

Upcoming Seventh Annual Miles Davis Jazz Festival

April 27 2012 10:14 AM



The seventh annual Miles Davis Jazz Festival is scheduled for Saturday, May 19 at 5:00 p.m on the campus of Lewis and Clark Community College in the Trimpe Building. Four bands will pay homage to the iconic stature of Miles Davis. Saxophonist Fred Walker, vocalist Danita Mumphord, trumpeter Jim Manley and from St. Louis, the Souldard Blues Band have been booked for this special evening of entertainment.

Event organizers are anticipating community support to make this a concert not to be missed. "We have a variety of musicians that we hope will encourage people to attend," said Lee Barham, event chairman. "Miles Davis was known for not being shy and stretching the boundaries of his talent. We believe we've assembled a diversity of bands that will appeal to area music lovers."

Fred Walker, who often performs at Jazz on Broadway in Alton, is the only solo artist on the bill. Walker has released his CD, *Sax Appeal* and plays both alto and soprano sax. He's been studying music since high school and attributes Miles Davis, Sonny Stitt, Dizzy Gillespie, and Sonny Rollins as early influences.

Vocalist Danita Mumphard began singing as a youth in church, and early on was featured with her father who is a member of the legendary jazz group, Trio Très Bien. Her debut jazz CD "With Love", released in October 2005 includes live and studio performances. She has been featured at the Whitaker Jazz Festival at Missouri Botanical Garden, Jazz shows in Laumeier Sculpture Park and Arts in the Park in Edwardsville.

Jim Manley is an explosive trumpet player based in St. Louis and has traveled the world via his four critically acclaimed recordings: "Some Assembly Required", "Lip Trip", "Horns in the House and Other Criminals", and "Christmas Unwrapped". In the past few years Jim has branched out as a band leader, composer/arranger, as well as a clinician. As well, Jim maintains a busy playing schedule with nearly 4500 engagements in the last fifteen years. He has headlined the Saguaro Jazz Festival in Phoenix, Arizona and opened for the legendary Maynard Ferguson in 1996.

Since 1978 this five-piece ensemble known as the Soulard Blues Band has been playing its namesake sound and ensuring its place along the way. In a popular St. Louis poll for nine consecutive years they have been voted the Best Blues Band. The Soulard Blues Band has played in blues festivals from Memphis to Murphysboro, Key West to Houston. They have performed with a Who's Who of musicians including Albert King, Albert Collins, Oliver Sain, Ramsey Lewis and Chuck Berry. not just any band

The concert in past years has been the occasion to offer a \$250 jazz scholarship to a deserving student. This year the committee is granting two scholarships so there's an increased excitement. "For two years we've given one scholarship each year. We wanted to contribute more than we've had in the past, so we've upped our commitment and will present two scholarships at this year's event," Barham added.

The committee is also proud of an anticipated introduction of a Miles Davis collector's stamp. With support from U.S. Congressman Jerry Costello and Mayor Tom Hoechst, the unveiling is expected in June. This notoriety draws attention to Alton as Davis' birthplace and further cements the continued effort of keeping this concert as a memorial to his musical legacy.

KMOV-TV Channel 4 news anchor Vickie Newton has agreed to emcee the event. Two years ago she attended the concert and so enjoyed the experience that she's donating her time to aid in the success of the festivities.

Tickets can be purchased in advance at the Alton Convention and Visitor's Bureau, 200 Piasa Street, 465-6676, at the Alton Museum of History and Art, 2809 College Ave, 462-2763 and at the door on the day of the concert. The cost is \$25 for adults, \$12.50 for students with school ID. Food will be available free of charge and a cash bar will be included.

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