



Saturday, October 7, 2023

25 jazz bands. 25 locations. Free jazz along the Charles River

On a single fall afternoon, Celebrity Series of Boston will produce a free, outdoor concert at a series of connected locations along DCR's Charles River Esplanade. 25 jazz ensembles will interpret the same curated setlist of Boston-related tunes, each in their own style. While each band is unique, together they will create one collective event that celebrates the great jazz community in Boston today. The audience will stroll along the Charles River on a 2-mile loop, discovering new songs, artists, and areas of the Esplanade, creating a dynamic and evolving jazz concert experience. Jazz Along the Charles is a free public event, part of Celebrity Series' commitment to share the joy of live performance with all of Boston. Previous Celebrity Series projects have included Street Pianos Boston, Le Grand Continental, Concert for One, and Let's Dance Boston.

This October will be Celebrity Series' second time producing Jazz Along the Charles. We first produced the event in 2018 and it was a big success! The positive feedback we received from participating artists and audience members inspired us to revisit this event in 2023.

What We Are Looking For

Jazz Along the Charles will celebrate local musicians performing jazz in Greater Boston today. We are seeking a wide variety of small, improvisational jazz ensembles (**1-5 people, with a 5-person max**) who will perform outdoors in a mostly acoustic environment. We welcome musicians who are at the amateur, college, pre-professional and professional levels. Applications are encouraged within all genres of improvisational jazz, including, but not limited to: acid, Afro-Cuban, Asian-American, avant-garde, bebop, bossa nova, chamber jazz, cool, traditional New Orleans, New Orleans brass band, ethno jazz, free, funk, fusion, Hot Club jazz, indo-jazz, Latin, second line, swing, third stream, and world. We are seeking groups who are eager to be part of the shared experience and community of a large-scale event. Musicians should have a demonstrated connection or commitment to the arts in Boston, and live or work in the greater Boston Metro area. This project wishes to represent the diverse ages, gender identities, abilities, backgrounds, cultural identities, ethnicities, ranges of education and training, and styles of artistic expression of local musicians performing jazz in Boston.

When

Saturday, October 7, 2023

10am – 2pm	band load-in & set up & 30-min soundcheck (Lunch provided)
2pm – 4pm	SET #1 (45-60 min curated set list, with last tune as artist choice) 15 min break SET #2 (45-60 min curated set list, with last tune as artist choice)
4pm – 6pm	band load-out

Musicians should hold 10am – 6pm (plus any travel time). Detailed schedule to be shared in early September.

Rain or shine. No rainedate.



Where

Approximately 25 jazz bands will be evenly spaced along the two-mile loop of the Dudley White Bike Path on DCR's Charles River Esplanade, approximately from the Community Boating Building near The Hatch Memorial Shell to the Stoneman Playground at Massachusetts Avenue. Groups will be placed approximately 150 – 200 ft apart. Potential surfaces include grass, brick, and asphalt.

Map of Esplanade: [Esplanade Map](#)

2018 Jazz Along the Charles Map: [2018 Map Link](#)

What

Selected ensembles will simultaneously play two curated 45-60 minute sets with a short intermission (approximately 15-20 songs total). The music will be curated by festival co-curators, Ken Field and Zahili Zamora. Curated set lists will include songs inspired by Boston or with a Greater Boston connection. Tunes will range from traditional jazz standards to popular, contemporary songs. Each group is encouraged to interpret the material in their own way, and to choose one song at the end of each set from their own repertoire (we recommend this song also be inspired by Boston or with a Greater Boston Connection). Groups will create their own arrangements specific to their ensemble. Adherence to the curated set list is critical to the effectiveness of the project and audience experience. *Jazz Along the Charles* celebrates being part of a larger event, and not a solo performance.

