

120 Claremont Avenue  
New York, New York  
10027-4698

917 493 4429 *tel*  
212 749 7561 *fax*  
www.msmnyc.edu

*Office of Public  
Relations*

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: February 15, 2010

	Let My Children Hear Music	Manhattan School of Music
Contact:	Sue Mingus	Debra Kinzler
Phone:	212 736 4749	917 493 4469
Email:	<a href="mailto:sue@mingusmingusmingus.com">sue@mingusmingusmingus.com</a>	<a href="mailto:dkinlzer@msmnyc.edu">dkinlzer@msmnyc.edu</a>

### CHARLES MINGUS HIGH SCHOOL COMPETITION WINNING ENSEMBLES and OUTSTANDING SOLOISTS ANNOUNCED

**COUNTRY'S MOST TALENTED YOUNG JAZZ MUSICIANS SHOWCASED**  
12 Big Bands and Combos from throughout the United States competed in day-long competition held at Manhattan School of Music on Sunday, February 14, 2010

Charles Mingus High School Competition took place as part of two-day Charles Mingus Festival, a collaboration between Let My Children Hear Music/The Charles Mingus Institute and Manhattan School of Music ; SUE MINGUS and JUSTIN DICIOCCIO, Producers



New York City – Sue Mingus, Director of Let My Children Hear Music and Justin DiCioccio, Assistant Dean and Chair of Manhattan School of Music's Jazz Arts Program, announced the winners of the Charles Mingus High School Competition last evening at the competition's conclusion. The winning ensembles and outstanding soloist awards were announced in an awards program held at the end of the all-day competition that took place at Manhattan School of Music on Sunday, February 14. In presenting the awards, Justin DiCioccio said, "Everyone who competed today was a winner. The level of playing was remarkable and the best that I have ever heard at the high school level." Sue Mingus commented, "All of the adjudicators were astonished with the musicianship heard today. For years, Mingus's music was thought to be too difficult to perform, and today, the spirit and vitality that was heard by all of the young musicians playing Mingus's music was really thrilling."

Awards were given in two categories for each of the combo and big band performances – one for regular high schools and one for specialized performing arts schools and programs. All combos and big bands were required to play compositions by Charles Mingus, and in the case of the combos, many of the tunes were arrangements by members of the combo. Among Mingus's compositions that were performed were *Goodbye Pork Pie Hat*, *Fables of Faubus*, *Better Get Hit in Your Soul*, *Jelly Roll* and *Ecclusiastics*.

THE WINNING ENSEMBLES AND OUTSTANDING SOLOISTS ARE:

**BIG BAND CATEGORY**

Adjudicators: Justin DiCioccio, Conrad Herwig and Boris Kozlov

**BEST BIG BAND – REGULAR HIGH SCHOOL**

The Rivers Big Band, Philippe Crettien, Band Director  
The Rivers School; Weston, Massachusetts



*The Rivers Big Band, Weston, Massachusetts*

**BEST BIG BAND – SPECIALIZED SCHOOL**

Academy Big Band, Douglas Maher, Band Director  
Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts; Hartford, Connecticut



*Academy Big Band, Hartford, Connecticut*

## MINGUS SPIRIT AWARD

The **Mingus Spirit Award** was given to the **Rio Americano Combo** from the Rio Americano High School in Sacramento, California. Maxwell Kiesner, Band Director.

Zach Giberson, alto saxophone; Zach Darf, tenor saxophone; Victor San Pedro, guitar; David Williams, piano; Nathan Swedlow, bass; Jarrett Tracy, drums



*Rio Americano Combo, Sacramento, California*

## COMBO CATEGORY

Adjudicators: Gunther Schuller, Vincent Herring and Andrew Homzy

## BEST COMBO – REGULAR HIGH SCHOOL

The **Foxborough High School Jazz Quintet**, Stephen C. Massey, Band Director

Foxborough High School; Foxborough, Massachusetts

Brendan Thomas, alto and tenor saxophones; Matt Muirhead, trumpet; Ian Ayers, guitar; Connor Schultze, Bass; and Christian Lyman, drums



*Foxborough High School Jazz Quintet, Foxborough, Massachusetts*

## BEST COMBO – SPECIALIZED HIGH SCHOOL

Manasia Improv Ensemble, Jeremy Manasia, Band Director

Manhattan School of Music Precollege; New York, New York

Elijah Shiffer, alto saxophone; Kevin Sun, tenor saxophone; Adam O’Farrill, trumpet; Luke Celenza, piano; Daryl Johns, bass; and Clint Mobley, drums



Manasia Improv Ensemble- Elijah Shiffer, Clint Mobley, Adam O’Farrill, Jeremy Manasia, Kevin Sun, Daryl Johns, and Luke Celenza  
Manhattan School of Music Precollege, New York, New York

## BEST ARRANGER

Elijah Shiffer awarded “Outstanding Arranger” for his arrangement of Mingus’s *Jelly Roll*. Mr. Shiffer, from Mount Vernon, NY, attends the Manhattan School of Music Precollege.

