

**Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 244**

**Is your organization a 501(c)3 nonprofit?**

Yes

**According to your 501(c)3 letter, in what town is your official office located?**

Hartford

**Where will your project be performed or exhibited?**

Hartford

**Will this activity occur after February 1, 2023?**

Yes

**Are you a recent grantee?**

Yes

**Enter your Report Code**

819417-Roberts2020

**Organization Name**

Hartford Jazz Society, Inc,

**Organization's IRS Tax ID #**

066102327

**Principal Contact Name**

Ronald Lyles

**Title**

President

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United States  
[Map It](#)

**Website**

<https://hartfordjazzsociety.com/>

**Amount requested this application**

## **Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 244**

\$7,500.00

### **What is the organization's mission/vision statement?**

The mission of the Hartford Jazz Society is to cultivate an appreciation of the sound, culture and love of jazz by presenting a variety of live events and other activities

### **Provide a brief history of your organization and its activities.**

The Hartford Jazz Society is the oldest continuously operating jazz society in the United States with a distinguished history of achievement in promoting, preserving and pioneering jazz performance for diverse audiences in the Greater Hartford, CT area. Founded in 1960 by local jazz aficionado, Art Fine, The Hartford Jazz Society has the additional distinctions of having been one of the first totally integrated social organizations in the Hartford, Connecticut area and of having operated for over sixty years as a volunteer-lead and driven non-profit organization.

With a mission of cultivating an appreciation of the sound, culture and love of jazz by presenting a variety of live events and other activities, The Hartford Jazz Society has brought a steady parade of world-class talent to Hartford, including Coleman Hawkins, Dizzy Gillespie, Teddy Wilson, Cannonball Adderley, Oscar Peterson, Clark Terry, Jackie McLean, Dave Brubeck, Clifford Brown, Bill Evans, Dexter Gordon, and scores of others.

The Hartford Jazz Society's annual programming includes the production of:

1. Paul Brown Monday Night Jazz Series
2. Concert and workshop series highlighting prominent jazz artists as well as high school ensembles.
3. Partnerships and collaborations with other presenters such as the Hartford Public Library, Real Art Ways and the New Britain Museum
4. Educational programming such as the Jazz 101 lecture series.
5. Weekly performances and jam sessions in partnership with Black Eyed Sally's in Hartford, CT
6. Scholarships to graduating high school students intending to study music in college.

### **Describe the demographics of your audience/people served by your activities.**

The Hartford Jazz Society's activities typically serve a diverse audience consistent with the demographic breakdown of the Greater Hartford population.

### **Describe your organization's governance.**

The Hartford Jazz Society is governed by a highly active, ten-member volunteer Board of Directors, which, along with a cadre of volunteers, performs all of the organization's administrative functions. Besides attending regular monthly Board Meetings, members of the Board of Directors also serve as chairpersons of on-going committees. Since the Board is small and responsibilities are evenly divided, attendance at monthly meetings is usually between 80% and 100%.

### **Describe the diversity of your board.**

The Hartford Jazz Society is proud of its long history of commitment to diversity on its board of directors, as well as in its membership, programming and service provided to the community. Since its inception in 1960 the organization's board has consistently mirrored the diversity of the Hartford community.

Of the ten members currently on the board, 60% are African-American or Latino, and 40% are women.

### **What percentage of your board makes personal financial contributions to your organization?**

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100% of board members make financial contributions to the organization through donations, memberships and/or support of the organization's ticketed events.

### Project Name

2023 Paul Brown Monday Night Jazz

### Is this project related to the Visual Arts?

No

### Project Description

The 56th Paul Brown Monday Night Jazz Series in Bushnell Park (the "Series") will be held on six consecutive Monday evenings beginning on Monday, July 10 and concluding on Monday, August 14, 2023. The Series has been recognized as a New England Legacy and is referenced in the Library of Congress as the oldest free continuously run jazz festival in the United States. Each year the Hartford Jazz Society seeks to present a diverse program featuring musicians exhibiting the highest artistic excellence, many of which are often new to the Greater Hartford audience. Each in-person concert will consist of an opening act featuring a local musician or ensemble followed by a headliner of regional, national or international prominence. Several nights will feature themes that have evolved in the years the Hartford Jazz Society has presented the Series; including Latin jazz, women in jazz, a unity theme and a special feature for an overlooked elder statesmen of the music.

