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**Thelonious Monk Competition Finalists Share Stage with Herbie Hancock, Seth MacFarlane, Al Jarreau, George Benson, Jeff Goldblum, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Wayne Shorter, Patti Austin, Arturo Sandoval, Ledisi and a Host of Others at All-Star Gala Concert Honoring Quincy Jones**

Los Angeles, California – The 2015 Thelonious Monk Institute International Jazz Competition and All-Star Gala Concert came to a close with thunderous applause following Quincy Jones' acceptance of the Institute's Herbie Hancock Humanitarian Award and the announcement of **Jazzmeia Horn** of Dallas, Texas as first place winner of the Competition, which this year showcased vocals.

Presented by the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz, the world's preeminent jazz education organization, the Thelonious Monk Institute International Jazz Vocals Competition awarded more than \$100,000 in scholarships and prizes, including a major scholarship and a guaranteed recording contract with Concord Music Group to the winner. The distinguished judges included **Patti Austin, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Freddy Cole, Al Jarreau** and **Luciana Souza**.

First place winner **Jazzmeia Horn** captured the audience's attention with her performances of "Moanin'" and "Detour Ahead." Second place winner **Veronica Swift** of Charlottesville, Virginia performed "September in the Rain" and "This Bitter Earth," and third place winner **Vuyolwethu Sotashe** of Mthatha, South Africa performed "If You Never Fall in Love with Me (Del Sasser)" and "Life Begins when You're in Love." A dynamic band comprising pianist **Reginald "Reggie" Thomas**, bassist **Rodney Whitaker** and drummer **Carl Allen** accompanied each finalist.

The November 15<sup>th</sup> event at Hollywood's Dolby Theatre featured a star-studded Gala Concert and tribute to Quincy Jones hosted by **Herbie Hancock, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Jeff Goldblum, and Billy Dee Williams**. It included amazing performances by a diverse group of all-stars including **George Benson, Seth MacFarlane, Wayne Shorter, Arturo Sandoval, Dave Grusin, Terri Lyne Carrington, Jimmy Heath, Ledisi, James Genus, Gretchen Parlato, Jeff "Tain" Watts**, Musical Director, **John Beasley**, and many others.

The evening began by shining a spotlight on the young, aspiring musicians who participate in the Institute's jazz education programs. Members of the Thelonious Monk Institute Ensemble opened the show with an

original arrangement of “I Can’t Help It.” These seven gifted musicians from around the world receive full scholarships to attend the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz Performance, the Institute’s master’s degree program at the UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music in Los Angeles. The musicians, who represent the next generation of jazz artists, study with Distinguished Professors Herbie Hancock and Wayne Shorter, and receive ongoing instruction from many other world-renowned jazz musicians, composers and educators.

The Gala also showcased a group of outstanding young Los Angeles public school students who study with the Institute’s teaching artists. The combo performed Benny Golson’s “Killer Joe” with dynamic vocalist Lisa Henry, a past winner of the Thelonious Monk Institute International Jazz Vocals Competition.

Highlights of the Gala Concert included the multitalented Seth MacFarlane revealing his vocal ability on “Come Fly with Me” with pianist John Beasley, bassist Ben Williams and drummer Jeff “Tain” Watts. In another segment of the show, the incomparable vocalist Dee Dee Bridgewater joined trumpet virtuoso Arturo Sandoval to perform Fats Waller’s “Honeysuckle Rose.”

To honor the legendary producer, composer and bandleader Quincy Jones for his monumental contributions to jazz and humankind, the stellar cast performed a wide range of songs composed or arranged by Jones. A dynamic big band assembled for the occasion performed the television theme songs Jones composed for “Ironside” and “Sanford and Son.” The soulful vocalist Ledisi gave a commanding performance of Jones’ “Everything Must Change.” Saxophone master Jimmy Heath and critically acclaimed vocalist Freddy Cole came onstage to perform “Let the Good Times Roll,” which Jones had arranged for his longtime friend Ray Charles. And Patti Austin and George Benson displayed their remarkable vocal abilities with Jones’ arrangement of “Moody’s Mood for Love,” which was inspired by an improvised solo by the late saxophone great James Moody.

Among those paying tribute to Jones was the gifted young pianist Justin Kauflin. Jones produced the 2014 documentary “Keep On Keepin’ On,” which chronicled Kauflin’s relationship with mentor Clark Terry and his experience as a semifinalist in the 2011 Thelonious Monk Institute International Jazz Piano Competition. Kauflin performed Ray Brown’s “Gravy Waltz” from the 1963 recording *Quincy Jones Plays Hip Hits*.

Herbie Hancock presented Jones with the Institute’s Herbie Hancock Humanitarian Award and praised Jones as a true humanitarian who has demonstrated his concern and caring for countless people worldwide through a broad range of musical, educational and relief initiatives.

In accepting the award, Jones said, “One of the things that I am most grateful for in my life...is that I was born at a time where I was able to witness, and play a role in, the growth of the only true indigenous American art form. I can only hope that one day America will recognize what the rest of the world already has. That our indigenous music, jazz, is the heart and soul of all popular music, and that we cannot afford to let its’ legacy slip into obscurity. I humbly accept this honor on behalf of my fellow Jazz musicians past, present

and future, and I promise that I will be right there with you on the front lines as we continue to work to preserve and promote our music, so that it will always get the recognition that it deserves.”

Following the award presentation, the all-star cast and gala big band raised the roof with Jones’ infectious R&B hit “Stuff Like That.” The evening concluded with the entire cast of extraordinary talents, including Competition winner Jazzmeia Horn, performing a moving rendition of “We Are The World” in tribute to the victims of the recent terrorist attacks in Paris.

Proceeds from the All-Star Gala Concert will support the Institute’s jazz education programs in public schools across America. Through its Competition and wide range of year-round programs, the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz is committed to identifying and training the world’s leading young jazz musicians who will preserve the traditions of jazz while expanding the music in new directions. All of the Institute’s education programs are provided free of charge, with a special emphasis on serving economically disadvantaged public school students and their teachers and parents.

Air transportation was provided by United Airlines, Official Airline of the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz.

For more information on the Institute, please visit [www.monkinstitute.org](http://www.monkinstitute.org).

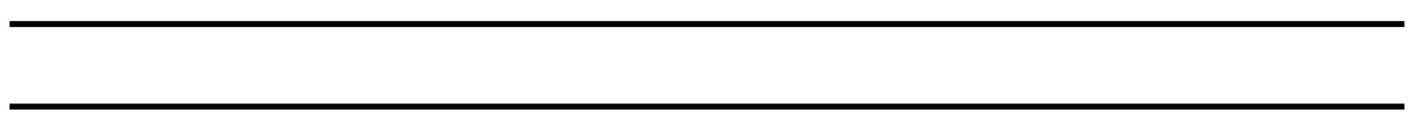


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**TMIJ House Photographer**

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