



Let My Children Hear Music
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WINNERS ANNOUNCED FOR THE FIRST ANNUAL CHARLES MINGUS HIGH SCHOOL
COMPETITION HELD AT MANHATTAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC

5 Combos and 5 Big Bands Hailing from High Schools in the Northeast competed for top honors

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2009 New York City – Sue Mingus, Director of Let My Children Hear Music (The Charles Mingus Institute) and Justin DiCioccio, Assistant Dean and Chair of Manhattan School of Music’s Jazz Arts Program, announced the winners of the First Annual Charles Mingus High School Competition in an awards ceremony held at the conclusion of the all-day competition that took place at Manhattan School of Music on Sunday, February 22.

Sue Mingus said the adjudicators were astonished by the musicianship displayed at the Competition and wishes to thank the band directors and students for the hard work and spirit that went into their performances. “Because Mingus’s voice is so original and his music was considered by many in the past to be thorny and difficult, it is heartwarming to see how gloriously these young musicians and students have taken to its challenges-- and hopefully benefited from its rewards. I was especially moved by some of the comments from the stage suggesting musical and life-changing revelations in the course of learning this music.”

“Let My Children Hear Music” and Sue Mingus are indebted to Justin DiCioccio, the Manhattan School of Music, and all of the adjudicators, musicians, students, band directors and production people who gave their time and energy to this competition. Special kudos to trombonist/educator Dave Taylor whose idea it was to approach MSM, to Shannon Manning who almost single-handedly took care of all production details throughout the year; to Gunther Schuller for his long-time Mingus support, to Bruce Bush of Hal Leonard Publishing who supplied the music charts for the contestants, to arrangers Andrew Homzy and Sy Johnson, to adjudicators James Newton, Donny McCaslin, Boris Kozlov, Conrad Herwig, Justin DiCioccio, Gunther Schuller, Vincent Herring; and to the Mingus Dynasty band, MSM bands, and all the Mingus musicians whose contributions to the music are ongoing.

We look forward to extending our competition to the rest of the United States next year, and to adding a day of clinics and workshops with members from the Mingus repertory bands—arrangers, instrumentalists, vocalists, musicologists and educators—who are familiar with Mingus composition and can share their personal insights and experiences (and no doubt Mingus's mantra to "play yourself, " a vital part of his legacy!). We will announce plans for next year's Competition in the coming weeks. Please refer to our website as we add reviews, photos, videos, and diaries from the Competition.

Thanks to all of the participants for helping to keep Mingus music so vibrantly alive!

Sue Mingus

“The music and atmosphere were incredible and will continue to inspire my students for years to come.”

-Christopher Oldfield, Gates Chili Band Director

“This has been an amazing experience for us. It was a competition but all you felt all weekend long was respect, praise and appreciation for the kids’ achievements. What a wonderful thing! The whole process of working on the music was fantastic, but being in New York and attending the symposiums, concerts and the competition was just a truly uplifting experience!”

-Philippe Crettien, Rivers School Band Director

“The process of learning Charles Mingus music with all its intense complexity, builds not only musical skills, but life skills as well. The focus and discipline it takes to reach any level of Mingus mastery is transferable to anything one does in life.... The Mingus Competition provides music programs, students and teachers a focal point to delve deeply into this music and ‘get it into our souls.’ It was great to hear student combos and big bands deal with this challenging music, each in their own way.”

- Howard Potter, Eastman Youth Orchestra Band Director

Awards were given in two categories -- for Combo and for Big Band.

