

**Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 167**

**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 August 1, 2023?**

Yes

**Are you a recent grantee?**

Yes

**Enter your Report Code**

106824-Roberts2020

**Organization Name**

The Hartford Jazz Society, Inc.

**Organization's IRS Tax ID #**

066102327

**Principal Contact Name**

Ronald Lyles

**Title**

President, Board of Directors

**Email**

[relyles@comcast.net](mailto:relyles@comcast.net)

**Phone**

(860) 833-1019

**Address**

116 Cottage Grove Road #202  
Bloomfield, Connecticut 06002  
United States  
[Map It](#)

**Website**

<http://hartfordjazzsociety.com/>

## **Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 167**

### **Amount requested this application**

\$10,000.00

### **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 60 years as a volunteer-lead and driven non-profit organization.

With a mission of fostering interest, understanding and appreciation of jazz by presenting a variety of live events and by nurturing new generations of jazz performers and audiences, The Hartford Jazz Society has brought a steady parade of world-class talent to Hartford. As it continues into its seventh decade of promoting and hosting a wide variety of live jazz performances to existing and new audiences of all ages, races and economic statuses in the Greater Hartford area, the Hartford Jazz Society has established itself as a vital presence in the Hartford cultural scene.

The organization's annual programming includes:

- Paul Brown Monday Night Jazz series
- Scholarships to local students
- Concert/Workshop Series
- Partnerships with area presenters including Hartford Public Library and New Britain Museum of American Art
- Monday Night Jazz Jam at Black Eyed Sally's
- Jazz 101/201 lecture series

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

The organization's audience/people served includes people of all ages, races and economic statuses in the Greater Hartford area and beyond.

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

The Hartford Jazz Society is governed by a ten member volunteer Board of Directors, which performs all of the organization's administrative functions. Besides attending regular monthly Board Meetings, members of the Board also serve as chairpersons of ongoing committees. Attendance at monthly meetings is almost always 75% - 100%. 100% of board members make financial contributions to the organization through donations, memberships and/or support of the organization's ticketed events.

### **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 member board of directors:

**Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 167**

40% - African American

10% - Latino

30% - women

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

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

**Project Name**

2022 Paul Brown Monday Night Jazz

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

No

**Project Description**

The 55th Paul Brown Monday Night Jazz Series in Bushnell Park (the "Series") will be held on six consecutive Monday evenings beginning on Monday, July 11 and concluding on Monday, August 15, 2022. The Series will include a diverse program featuring musicians exhibiting the highest artistic excellence, most of which are new to the Greater Hartford audience. Each concert will consist of an opening act featuring a local artist followed by a headliner of regional, national or international prominence. Several nights will feature themes; including Latin jazz, women in jazz, and a special feature for an overlooked elder statesmen of the music. The Series will be highlighted by the finale, which will feature a presentation of Ragmala by the Go: Organic Orchestra and Brooklyn Raga Massive. Featuring over thirty-five musicians, Ragmala bridges musical and cultural distinctions between Indian Classical, jazz and West African Music.

**Total estimated project budget**

\$75,000.00

**Project start/opening**

07/11/2022

**Project end/closing**

08/15/2022

**Project venue**

Bushnell Park

**Project town**

Hartford, CT

**Admission fees, attendance, and activity details**

All six weeks of the project are free and open to public. The organization anticipates audiences between 1000 to 1500 each week. The audience is expanded as additional listeners also can access live broadcasts by WWUH.

## **Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 167**

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

The organization will promote the event heavily through social media and its own website. In recent years the Hartford Jazz Society has emphasized enhancing its social media presence and expertise in order to maximize the reach of its marketing efforts. The Hartford Jazz Society will also send traditional press releases to the relevant media outlets, produce post cards for distribution, and add the event to available calendars of organizations such as GHAC and [allaboutjazz.com](http://allaboutjazz.com).

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

Roberts funding will be pooled with other sources of funding to cover the expenses of the Series. Specifically, as of the date of this proposal the Society intends to allocate \$4,550 of Roberts funding toward the balance of the artist fee for the Ragmala Project not covered by the New England Foundation of the Arts grant. The remainder of Roberts funding will go toward the cost of the sound professionals.

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

The Roberts Foundation and all supporters will be recognized in the press release, all printed marketing material, the event stage banner, stage announcements and on the organization's website and all social media.

### **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. When applying its criteria for artistic excellence, the Hartford Jazz Society believes it is important to expose audiences to a variety of artists, give emerging artists performance opportunities and to occasionally challenge the audience's preconceived assumptions with high caliber artists that may be pushing at the boundaries of the music. Concerts sponsored by the Society have been reviewed by music critics 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. COVID continues to negatively impact live music. 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.

## **Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 167**

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.

### **Cover letter**

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

### **Board list**

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

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

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

### **Financial statement**

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

### **Last year operational budget**

- [Hartford-Jazz-Society-Previous-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

**Excellence in the Arts : Entry # 167**

**Grant Report**

- [The-Hartford-Jazz-Society-Inc.-Grantee-Reporting-Form.pdf](#)

**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?**

Yes