



NYJO Jazz Messengers: THAMES



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YOUTH MUSIC



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PETER SOWERBY FOUNDATION

Welcome!

We are really pleased that you are taking part in the NYJO Jazz Messengers project. The band, as well as coming to your school, will be visiting schools all across the country to spread to jazz message.

In this pack you'll find out more information about the music and the players, listen to some more jazz and, most importantly, find out how you can get involved in learning jazz in your area.

The NYJO Jazz Messengers is part of the National Youth Jazz Orchestra's learning programme. The National Youth Jazz Orchestra has been running for over 50 years and includes some of the best young jazz musicians in the country so it's very exciting that they're coming into your school to play for you.

Before NYJO existed, there wasn't much around for young people wanting to play jazz. You couldn't study jazz in school or university and there certainly weren't any concerts happening like the one you're in now.

Now, with NYJO, young people can gain experience performing live at some of the most famous jazz venues across the UK and around the world. Some of the most famous musicians of our time have come through NYJO. For example, Amy Winehouse started off as a vocalist in NYJO. Also, almost all of the band on the BBC show 'Strictly Come Dancing' have been NYJO members.

Our mission at NYJO is to make sure everyone gets the chance to learn about jazz and develop their performance skills. It doesn't matter if you're still learning on your instrument – the great thing about jazz is that you are in charge of the music!

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1) Meet the Musicians

Chelsea Carmichael: Saxophone and Band Leader

"Always check out new music – the more music you're exposed to the better!"



Jack Banjo Courtney: Trumpet

"Have confidence to show yourself off"



Joe Bristow: Trombone

*“Don’t let people tell you it’s not cool
to do music instead of things like
football.”*



Rosie Frater-Taylor: Guitar

*“Music has an incredible ability
to connect people and make
people feel something”*



Arthur O'Hara:
Bass

"Sitting down and jamming with mates is a great way of learning"



Jas Kayser:
Drums

"Playing drums is brilliant for releasing all my pent-up energy!"



2 About the Music

Today you'll hear a selection of the following tunes – here's a bit more about them!

Top of My Head- Roy Hargrove

Hargrove is a Grammy-winning jazz trumpeter, one of Jack's favourites. Although Hargrove wasn't a showman, he also always eager to learn and experiment, "maybe I'll be able to develop something that hasn't been done yet".

Ca Lee So – Lee Morgan

Lee Morgan was a jazz trumpeter from Pennsylvania, but is mainly known for his hard-bop style. Morgan was a member of Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers in the 1950s. His best known album is Sidewinder, which you should check out if you can.

Awake- Joe Bristow

Joe says "I woke up with a two-bar melody in my head that inspired the whole composition. The start and end also represent a dream". Listen to the mood of the piece and see how it makes you feel.

Calm After Storm – Chelsea Carmichael

"I think what I was trying to do here is demonstrate the different textures you can have within one ensemble. So it starts off just saxophone and piano/guitar, then just the horns, then eventually into the whole rhythm section. I think it makes for interesting listening, and you can hear the different qualities each piece brings to the overall sound."

It's Going to be Alright- Theo Croker, arr. By Chelsea Carmichael

Theo Croker is really new on the jazz scene, and really exciting and fun to listen to, with lots of hip-hop vibes.

New Orleans Medley- arr. By Chelsea Carmichael

New Orleans is the epicenter of the jazz world, and it's a really exciting place to visit if you love jazz. It's considered the birthplace of jazz. You may have heard of 'Dixieland' and 'ragtime' music, which jazz stems from.



Salt Peanuts- Dizzy Gillespie

"Salt Peanuts" is a bebop tune composed by Dizzy Gillespie in 1942. It is also cited as Charlie Parker's. Listen to the different layers of harmony and rhythm in this tune. The lyrics have no meaning, but it's probably about the snacks in the jazz clubs!

Second Balcony Jump- Dexter Gordon

Gordon was 6 feet 6 inches tall, so he was also known as "Long Tall Dexter" and "Sophisticated Giant"! He was known for inserting musical quotes into his solos, like "happy birthday" for example. It was something really unusual at the time, but now you can hear quotes like this all the time, thanks to Gordon.

3 Choosing an Instrument

Jazz can be played by all types of instruments - not just saxophones and trumpets. It's more about the feeling behind your playing and being able to improvise (make it up!) in a jazz style. Jack thinks improvising is *"where the magic is"*!

Of course, all of the NYJO Jazz Messengers think their instrument is the best. What do you think?

Saxophone

Chelsea loves the saxophone because of how versatile it is. Although she's playing jazz today, she plays it in hip hop, funk and even rock bands!

Fun Fact: The saxophone was the first instrument to be played in Space in 1984 by Ron McNair

Trumpet

Jack loves the trumpet because you *'sing'* when you play it.

