

HITTING THE HIGH NOTES
JAZZ HOUSE KIDS®
TURNS 10

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**JAZZ HOUSE KIDS ANNOUNCES
10TH ANNIVERSARY GALA AND CONCERT AT NJPAC,
YEAR-LONG COMMUNITY EVENTS**

Newark, NJ – April, 2012. Jazz House Kids, an acclaimed community-arts organization that has brought close to \$2.5 million in award-winning educational jazz programs to more than 15,000 New Jersey students, kicked off its 10 Year Anniversary, announcing plans for a NJPAC-hosted star-studded gala and concert in October, and special jazz events for the community throughout the year.

Hitting the High Notes – Jazz House Kids Turns 10 Gala and Concert will take place on Wednesday, October 17, 2012, opening NJPAC's inaugural ***James Moody Democracy of Jazz Festival***, a week-long celebration of jazz and the musical legacy of the late James Moody. Honorary co-chairs of the Jazz House Kids gala and concert are **John and Rose Cali** and **Bobbi Brown and Steven Plofker**.

GRAMMY-winning bassist, composer and artistic director for *The James Moody Democracy of Jazz Festival* **Christian McBride** will be the musical director of the Jazz House Kids all-star event. McBride also serves as Jazz House Kids artistic chair throughout the year. The evening is hosted by beloved stars **S. Epatha Merkerson** and **Jesse L. Martin**, fondly known as Lt. Anita Van Buren and Detective Ed Green of the long-running EMMY Award-record-breaking TV show, **Law & Order**. Jazz Luminary Honorees include **Harry Belafonte**, the award-winning iconic singer, songwriter, actor and tireless civil rights advocate; and long-time philanthropist to the arts, Jazz House Kids signature donor and an early real estate visionary, **John Cali**; with more to come.

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McBride is assembling an impressive group of top talent for the Wednesday evening concert to be held in NJPAC's beautiful Victoria Theater. Among the evening's special guests are internationally acclaimed and GRAMMY-winning Beninose singer-songwriter **Angelique Kidjo**; legendary pianist, keyboardist and producer **George Duke**; alto saxophonist and funk master, **Maceo Parker**; and McBride's own GRAMMY-winning **Christian McBride Big Band**, featuring vocalist and Jazz House Kids president **Melissa Walker**. Also performing that evening are the talented emerging Jazz House Kids students from the music studio in Montclair and school-based programs in Newark. McBride has hinted that the evening will include a few of his "powerhouse" music friends stopping by to lend their support.

"It is a thrill to be doing double duty in October – ushering in a new tradition at NJPAC with *The James Moody Democracy of Jazz Festival* as well as curating Jazz House Kids' big birthday celebration which is dedicated to creating a new generation of jazz citizens," said Christian McBride.

Tickets to the ***Hitting the High Notes – Jazz House Kids Turns 10 Gala and Concert*** can be purchased with a package that also includes cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, and dinner in NJPAC's dazzling lobby. For more information, contact Jazz House Kids at 973-744-2273 or visit www.jazzhousekids.org. Tickets to the concert only are also available. All proceeds benefit Jazz House Kids programming and scholarship fund. Information on the entire Festival lineup will be announced as part of NJPAC's 2012-2013 season in May.

Under the leadership of founder/president and acclaimed jazz vocalist **Melissa Walker**, Jazz House Kids has become a nationally recognized organization dedicated to closing the gap in the arts and opening the window for students to cultivate the talent, discipline, skills and principles they need to play, sing, and appreciate America's original musical art form. Through music, mentoring and education, Jazz House Kids cultivates tomorrow's community leaders and global citizens so they may build vibrant communities where they live.

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“The foundation for Jazz House Kids was built in this great city a decade ago, against the backdrop of NJPAC and with the help of two key organizations, **Prudential** and **WBGO**,” said Walker. “It is especially gratifying to come full circle and celebrate turning 10 and our shared mission with New Jersey’s preeminent *Jazz House*. We are honored to have been invited by **John Schreiber** [CEO of NJPAC] to kick off NJPAC’s inaugural *James Moody Democracy of Jazz Festival* with our star-studded 10th anniversary gala featuring many of our musical friends and our emerging musicians and tomorrow’s rising stars.”

In addition to ***Hitting the High Notes – Jazz House Kids Turns 10 Gala and Concert*** in October, Jazz House Kids has planned special events for the community throughout its landmark year. Activities include an **“I Love Jazz”** lecture and workshop series in April for Jazz Appreciation Month and the first International Jazz Day on April 30, 2012 designated by UNESCO General Conference; ***Inside the Jazz Note***, a high school masterclass and evening public concert with **Diane Reeves**, **Christian McBride** and **Inside Straight** celebrating Christian McBride’s 40th birthday on June 6; and the ***Montclair Jazz Festival*** produced by Jazz House Kids on August 18. For more information on Jazz House Kids, visit www.jazzhousekids.org.

Jazz House Kids is an award-winning community-based arts organization with a mission to provide year-round musical, educational, and cultural programs to students in grades K-12, teachers, adults, and families from diverse backgrounds.

Celebrating its 10th anniversary in 2012, internationally renowned jazz performers and multi-Grammy winners teach alongside a professional staff, offering students a wide range of creative programming that develops musical potential, enhances leadership skills, and strengthens academic performance.

The “Jazz House” provides the framework for students to cultivate the talent, discipline, skills and principles they need to play, sing, and appreciate America’s original musical art form. Through music, mentoring and education, Jazz House Kids cultivates tomorrow’s global citizens so they may build vibrant communities where they live.

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