The winners are:

COMBO CATEGORY

Adjudicators: Justin DiCioccio, Conrad Herwig and Vincent Herring

Best Combo

Winner, Non-specialized High School – King Philip Regional High School Jazz Combo 1
Wrentham, Massachusetts; Band Directors: Peter Levesque and Peter Tileston

Winner, Performing Arts High School – Manhattan School of Music Precollege Combo
New York, New York; Band Director: Jeremy Manasia

Outstanding Combo Rhythm Section

Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts, Jazz Ensemble 3, Hartford, CT

Band Directors: Kris Allen and Jimmy Greene

Rhythm Section: Terrance Shider, piano; Alec Beloin, guitar;

Matt Dwonszyk, bass; Jimmy McBride and Mike Allegue, drums

Best Arrangement

Elijah Shiffer, Manhattan School of Music Precollege Combo for Fables of Faubus

Outstanding Soloists

Trumpet: Adam O’Farrill

Vocalist: Martina DaSilva

LaGuardia High School Jazz Quintet, New York, NY;

Band Director: Kevin Blancq

Trombone: Chris Palmer

Bass: Gina Giacalone

King Philip Regional High School Jazz Combo 1, Wrentham, MA

Band Directors: Peter Levesque and Peter Tileston

Alto Sax: Elijah Shiffer
Tenor Sax: Kevin Sun
Manhattan School of Music Precollege Combo, New York, NY
Band Director: Jeremy Manasia

Piano: Terrance Shider
Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts, Jazz Ensemble 3 Hartford, CT;
Band Directors: Kris Allen and Jimmy Greene

Tenor Sax: Casey Berman
The Rivers School, Rivers Select 1 Combo, Weston, MA
Band Director: Philippe Crettien

BIG BAND CATEGORY

Adjudicators: Gunther Schuller, Boris Kozlov and Donny McCaslin

Best Big Band

Winner, Eastman Youth Jazz Orchestra, Rochester, New York;
Band Director: Howard Potter

Best Rhythm Section

LaGuardia Senior Jazz Band, New York, NY; Band Director: Kevin Blancq
Max Coburn, piano; Oliver Marsh, piano; Noam Londy, guitar; Joseph Endozo, guitar; Joanna Sternberg, bass;
Harry Rubin-Falcone, bass; Zack O’Farrill, drums; Clint Mobley, drums

Best Trumpet Section

Lexington High School Jazz Ensemble, Lexington, MA;
Band Director: Jeffrey Leonard
Evan Marcantonio, Nick Singer, Christian Ulmer, and Mikko Silliman, trumpets

Outstanding Soloists

Tenor Sax: Nick Lippa
Gates Chili High School Jazz Ensemble, Rochester, NY
Band Director: Christopher Oldfield

Trombone: Tom Chalmers
Rivers Big Band, The Rivers School, Weston, MA;
Band Director: Philippe Crettien

Trumpet: Ivan Rosenberg
Bass: Joanne Sternberg
Vibes: Clint Mobley
LaGuardia Senior High Jazz Band, New York, NY;
Band Director: Kevin Blancq

Piano: Josh Condon
Guitar: Gabe Condon
Eastman Youth Jazz Orchestra, Rochester, NY;
Band Director: Howard Potter

Tenor Sax: Nathan Katz
Piano: Steven Feifke
Drums: John Cho
Lexington High School Jazz Ensemble, Lexington, MA
Band Director: Jeffrey Leonard

The First Annual Charles Mingus High School Competition was open to high school jazz combos and big bands hailing from the Northeast: Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and Vermont. Some 60 submissions were received for the first round of pre-screening CDs, with five combos selected and five big bands chosen to compete in Sunday's competition. 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 individual voices within the music. The competing high school jazz combos and big bands and the Mingus tunes they performed, are listed at the end of the press release.

The 2009-10 Charles Mingus High School Competition will be expanded to high schools nationwide. For information, contact Sue Mingus at Let My Children Hear Music, 484 West 43rd Street, 43-S, New York, NY 10036, (212) 736 - 4749, (212) 736-6149, fax, or visit www.mingusmingusmingus.com/JazzEducation.

