

City of Alton unveils long-awaited Miles Davis statue in special ceremony

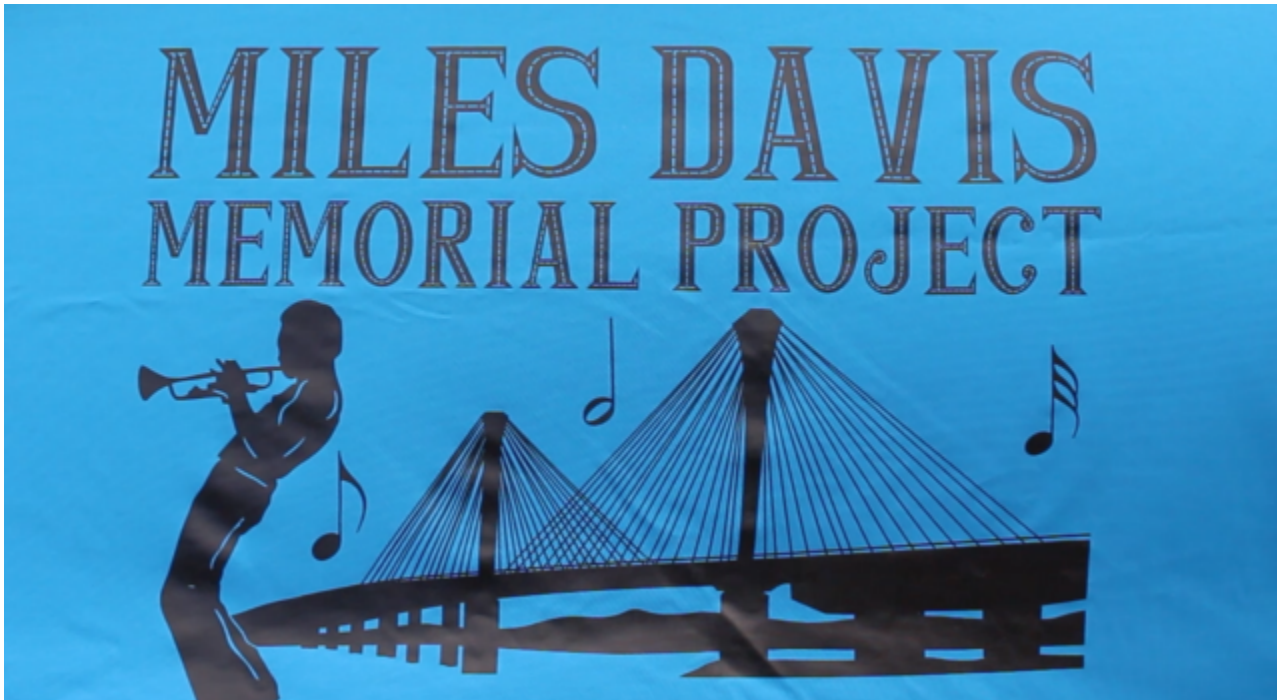
by Madelaine Gerard, Staff Writer
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ALTON - The long-awaited unveiling of the **Miles Davis statue** took place in a special ceremony at **5:00 p.m.** on **Saturday, Sept. 12**, on **3rd St. in Downtown Alton**.

Several notable people, including **Alton Mayor Brant Walker**, **Illinois State Representative Dan Beiser** and **Senator Bill Haine** were on hand for the memorable ceremony to celebrate the life and career of Davis, who was born in Alton and lived there as an infant.

Master of Ceremony Jim Killian praised the legend in his program, referencing his early years in Alton, as well as his astounding career as a jazz trumpet player. Although his family settled in **East St. Louis**, Killian noted that Davis always referred to Alton as his home. Live jazz was played throughout the evening to set the mood.



The effort to create the new landmark was given by the **The Miles Davis Memorial Project**. The project was formed as a collaboration between the **Alton Museum of History and Art, Pride, Incorporated** as well as the **Miles Davis Jazz Committee of Alton**. After fundraising and even crowdfunding on website **Indiegogo**, the Miles Davis statue that the group had hoped for is now a reality.

Emmy nominated jazz trumpeter **Bobby Shew** spoke as a special guest at the ceremony. Shew told the audience of his accidental meeting with Davis while performing at a jazz festival in **Indiana**, where his friend Louis pressured him into approaching the jazz legend. Shew was clearly starstruck in the presence of the great.

Sculptor **Preston Jackson** was commissioned to create the wonderful work of art that has now become one of the many landmarks in the region. During his speech before the unveiling, Jackson spoke of how Davis' music inspired him as an artist throughout the course of his career.

"I began to try to paint the music, paint the sounds of Miles," Jackson said.

The permanent fixture of famous jazz musician finds its home next to local restaraunts **Chez Marilyn** and **Bossanova** and is a short distance from the **Riverbender.com Community Center**.

