

## **Jazz in Philadelphia – Yesterday and in February, 2010!**

### **Sheryl Monkeliën, Vocal Jazz R&S Chair**

Broad Street, also known as the Avenue of the Arts, is the backbone of the Philadelphia arts community. The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts, home of the Philadelphia Orchestra and seven other companies, is located here. The Philadelphia Alliance's Walk of Fame, Philadelphia International Records and the Clef Club of the Performing Arts preserve the history of the Arts in Philadelphia and can also be found on Broad Street. Not only a mecca for classical music, Broad Street also was a hub of great jazz music as well. In the 1940's clubs like Pep's, the Uptown and Zanzibar nurtured some of the country's jazz greats. The Heath Brothers, Dizzy Gillespie, John Coltrane, Jimmy Oliver, Clifford Brown, Billie Holliday and Benny Golson were all born, raised or professionally proven in the jazz clubs of Philadelphia.

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the Dunbar Theatre (later renamed the Lincoln Theatre) and the Standard Theatre were important venues for jazz. Most major performers stopped in Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington and New York. Two of Philadelphia's native sons – Eddie Lang, guitar and Joe Venuti, violin became international jazz stars on their respective instruments. With Philadelphia as a stop for most major jazz performers, the city played an important role in the development of bebop and produced a number of bop-era saxophonists. The most famous was John Coltrane known for his active, vigorous, emotionally charged style of playing.

In the 1970's - 90's jazz greats like Sun Ra, McCoy Tyner, Stanley Clarke, Grover Washington Jr. and Christian McBride made Philadelphia a place where a new generation of jazz performers continued the innovative tradition and listeners discovered the jazz of Philadelphia.

Next February, Philadelphia will host the ACDA Eastern Division Conference that will feature an entire day of vocal jazz. On Friday, February 12<sup>th</sup>, jazz educators and enthusiasts will experience performances, clinics and a jam session devoted to the art of vocal jazz. The schedule includes:

9:15 am – *Jazz Rehearsal Techniques: Stylistic Approaches and Thoughts*, clinician Vijay Singh

10:45 am – Performance by the *Mansfieldians* – *Vocal Jazz* from Mansfield University  
and *Fantasy Show Choir* from Shepherd hill Regional High School

1:00 pm – *The Jazz Singer: and We Ain't Talkin' Al Jolsen*, clinician Peter Eldridge

2:30 pm – Vocal Jazz Reading Session with the *Mansfieldians* as a demonstration group

4:00 pm – Performance by *Men of Note*, Cherry Hill High School and the *High School/Collegiate Jazz Honor Choir*, Vijay Singh, director

9:30 pm – Jazz JAM Session with students from UArts, members of the Jazz Honor Choir, conference participants, and jazz enthusiasts at Chris's Jazz Café, Philadelphia

All jazz events will be held at the University of the Arts, with performances in the Ellen and Ronald Caplan Center for the Performing Arts. UArts, located on Broad Street, and Chris's Jazz Café, are both found in the historical arts center of Philadelphia. We hope you all will take part in the celebration of jazz in a city that helped nurture the art form in its earliest days. Join us for JAZZ IN PHILADELPHIA!