In addition to the First Annual Charles Mingus High School Competition, the Mingus Summit included on Friday, February 20th, a keynote address given by Gunther Schuller, followed by a panel discussion moderated by Justin DiCioccio with Vincent Herring, Conrad Herwig, Andy McKee, Sue Mingus and Gunther Schuller, discussing "Mingus Music in the 21st Century." On Saturday, February 21, the Manhattan School of Music Charles Mingus Student Jazz Ensemble performed, joined by Mingus Big Band saxophonist Steve Slagle. Sunday afternoon there were showcase performances by the Manhattan School of Music Jazz Orchestra conducted by Justin DiCioccio and the Mingus Dynasty with Boris Kozlov playing Charles Mingus's lion's head bass; Vincent Herring, alto sax; Donny McCaslin, tenor sax; Alex Sipiagin, trumpet; Conrad Herwig, trombone; Helen Sung, piano; and Justin Faulkner, drums (high school student from the Girard Academic Music program in Philadelphia).

Charles Mingus is recognized as a major 20th-century composer, whose entire works have been acquired by the Library of Congress – a first for jazz. Mingus left behind the largest legacy of composition in American music after Duke Ellington. The Mingus repertory bands remain devoted to this vast repertoire and under the artistic direction of Sue Mingus, play to critical acclaim throughout the world.

(Listed below are the competing high schools and repertoire played)

Combo Category

LaGuardia High School Jazz Quintet• , New York, NY
Band Director: Kevin Blancq
Program: O.P. (arr. /Adam O’Farrill); Duke Ellington’s Sound of Love (arr. /Kevin Blancq); and Fables of Faubus (arr. /Adam O’Farrill)

King Philip Regional High School Jazz Combo 1• , Wrentham, MA.
Band Directors: Peter Levesque and Peter Tileston
Program: Pithecanthropus Erectus (arr. /Pete Levesque); Goodbye Pork Pie Hat (arr. /Pete Levesque); and Better Get Hit in Your Soul (arr. /Pete Levesque)

Manhattan School of Music Precollege Combo• , New York, NY
Band Director: Jeremy Manasia
Program: Fables of Faubus (arr. /Elijah Shiffer); Duke Ellington’s Sound of Love (arr. /Jeremy Manasia); and Better Get Hit in Your Soul

Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts, Jazz Ensemble 3,• Hartford, CT
Band Directors: Kris Allen and Jimmy Greene
Program: Duke Ellington’s Sound of Love (arr. /Kris Allen); Pithecanthropus Erectus (arr. /Kris Allen); and O.P. (arr. /Kris Allen)

The Rivers School, Rivers Select 1 Combo• , Weston, MA
Band Director: Philippe Crettien
Program: Sue’s Changes; Jelly Roll and Boogie Stop Shuffle

Big Band Category

Rivers Big Band• , The Rivers School, Weston, MA
Band Director: Philippe Crettien
Program: Opus 4 (arr. /Boris Kozlov); Goodbye Pork Pie Hat (arr. / Sy Johnson) and Fables of Faubus (arr. / Steve Slagle)

Gates Chili High School Jazz Ensemble• , Rochester, NY
Band Director: Christopher Oldfield
Program: Moanin’ (arr. /Andrew Homzy); Duke Ellington’s Sound of Love (arr. /Andrew Homzy); and Nostalgia in Times Square (arr. /Sy Johnson)

LaGuardia Senior Jazz Band• , New York, NY
Band Director: Kevin Blancq
Program: Nostalgia in Times Square (arr. /Ronnie Cuber); Goodbye Porkpie Hat (arr. /Sy Johnson); and Moanin’ (arr. /Sy Johnson)

Eastman Youth Jazz Orchestra, • Rochester, NY
Band Director: Howard Potter
Program: Moanin’ (arr. /Sy Johnson); Sue’s Changes (arr. /Sy Johnson) and Gunslinging Bird (arr. /Steve Slagle)

Lexington High School Jazz Ensemble,• Lexington, MA
Band Director: Jeffrey Leonard
Program: Pedal Point Blues (arr. /John Stubblefield); Goodbye Porkpie Hat (arr. /Sy Johnson); and Nostalgia in Times Square (arr. /Ronnie Cuber)

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