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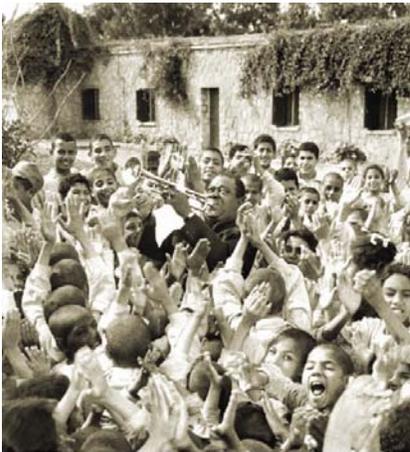
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Jam Session: America's Jazz Ambassadors Embrace the World **Opens Mar 20 at the Fowler Museum at UCLA**



From the mid-1950s through the 1970s, Dizzy Gillespie, Louis Armstrong, Dave Brubeck, Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Benny Goodman and others served as cultural diplomats, touring the globe on behalf of the U.S. State Department. Millions of people experienced their concerts and thrilled to the many styles and variations of the remarkable American art form called jazz music. *Jam Session: America's Jazz Ambassadors Embrace the World*—a collection of photographs and documents chronicling these tours—will be on display at the Fowler Museum from March 20–August 14, 2011.

These travels emerged as a part of a cultural Cold War, in which both Russians and Americans hoped to court people in newly independent countries by sending their best representatives. Americans worried that they could not compete with famous Soviet dancers and classical

musicians, but soon realized that the Russians could not claim jazz, a unique phenomenon that developed in the United States as a creative interaction of African and European musical forms.

Following the success of an initial goodwill voyage by trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie, America's "Jazz Ambassadors" continued to dazzle audiences on stage and off in Africa, the Middle East, Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union, Asia, Latin America, and South America. Deeply curious about the music and people of other countries, the American artists are seen jamming with local musicians, visiting international monuments and exploring local cultures, in addition to performing in concerts large and small. Photographs drawn from important archives around the country show Quincy Jones striking a pose at the Acropolis, Duke Ellington and Paul Gonsalves sampling a hookah in Iraq, Louis Armstrong carried via a palanquin into stadium in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and more.

Along with nearly one hundred mostly black-and-white photographs of these jazz legends visiting thirty-five countries, a fully functional stage will be built in the gallery, where live jazz will be performed intermittently throughout the run of exhibition. These performances will be announced on the Fowler's website and via Facebook (www.facebook.com/FowlerMuseum) and Twitter (www.twitter.com/FowlerMuseum).

Jam Session: America's Jazz Ambassadors Embrace the World is guest curated by Curtis Sandberg, Vice President for the Arts at the Meridian International Center, with Penny M. Von Eschen, an expert in the history of jazz diplomacy and author of *Satchmo Blows Up the World: Jazz*

Ambassadors Play the Cold War.

This exhibition is organized and circulated by Meridian International Center, Washington, D.C. Its Los Angeles presentation is supported in part by the Ella Fitzgerald Charitable Foundation, UCLA Graduate Division, UCLA School of the Arts and Architecture, *Friends of Jazz at UCLA*, the Shirley and Ralph Shapiro Director's Discretionary Fund, and the Yvonne Lenart Public Programs Fund. Co-sponsors include the Herb Alpert School of Music and the UCLA Department of Ethnomusicology. In-kind support is provided by Remo D. Belli, CEO/Founder of Remo, Inc., and Keyboard Concepts Inc. Media sponsor: KJAZZ 88.1 FM.



The **Fowler Museum at UCLA** is one of the country's most respected institutions devoted to exploring the arts and cultures of Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and the Americas. The Fowler is open Wednesdays through Sundays, from noon to 5 p.m.; and on Thursdays, from noon until 8 p.m. The museum is closed Mondays and Tuesdays. The Fowler Museum, part of UCLA Arts, is located in the north part of the UCLA campus. Admission is free. Parking is available for a maximum of \$10 in Lot 4. For more information, the public may call 310/825-4361 or visit fowler.ucla.edu.

Related Opening Events:

Saturday, March 19, 7 pm

Opening Night Concert and Reception

The Fowler teams with *Friends of Jazz* for a performance by UCLA faculty, students and special guests, under the direction of Kenny Burrell. A dessert reception and exhibition preview follow.

Sunday, March 20, Opening Day, 12-5 pm

1 pm In-Gallery Jazz Performance

Hear one of UCLA's celebrated jazz combos live inside *Jam Session: America's Jazz Ambassadors Embrace the World*.

1-4 pm Kids in the Courtyard: Peanut, Peanut Butter...and JAZZ

Celebrate the opening day of *Jam Session* with peanut butter and *jam* sandwiches, and improvisational music-making led by UCLA students.

2 pm

Fowler OutSpoken Conversation: Kenny Burrell and John Hasse
Jazz Diplomacy

Since the end of World War II, the State Department has called on performing artists to play the role of cultural ambassadors, a practice that has experienced a resurgence in the last decade. Former cultural ambassador Kenny Burrell and leading jazz historian John Hasse from the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History discuss the importance of jazz as a diplomatic tool—one that communicates cherished aspects of American society and culture to the larger world.

Many more related programs will be presented this spring.

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