## OUTSTANDING SECTION

**The Saxophone Section from the Manhattan School of Music Precollege Big Band;** Jeremy Manasia, Band Director  
Elijah Shiffer, David Kolchmeyer, alto sax; Kevin Sun, Miguel Rodriguez, tenor sax; and Michael Schramm, baritone sax

## OUTSTANDING SOLOISTS

**Bass:** Connor Schultze  
Foxborough High School, Foxborough, Massachusetts

**Guitar:** Victor San Pedro  
Rio Americano High School, Sacramento, California

**Trombone:** Tom Chalmers  
**Trumpet:** Ross Hoyt  
**Bass:** Henry Fraser  
The Rivers School, Weston, Massachusetts

**Trumpet:** Adam O’Farrill  
**Piano:** Luke Celenza  
**Alto Sax:** Elijah Shiffer  
**Tenor Sax:** Kevin Sun  
**Bass:** Daryl Johns  
Manhattan School of Music Precollege, New York, NY

**Drums:**           Xavier Hill  
York College/CUNY, New York, NY

**Piano:**           Mike Raleigh  
Boston Latin School, Boston, Massachusetts

**Alto Sax:**       Elliot Scozzaro  
Kenmore East High School, Tonawanda, New York

**Tenor Sax:**     Lomar Brown  
Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts, Hartford, Connecticut

**Soprano Sax:**  Erik Stabnau  
**Trombone:**    Nelson Campbell  
Eastman School of Music, Rochester, NY

The **Charles Mingus High School Competition** was open this year to high school jazz combos and big bands nationwide. (Last year's competition, the first of its kind, was open to ensembles from the Northeast.) The goal of the competition is to provide an opportunity for high school music students to explore the enormously varied works of Charles Mingus and to find their own voices within the music. The finalists were chosen from high school jazz bands from across the country: California, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Illinois, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington, and Wisconsin.

In addition to the Charles Mingus High School Competition that took place on Sunday, the two-day **Charles Mingus Festival** included on Saturday, February 13, clinics given by members of the Mingus repertory bands, a student jam session, and a concert of Mingus's music showcasing his blues and gospel roots. Performing the concert was the Mingus Orchestra, with Gunther Schuller and Harpist Edmar Castaneda, guest artist, given at New York City's historic St. Bartholomew's Church.

**Charles Mingus**, a virtuoso bassist, accomplished pianist and bandleader, is recognized as a major 20<sup>th</sup>-century composer, whose entire works have been acquired by the Library of Congress – a first for jazz, and a first for an African-American composer. He recorded more than 100 albums and composed more than 300 compositions, music that is still considered far ahead of its time, leaving behind the largest legacy of composition in American music after Duke Ellington. The Mingus Bands remain devoted to his vast repertoire and under the artistic direction of Sue Mingus, play to critical acclaim throughout the world. Their critical and popular successes are a testament to the power of Mingus's composition. The availability of his music through published arrangements, educational books, school courses, and workshops, coupled with the hugely successful Charles Mingus High School Competition, have extended the reach of his legacy.

\* \* \* \* \*

Below is a listing of the participating schools and the repertoire that they played:

## HIGH SCHOOL COMBOS

### Combo Category – Regular High Schools

- **Foxborough High School Jazz Quintet** – Stephen C. Massy, Band Director  
Foxborough High School, Foxborough, Massachusetts  
*Program:* *Moanin'*; *Goodbye Pork Pie Hat*, arr. by group; *So Long Eric*, arr. by group
- **Rio Americano Combo** – Maxwell Kiesner, Band Director  
Rio Americano High School, Sacramento, California  
*Program:* *Fables of Faubus*, *Goodbye Pork Pie Hat*, *O.P.* arr. collectively by group
- **Rivers Select Combo** – Philippe Crettien, Band Director  
The Rivers School, Weston, Massachusetts  
*Program:* *Pithecanthropus Erectus*, arr. Todd Chalmers; *Goodbye Pork Pie Hat*, arr. Henry Fraser, Elliot Berman; *Better Get Hit in Your Soul*, arr. by Colin Beagan, Ross Hoyt

### Combo Category – Specialized High Schools

- **Eastman Youth Jazz Combo** – Howard Potter, Band Director  
Eastman School of Music, Rochester, New York  
*Program: Fables of Faubus, Ecclesiastics, O.P.* arr. collectively by group
- **Manasia Improv Ensemble** – Jeremy Manasia, Band Director  
Manhattan School of Music Precollege, New York, New York  
*Program: Peggy's Blue Skylight, Jelly Roll*, arr. by Elijah Shiffer, *Pithecanthropus Erectus*
- **York College Blue Notes** – Tom Zlabinger, Band Director  
York College/CUNY, New York, New York  
*Program: Slippers, Work Song, Pithecanthropus Erectus*, arr. by group

### BIG BAND CATEGORY

#### Big Band Category – Regular High Schools

- **Boston Latin Big Band** – Paul J. Pitts, Band Director  
Boston Latin School, Boston, Massachusetts  
*Program: Nostalgia in Times Square, Sue's Changes, Haitian Fight Song*
- **Kenmore East High School Jazz Band** – Phil Aguglia, Band Director  
Kenmore East High School, Tonawanda, New York  
*Program: Fables of Faubus, Self-Portrait in Three Colors; Better Get Hit in Your Soul*
- **Rivers Big Band** – Philippe Crettien, Band Director  
The Rivers School, Weston, Massachusetts  
*Program: Songs with Orange, Sue's Changes, Haitian Fight Song*

#### Big Band Category – Specialized High Schools

- **MSM Precollege Big Band** – Jeremy Manasia, Band Director  
Manhattan School of Music Precollege, New York, NY  
*Program: Better Get Hit in Your Soul, Goodbye Pork Pie Hat, Boogie Stop Shuffle*
- **Academy Big Band** – Douglas Maher, Band Director  
Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts, Hartford, Connecticut  
*Program: Opus 4, Duke Ellington's Sound of Love, GG Train*
- **Eastman Youth Jazz Orchestra** – Howard Potter, Band Director  
Eastman School of Music, Rochester, New York  
*Program: Duke Ellington's Sounds of Love, Jelly Roll, Haitian Fight Song*

\* \* \* \* \*

*All photos by Brian Hatton*