Below are *select* songs from the curated set lists to demonstrate range and artistic direction. Exact tunes subject to change:

Willow Weep For Me - Ann Ronnell

Fast Car - Tracy Chapman

Circle Song - Nnenna Freelon

Just Like That - Bonnie Raitt

Reminder! Applications are encouraged within all genres of improvisational jazz, including, but not limited to, acid, Afro-Cuban, Asian-American, avant-garde, bebop, bossa nova, chamber jazz, cool, traditional New Orleans, New Orleans brass band, ethno jazz, free, funk, fusion, Hot Club jazz, indo-jazz, Latin, second line, swing, third stream, world.

Curated Sets / Sheet Music

Each band will play two set lists curated by co-curators Ken Field and Zahili Zamora. The music will be at an intermediate level of difficulty. **Full set list and sheet music will be provided by August 15.** Sheet music will be provided digitally as concert lead sheets, with Bb and Eb transpositions, in the form of .pdf files. Other formats may be available, including Finale .mus & .musx and .xml.

***Important!* Groups will create their own arrangements specific to their ensemble.**

Adherence to the designated set list is critical to the success of the project. All bands must download lead sheets by **August 29**. Any group that has not confirmed receipt of all music by **August 29** may be subject to removal from the project.

JAZZ ALONG THE CHARLES

TECHNICAL DETAILS

Set up

Each band is responsible for obtaining, transporting, and setting up all musical instruments, specialty music stands and seating, amps, cabling, sheet music etc. Celebrity Series will provide tent, signage, simple chairs and music stands, light power and water.

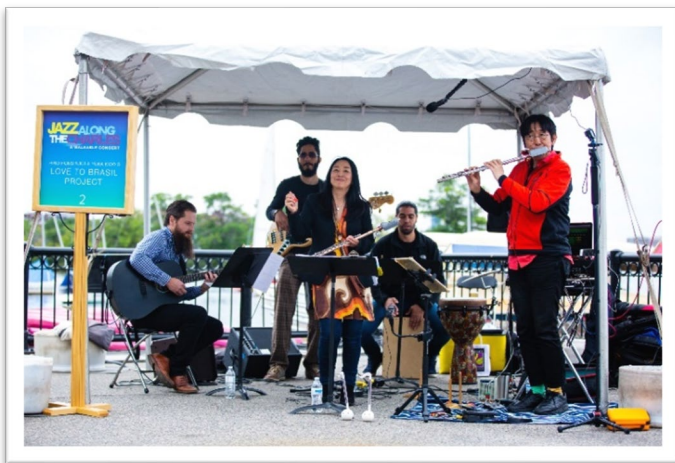
Artistic Intent / Light Amplification / Power

In general, we are seeking an acoustic experience and are looking for musicians interested in performing in this manner. That said, certain instruments may require light support, such as voice, guitar, keys, and bass, in the form of small, artist-supplied amps. We do not expect most winds, drums, horns, etc. to require any audio support. The artistic intent behind this event is for the audience to hear each ensemble when standing in close proximity (within a 30ft radius of a group), but that no ensemble overpowers another one approximately 150-200ft away. Audio levels will be closely monitored during sound check and performance, and Celebrity Series reserves the right to control volume levels of each ensemble.

Light power in the form of 15a circuit for each site will be provided. Each group will have access to not more than 10 amps, 750 watts each. As a reference, a typical guitar amp uses 3-5 amps. Most groups will have the ability to amplify 1-2 instruments only. Again, we are seeking a mostly acoustic experience.

Detail and clarity on applications regarding instrumentation will greatly inform band site suitability for each group.

*See images of sample set ups below.



Load-in/out

Select car access will be available for load-in and out of instruments and related equipment during specific loading times. Access to the performance area will be closely managed by Celebrity Series, with detailed plans to be shared in late summer.

Stipend:

Each individual musician will receive a \$350 stipend and paid separately. Maximum of 5 musicians per ensemble. All participants will sign a simple letter of agreement and W-9 form prior to participation and payment. Payment will be initiated by Celebrity Series to individual players within 1 week of the event.