, vocal sensation and a former winner of the Thelonious Monk International Jazz Vocals Competition **Kellylee Evans**, and renowned jazz educator **Dr. JB Dyas**. Each school visit will include an assembly program featuring a musical performance for all students, followed by jazz workshops for each school’s jazz band and choir with the visiting student performers playing alongside and sharing ideas with their Windy City counterparts.

“We’ve found that sometimes young people can learn about certain things better from kids their own age, and one of them is jazz,” said 14-time GRAMMY winner **Herbie Hancock**, Chairman of the Institute, NEA Jazz Master, and International Goodwill Ambassador for UNESCO. “And when you hear how accomplished these musicians are at such a young age, you know their peers are going to listen to what they have to say.”

Besides playing jazz at a level that belies their years, the students will talk with their Chicago peers about what jazz is, why it is important to America, and how a jazz ensemble represents a perfect democracy. They also will discuss the important American values that jazz represents: teamwork, freedom with responsibility, unity with ethnic diversity, the correlation of hard work and goal accomplishment, persistence, and the vital importance of really listening to one another. When young people hear this important message from kids their same age, they are often more likely to tune in.

The members of the all-star quintet selected nationwide to participate in the Chicago tour include saxophonist **Isaiah Collier**, 16, from Chicago; guitarist **Josh Bermudez**, 18, from Miami; pianist **Jamael Dean**, 16, from Los Angeles; bassist **Kanoa Mendenhall**, 17, from San Francisco; and drummer **Jerome Gillespie**, 17, from Houston. “We’re so looking forward to going to Chicago,” said Bermudez, one of the best jazz guitarists for his age in the country. “This city is well known for having given us some of the greatest jazz and blues guitarists of all time.”

Immediately following the informances, Hart, Evans and Dyas will conduct jazz workshops for each host school’s jazz band and choir in which the visiting students will play with their Chicago counterparts side-by-side, 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 60 years ago. They’ll also learn about each other’s cities and culture.

“The best part will be hanging out and playing jazz with kids our own age from Chicago,” exclaimed Gillespie. “I can teach them about Texas blues, and they can teach me about Chicago blues.” Indeed, the Windy City is renowned for its legendary jazz and blues musicians, including such luminaries as the Art Ensemble of Chicago, Bobby Broom, Benny Goodman, Johnny Griffin, Buddy Guy, Muddy Waters, Howlin’ Wolf and many others.

The weeklong stint will include two shows open to the public on **Thursday, May 21, 8:00 & 10:00 pm**, at **The Jazz Showcase, 806 S. Plymouth Ct.**, where Chicago residents and visitors are invited to enjoy an evening of music with Hart and Evans alongside jazz’s future “young lions.” The septet will perform standards, jazz classics and contemporary tunes, as well as compositions from Hart’s and Evans’ latest recordings. Call 312-360-0234 or visit [www.jazzshowcase.com](http://www.jazzshowcase.com) for further information.

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS & EDUCATORS



**Antonio Hart** is one of the top alto saxophonists on the scene today. Born and raised in Baltimore, Hart was classically trained at the Baltimore School for the Arts, studied jazz at the Berklee College of Music in Boston, and later earned his master's degree in Music Composition and Performance at Queens College in New York. While at Berklee, he teamed up with classmate Roy Hargrove, with whom he would later tour the world and make a number of critically acclaimed recordings. In 1991, Hart made his debut recording as a leader with *For the First Time* on RCA/Novus. He has since gone on to appear on more than 100 albums and perform around the globe with such eminent jazz artists as Nat Adderley, Monty Alexander, Terence Blanchard, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Ray Brown, Cyrus Chestnut, Dizzy Gillespie, Slide Hampton, Jimmy Heath, Dave Holland, Christian McBride, Wallace Roney, SF Jazz Collective, McCoy Tyner and Nancy Wilson. Hart was nominated for a GRAMMY for Best Jazz Instrumental Solo for his recording, *Here I Stand*. Besides being an internationally acclaimed performer and prolific composer, Hart is a renowned educator and currently serves as Professor of Jazz Studies at the Aaron Copland School of Music at Queens College. [www.antoniohart.com](http://www.antoniohart.com)



