Jazz Day for Kids
Kindergarten to Grade 8
Gaillard Center Artist-in-Residence Emeritus

A native of Awendaw, South Carolina, Charlton Singleton began his musical studies at the age of three on the piano. He went on to study the organ, violin, cello, and trumpet throughout elementary, middle, and high school. In 1994, he received a Bachelor of Arts in Music Performance from South Carolina State University. Since that time, he has taught music at the elementary, middle, and high school levels, as well as being an adjunct faculty member at the College of Charleston. In 2008 he co-founded and became the Artistic Director and Conductor of the Charleston Jazz Orchestra, an 18-piece jazz ensemble of some of the finest professional musicians in the Southeast and the resident big band in Charleston, SC. Mr. Singleton is also the organist and choir director at St. Patrick Catholic Church in Charleston. In November 2016, he was named the inaugural Artist in Residence at the recently renovated Gaillard Center in downtown Charleston. He remained in this position until July 2019; at that point he was named Artist in Residence Emeritus. In this position, he continues to lead the Summer Youth Jazz Orchestra Camp as well as the “Jazz Through the Ages” assembly, which attracts a capacity crowd of students at the Gaillard Center.

As a performer, Charlton leads his own ensembles that vary in size and style. He has performed in France, Great Britain, Scotland, Spain, Germany, Austria, Italy, Switzerland, Norway, The Netherlands, as well as many great cities throughout the United States. He is a founding member of a new ensemble called Ranky Tanky, a quintet that interprets the sounds of Gullah from the southeast coast of the United States. In 2018 Ranky Tanky reached the top of the Billboard, iTunes, and Amazon Contemporary Jazz charts with their self-titlewwd debut recording. In 2019 they accomplished the same feat with the release of their sophomore effort, “Good Time,” which won a Grammy Award for Best Regional Roots Album.

WATCH
Charlton with a Quintet
Jazz Theory: Charlton Singleton
MEET THE ARTIST // Robert Lewis

Director of the Charleston Jazz Orchestra
A lover of music since childhood, Lewis began playing saxophone in middle school. He earned a bachelor's degree in saxophone performance from the University of Idaho and a master’s degree in saxophone performance from Western Michigan University.

In 1998, Lewis began teaching in the College of Charleston School of Music as an adjunct instructor, before taking the helm of the jazz studies program in 2002. His love of jazz runs deep, which is evident in his wide-ranging interests of teaching, performing, and composing within the genre. Since 2019, he has been the Music Director of the Charleston Jazz Orchestra.

“I first of all just love the sound of jazz,” he says. “The melodies, harmonic language, and, most importantly, the rhythmic language has captivated me since I was very young. Also, the improvisation that is a requisite part of a jazz performance is extremely satisfying. To compose and perform simultaneously is one of the great joys I find in music, and since the entire group is often improvising there is really a conversation (in music) happening all the time.”

About Charleston Jazz Orchestra
“Founded in 2008, Charleston Jazz is a non-profit organization whose mission is to build a local and global community for jazz through performance, education and outreach while celebrating Charleston’s rich history in jazz.”

WATCH  Charleston Jazz Orchestra: Blues in the Night
Charleston Jazz Orchestra: Caravan

EXPLORE // Classroom Workshops

BeBop with Louis and Ella
Grades 2nd-8th
In this workshop, students will listen to the story When Louis Armstrong Taught Me Scat and will listen to Ella Fitzgerald scat sing. After, students will explore scat phrases and come up with their own scat song.
[Click Here for the Lesson Plan]

Music Listening Abstract Art
Grades K-5th
In this workshop, students will listen to various jazz instruments and will create an abstract piece of art where they will attribute colors, lines, and shapes to each instrument.
[Click Here for the Lesson Plan]

Book a Jazz Session with Charleston Jazz Academy
Grades: All Ages
Each Jazz Session features specially tailored programs for elementary, middle, and high school students in the Charleston Tri-County area. Whether it’s a performance, workshop, or artist visit to a school, these events help students develop an interest in and appreciation for jazz music and Charleston’s unique role in jazz history.
[To bring jazz into your school, please contact Basil Kerr at basil@charlestonjazz.com]
CONNECT // Jazz in South Carolina and the Harlem Renaissance

WATCH

Harlem Renaissance

The Jenkins Orphanage

JAZZ MUSICIANS NATIVE TO SOUTH CAROLINA

Figure 1

James Brown

Listen
Learn

Figure 2

Dizzy Gillespie

Listen
Learn

Figure 3

Freddie Green

Listen
Learn

READ

Hey Charleston! The True Story of the Jenkins Orphanage Band
by Anne Rockwell

Hey Charleston! is the story of the kind man who gave America “some rag” and so much more. What happened when a former slave took beat-up old instruments and gave them to a bunch of orphans? Thousands of futures got a little brighter and a great American art form was born.