### Total estimated project budget

\$85,950.00

### Project start/opening

07/10/2023

### Project end/closing

08/14/2023

### Project venue

Bushnell Park

### Project town

Hartford

### Admission fees, attendance, and activity details

The Series is a free event open to the public. The Hartford Jazz Society typically estimates between 1500 to 2000 attendees for each night not impacted by inclement weather. There will be two performances each night for six consecutive Mondays.

### How do you intend to promote/market this project?

The marketing of the project will primarily rely on all of the available social media platforms as well as the organization's large email distribution list. However, in light of the inaccessibility of social media to some segments of the potential audience, the

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Hartford Jazz Society will investigate other mediums to promote the program to ensure that the event is accessible to all that may have an interest, such as local community print media and radio.

### **How is your organization going to use Roberts funding?**

Depending on the overall funding for the program, the organization will use Roberts funding for critical expenses associated with presenting the Series such as lighting, piano rental and the sound professional.

### **How will Roberts support be recognized?**

Roberts support will be recognized in all press releases and marketing materials, including the Hartford Jazz Society website, and any printed materials. The Hartford Jazz Society will also recognize Roberts in all stage announcements and include the Roberts logo on the large stage banner that will be produced.

### **What is your organization's definition of artistic excellence?**

When selecting jazz musicians for any of its programs, The Hartford Jazz Society seeks artists whose work is characterized by such qualities as vitality, originality, relevance, creativity, innovation, experimentation, and technical expertise. Concerts sponsored by the Society have been reviewed by music critics and audiences on a consistent basis as having fulfilled these criteria of artistic excellence.

### **How does this project align with that definition, and how does it advance your mission?**

The Paul Brown Monday Night Jazz series aligns perfectly with the definition. Each of the artists selected embodies the definition of excellence. Each headliner has received wide critical acclaim and/or prestigious awards for their music. In addition, each has attained an authentic personal voice, which all jazz musicians strive for. Several have long tenures educating subsequent generations of jazz performers and are widely adored for their contributions to jazz education, which are extensions of their artistic excellence. The project will significantly advance the organization's mission to cultivate an appreciation of the music during the six nights of concerts. Each artist is known for their ability to connect with audiences from novices to aficionados.

### **How will your audience and the community benefit from this project?**

The Series enhances and enriches the Hartford area arts scene, it contributes to the growth of the jazz audience and it nurtures the viability of the music as an art form. There are a limited number of venues and organizations in the entire state of Connecticut that present jazz programming. Unfortunately these circumstances reduce the opportunities to expose the art form to potential audiences. In addition to the limited number of educational opportunities for aspiring jazz musicians, the lack of exposure to jazz limits the growth of the audience for the music. The Series presents the music to thousands of audience members, many of whom are not necessarily jazz enthusiasts, but whose appreciation for the music will grow with each exposure.

The project also provides a potential economic benefit to the Hartford area due to the presence of thousands of people in downtown Hartford who would not otherwise be there.

### **How will this project be evaluated?**

The Hartford Jazz Society will evaluate the success of the Series by reviewing: (1) whether the concerts met anticipated attendance numbers; (2) feedback from the audiences and musicians; and (3) how administrative functions and marketing efforts achieved programming goals.

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### **Cover letter**

- [Hartford-Jazz-Society-Cover-Letter.pdf](#)

### **Board list**

- [Hartford-Jazz-Society-2023-Board-List.pdf](#)

### **IRS 501(c)3 determination letter**

- [Hartford-jazz-Society-501c3-Determination-Letter.pdf](#)

### **Financial statement**

- [Hartford-Jazz-Society-Financial-Statement.pdf](#)

### **Last year operational budget**

- [Hartford-Jazz-society-Last-Year-Operational-Budget.pdf](#)

### **Current year operational budget**

- [Hartford-Jazz-Society-Current-Year-Operational-Budget.pdf](#)

### **Balance sheet**

- [Hartford-Jazz-Society-Balance-Sheet.pdf](#)

### **Project budget**

- [Hartford-Jazz-Society-Project-Budget.pdf](#)

### **Does your organization produce an annual report?**

No

### **Has your organization adopted a strategic plan?**

No

### **Other materials?**

- [Hartford-Jazz-Society-Artist-Biographies.pdf](#)

### **Have you contacted the Executive Director by email or phone to discuss this proposal?**

Yes

### **Is your cover letter signed by your senior executive? on your letterhead? with your official office address?**

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Yes