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# **Douglass High Students Groove To Smooth Jazz**

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(Memphis) Memphis students are among a select group of high schoolers in the country included in a national jazz tour.

The tour exposes students to a type haven't heard before.

The [Thelonius Monk Institute of Jazz \(http://www.monkinstitute.org/\)](http://www.monkinstitute.org/) made a stop at Douglass High and Overton High Schools this week.

An ensemble on stage hopes to open up a whole new world for Douglass High School students in attendance.

There's a Grammy award-winning artist leading them but everyone else is a Los Angeles County high school student.

They're here for the Thelonius Monk Institute Of Jazz Peer to Peer Education Program.

"We take young students from another city in this case Los Angeles, bring them to Memphis and have them teach their peers," said JB Dyas, PhD, Thelonius Monk Institute of Jazz.

This is the first time most of these Douglass students ever heard jazz performed live.

Band Director Arnold Reed said, "They're starting to pick up when to applaud when someone finishes a solo."

However, the hand claps and head movements groove naturally after a while.

Reed said, "This originated from America. It's our music. Our heritage and they should know it because of that also."

After seeing kids just like them so involved in jazz, it didn't take long for Douglass students to understand why this kind of music is so original and so special.

"You hear different arrangements and everyone is speaking to each other through their horns. It's kind of unique to be able to speak through your horn besides speaking verbally," said Adam Coleman, Douglass Senior.

Throughout this week students have had a chance to meet some pretty famous jazz musicians including, Herbie Hancock, and the idea is they'll hopefully not only want to listen to it but some of them might also want to play it.

Douglass' band director hopes to start a jazz band next year at the school.

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