Harlem Renaissance Party by Faith Ringgold

Faith Ringgold’s bold and vibrant illustrations capture the song and dance of the Harlem Renaissance while her story will captivate young readers, teaching them all about this significant time in our history. A glossary and further reading list are included.


Figure 2 Dizzy Gillespie (“Dizzy Gillespie,” Britannica, accessed December 12, 2023, https://www.britannica.com/biography/Dizzy-Gillespie)

Figure 3 Freddie Green (“Freddie Green Rythm Lesson,” Acoustic Guitar, accessed December 12, 2023, https://acousticguitar.com/swing-lesson-learn-to-play-rhythm-guitar-like-freddie-green/)

1Anne Rockwell, Hey, Charleston: The True Story of the Jenkins Orphanage. Illustrated by Colin Bootman (Minneapolis: Carolrhoda Books, 2013).

ENHANCE // Charlton Singleton & Other Jazz Influencers

LISTEN & WATCH Jazz with Charlton
Charlton at Howe Hall Aims Workshop
Interview with Charlton

LISTEN Samples of Jazz Music
“What a Wonderful World” by Louis Armstrong
“Cheek to Cheek” by Louis Armstrong and Ella Fitzgerald
“It Don’t Mean a Thing” by Duke Ellington
“Oop Bop Sh’ Bam” by Dizzy Gillespie

VISIT
Jenkins Orphanage
Click here to see one of the original Jenkins buildings, the current location, the historic marker, and the Bell of Hope.

READ
The History of Jazz by Ted Gioia
Gioia brings the story up-to-date, drawing on his latest research and covering the full spectrum of the music's past, present, and future in a survey that is a must-read for all jazz musicians, educators, and fans.4

Charleston Jazz by Jack McCray
Charleston Jazz sets out to reveal the rich, untold story of the evolution of American jazz in one of its major cradles: Charleston, South Carolina. The text and images show that what happened on the Gullah coast of South Carolina in terms of history, culture, and entertainment had a huge impact on jazz as we know it today.5

Doin’ the Charleston by Mark R. Jones
For the first time, here is the stirring story of the Jenkins Orphanage Band and its role in American popular music. From slavery to freedom, follow the inspirational rags-to-riches story of some of America’s greatest jazz musicians brought together by the determination of one man, a freed black slave named Rev. Daniel Jenkins. His “Jazz Nursery” revolutionized the music world.6

---

EXPLORE // Jazz Music Across the Globe

The travel and migration of jazz musicians from the United States to different countries has helped to popularize the genre and has led to the conception of new age international jazz music. “That genre [jazz] has come a long way from its birth in the American South. You can listen to jazz music around the world today, but it might sound a little different than what you’re used to hearing.”

While many international musicians have taken inspiration from American jazz music, we can also see a pattern of jazz musicians who have created their own cultural fusions through the incorporation of music from across the globe.

LISTEN
SCENERY BY RYO FUKUI (JAPAN)
JAZZ MEETS INDIA BY IRENE SCHWEIZER TRIO (SWITZERLAND)
BOEING BY DANTE AGOSTINI (FRANCE)
LE JAZZ BY KORA JAZZ TRIO (SENEGAL)
MAMBO NO 8 - DÁMASO PERÉZ PRADO (CUBA)
ELECTRIC BLUE BY KATE NOONAN (AUSTRALIA)

Compare and contrast the jazz music you’ve just heard from around the world. How are they similar to or different from one another? How are they similar to or different from American jazz music?

Figure 4 "Shanghai Jazz" accessed December 12, 2023, https://www.shjazz.com
EXPLORE // More Resources

The Charleston Jazz Initiative
The Charleston Jazz Initiative is a multi-year research project that documents the African American jazz tradition in Charleston, the South Carolina Lowcountry, and its diasporic movement throughout the United States and Europe between the late nineteenth century through today.⁹

For more information on the Charleston Jazz Initiative, click here.

Charleston Jazz
“Founded in 2008, Charleston Jazz is a non-profit organization whose mission is to build a local and global community for jazz through performance, education and outreach while celebrating Charleston’s rich history in jazz.”

For more information on Charleston Jazz, click here.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


BIBLIOGRAPHY

http://www.freddiegreen.org/interviews.html.

“They There Eyes - Freddie Green 1938.” September 8, 2013. YouTube video, 3:00. 

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bopD0Ud75RU.


https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ukP3sASoOx4.

“Jazz Theory: Charlton Singleton.” Produced by Carl Asee and D’Andre Brothers. 

EDUCATIONAL PARTNERS

The Gaillard Center would like to thank the following educational partners in their ongoing support of our Education & Community program. This program is also supported, in part, by a grant from a private foundation.

Gaillard Center Partners

Institutional Support
Jazz Day for Kids
with the
Charleston
Jazz Orchestra
& Charlton
Singleton

EDUCATIONAL PARTNERS

Institutional Support Continued

Community Partners

Jazz Day for Kids
with the
Charleston
Jazz Orchestra
& Charlton
Singleton