

**HBO's 'The Wire' to  
ation on June 3**

Stage is an important theatrical institution that continues to provide the community with original work, classics, development of new directors and playwrights, and arts education for adults and young people. "Carnivale de Luna" will be held on Sunday, June 3, from 5 to 9 p.m., at the Richfield Regency on Bloomfield Avenue in Verona. Gala ticket prices begin at \$150. For reservations, call Luna Stage at 973-744-3309, or visit Luna on the Web at [www.lunastage.org](http://www.lunastage.org).

Unit (MVAU) offers free ambulance more information, or to learn how to

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**Jazz House Kids are jazzed about music education**

By MARY ANNE CHRISTIANO  
of The Montclair Times

Learning can be thrilling when children have the opportunity to be creative in the process.

Montclair resident Melissa Walker had a vision to make a difference in the lives of children. Her dream was to improve the quality of life for young people through the jazz medium.

"About eight or so years ago, in the late '90s, living and working at the time in Newark, looking around in a city that didn't have a mall, didn't have bookstores, at the time there wasn't a movie theater," Walker said. "What can I do in the scheme of reality, to be part of a solution?"

The solution was founding Jazz House Kids, a nonprofit music educational organization based in Montclair which brings jazz heritage into public schools by offering multi-media jazz enrichment programs for children.

"When I started the program, it was important that Jazz House Kids not only entertain, but educate," Walker said.

Being a professional jazz singer herself, working, recording and touring internationally, jazz had been a major vehicle in Walker's life. Her husband, Christian McBride, a renowned bassist and Grammy winner, is on the Jazz House Kids Advisory Board as an entertainment director.

Jazz House Kids will be holding its Fifth Anniversary Gala and Benefit Dinner on Thursday, June 7, at the Montclair Art Museum. Headlining the event is jazz leg-



Photo courtesy of the Jazz House Kids

**JAZZ EDUCATOR:** In the photo above, Montclair vocalist and recording artist Melissa Walker is surrounded by her some of her Jazz House Kids. Walker, who founded the organization Jazz House Kids in 2002, has made it her personal undertaking to create high-quality arts education programs that are accessible to young people, particularly those in underserved urban and rural communities.

end, saxophonist David Sanborn, who McBride knows personally.

"I knew that this fundraising event would need a really big bang. I was thinking of somebody to be the centerpiece of the whole evening. I was very fortunate my good buddy David Sanborn decided to do it," McBride said.

Walker agreed, "His music has inspired countless musicians from all over the world and being able to share such world-renowned music with our supporters is really what Jazz House Kids is about. He influenced an entire generation of musicians and created an incredible body of work spanning rock 'n' roll, R&B, pop and jazz. He and other musicians like him serve as role models to the children we work with and to all of us."

McBride will also be performing at the fundraiser, along with Mulgrew Miller, jazz pianist and composer recently named director of the Jazz Studies Program at William Paterson University, and drummer Lewis Nash.

In addition to the star-studded jazz concert, the evening will also include cocktails and a silent auction, awards and dinner, followed by a live auction conducted by Sotheby's. The event will be hosted by WBGO radio personality Gary Walker.

Special awards will be given to "ABC News" anchor Peter Jen-

nings for his long-standing support of the jazz community, and to jazz musician Jackie McLean, for his advocacy of jazz education. Event sponsor Prudential Financial's Foundation arm will receive an award for its leadership in bringing arts education to underserved communities. A Jazz House Award will also be presented to William May of the Newark public schools.

Since its inception, more than 6,500 children in the Newark public schools have participated in multiple Jazz House Kids music enrichment programs.

*Jazz House Kids Fifth Anniversary Gala and Benefit Dinner, will be held Thursday, June 7, at 7 p.m., at the Montclair Art Museum, 3 South Mountain Ave. Tickets are available at two price levels: \$250 and \$100. The "Chilling with the Stars" tickets are \$250 per person, with festivities beginning at 7 p.m., with a private party with the artists, including cocktails, hors d'oeuvres and dinner. The "Jazz Appreciator" tickets are \$100 per person, with festivities beginning at 8 p.m. with drinks and dessert. Both levels of supporters are then welcome to the silent auction hosted by Sotheby's, the jazz concert, and the award presentations. Tickets are available by calling 973-744-2773, or visiting [www.jazzhousekids.org](http://www.jazzhousekids.org).*

**Midday Movies at Main Library**

The Montclair Public Library's series of Midday Movies continues on Fridays at 1:15 p.m., in the auditorium of the Main Library, 50 South Fullerton Ave. Admission is free. The films include:

- June 1:** "My Dream is Yours" (1949), starring Doris Day and Jack Carson.
- June 8:** "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" (1949), starring Esther Williams and Gene Kelly.