**Kellylee Evans** is one of the most dynamic and creative vocalists of her generation. Hailing from Ontario, Canada, she discovered jazz in her teens while a student at Carleton University. She has since gone on to perform all over the world, opening for such artists as Tony Bennett, George Benson, Chris Botti, John Legend, Dianne Reeves, Derek Trucks and Willie Nelson. Evans recently appeared in Paris along with Herbie Hancock, Wayne Shorter and other jazz greats at this year's International Jazz Day All-Star Global Concert. She also appears on 13 albums, one of which, *Nina* (inspired by the life of jazz vocal great Nina Simone), won the 2011 Canadian Juno Award for Vocal Jazz Album of the Year. Evans was a winner of the 2010 Thelonious Monk International Jazz Vocals Competition held at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC. Besides being an extraordinary vocalist, she is a talented songwriter. Her latest recording, *I Remember When* (Universal Music Group, 2013), includes nine original compositions that have received critical acclaim. Evans is also a gifted educator and enjoys working with up-and-coming young jazz artists. She recently appeared with the Thelonious Monk National Performing Arts High School All-Star Jazz Sextet at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles. [www.kellyleeevans.com](http://www.kellyleeevans.com)



**Dr. J.B. 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](http://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 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. He is a recipient of the *DownBeat* Achievement Award for Jazz Education.

## 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 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 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](http://www.monkinstitute.org).

## ABOUT THE NATIONAL PERFORMING ARTS HIGH SCHOOL JAZZ PROGRAM

The Institute's *National Performing Arts High School Program* facilitates the education of gifted music students who attend public performing arts high schools across the nation. The Program offers them opportunities 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*, funded by United Airlines and the National Endowment for the Arts, the Institute invites outstanding music students from select public performing arts high schools across the nation to participate in week-long *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.

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### Chicago Peer-to-Peer Jazz Education Informance and Workshop Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>
Monday, May 18	Jazz Band Workshop	2:30 pm	CPS Advanced Arts Education Program Gallery 37 Center for the Arts 66 East Randolph Street, Chicago, IL 60601 Principal: Helen McElroy • 312-742-1460
	Jazz Vocal Workshop	2:30 pm	
	Peer-to-Peer Jam Session	4:00 pm	
Tuesday, May 19	Assembly Program	2:00 pm	Chicago High School for the Arts 2714 West Augusta Boulevard Chicago, IL 60622 Executive/Artistic Director: Jose Ochoa • 773-534-9710
	Jazz Band Workshop	3:30 pm	
	Jazz Vocal Workshop	3:30 pm	
	Peer-to-Peer Jam Session	5:00 pm	
Wednesday, May 20	Assembly Program	1:00 pm	Lake View High School 4015 North Ashland Avenue, Chicago, IL 60613 Principal: Scott Grens • 773-534-5440
	Jazz Band Workshop	2:00 pm	
	Jazz Vocal Workshop	2:00 pm	
Thursday, May 21	Assembly Program	9:30 am	Lincoln Park High School 2001 North Orchard Street, Chicago, IL 60614 Principal: Michael Boraz • 773-534-5440
	Jazz Band Workshop	10:30 am	
	Jazz Vocal Workshop	10:30 am	
	Concert Open to the Public	8:00 & 10:00 pm	
Friday, May 22	Assembly Program	11:30 am	Rachel Carson Elementary School 5516 S Maplewood Avenue, Chicago, IL 60629 Principal: Javier Arriola-Lopez • 773-535-9222
	Jazz Band Workshop	1:00 pm	
	Jazz Vocal Workshop	1:00 pm	

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