Fun Fact: The first horns were not made out of brass but out of animal horns!

Trombone



Joe thinks the trombone is best because it's not the obvious choice. Although it's often not the star of the show he loves how unique its sound is.

Fun Fact: If you were to unwind a trombone the total length would be around 9 feet. That's the size of an African elephant from its shoulder to its toe!



NYJO on stage at the BBC Proms in Royal Albert Hall in 2018.

Guitar

Simply, Rosie thinks the guitar is the coolest and she loves how accessible it is – it's the second most popular instrument in the world. She also thinks it's great that it's a bit edgy. She's still working on her rock star moves though!

Fun fact: The longest marathon playing guitar is 114 hours 6 minutes 30 seconds and was achieved by David Browne in June 2011!

Double Bass

The bass is incredibly important when you're playing jazz – it's responsible for making the band groove. It's a tough job and you've got to have a great sense of rhythm. Arthur loves playing it as it's understated but so important.

Fun Fact: The Octobass is a huge bass that you can only play standing on a stool!

Drums

Jas loves playing the drums as it's so complicated doing lots of things at once. You have to be really co-ordinated to play drums. Also all the rhythm section (guitar, piano, bass and drums) have to work together to make the band groove so she really likes the teamwork when playing with his friends.

Fun Fact: The world's largest drum kit has 813 pieces to it and took 36 hours to build.



4 How to get Involved with playing Jazz

If you really enjoyed the NYJO Jazz Messengers concert, perhaps you'd like to start to learn an instrument. Tower Hamlets Arts & Music Education Service (THAMES) offers loads of opportunities to have lessons in school and join in playing in bands.

Have a think about what instrument you'd like to play. Would you like to be the cool saxophonist improvising a solo, the singer and star of the band, or the bassist laying down the groove?

You can learn an instrument through THAMES, and that's organised by your school, taking place during the school day. Usually, these lessons are free! . Have a chat with your teachers for more information!

You can also learn an instrument through East London Community Band (ELCB). ELCB are a Tower Hamlets based charity and offer a range of ensembles and instrumental lessons for anyone aged 6+ on Friday evenings in Shadwell. www.elcb.org.uk.

If you are already having instrumental or vocal lessons, you could join THAMES' Wednesday Music Centre or Saturday Music Centre and play in one of the many ensembles, from orchestras to jazz and wind bands.

<http://webfronter.com/towerhamlets/thames/>

Taking Exams

When you're learning an instrument, there are all sorts of exams you can take to mark your progress. The ABRSM have a specially designed series of jazz exams – which include some really fun tunes that will help you in your journey into jazz, and some of the tunes you've heard today such as Moanin'. Currently these are available for flute, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, trombone, piano and for ensembles.

To find out more, speak to your music teacher or visit; <https://gb.abrsm.org/en/our-exams/jazz-exams/>





NYJO Academy Musicians at Ray's Jazz, Foyles Charing Cross 2019

5 Challenges with learning an instrument

Learning how to play an instrument or committing to being the best player you can be is one of the most enjoyable and challenging things.

All of the NYJO Jazz Messengers went through challenges while learning...

Practice

Finding the time to practice and knowing what to practice can be one of the first hurdles. Like most other things, practise is the only way to be great! Chelsea says *"practise little and often! Practising for 20mins every day is better than doing 3 hours once a week"*

Challenge: chose a song or a scale you'd like to learn and practise it for 20 minutes or the same amount of time every day.

Playing live

One of the most nerve-racking things can be playing live. Playing live improvised jazz means there's always potential for something to go wrong. Believe it or not, all of the NYJO Jazz Messengers have had something go wrong when they were playing live, from hitting the wrong note or coming in at the wrong time!

The solution is NYJO Academy Musicians at Ray's Jazz, Foyles Charing Cross 2019 do is carry on. Joe says *you can't go back and change something so you have to do the best*



you can but most importantly, you have to learn to let it go!” For Joe making mistakes motivates him to practice even harder so he doesn’t make the same mistake again.

Jas adds *“you should just be confident – no one besides you and your band mates will know that you’ve done it wrong. That way you’ll turn your mistakes into music!”*

Nerves whilst playing live

For Chelsea combating nerves is something she is still working on. The trick she says is *“remembering music is fun”*. Also she says the best way you can practically get ready is to *“be prepared, don’t turn up late to a gig so you have time to be calm before you get on stage. Most importantly, eat!”*

Playing with other musicians

So where do you go when you’re tired of playing by yourself in your bedroom or in a classroom.

Well, there are so many ways to start playing with others. Both Jas and Arthur say *“get your mates together and start jamming!”*. If none of your friends have decided to go down a musical route we still have you covered. Check out page 9 for how to get involved in ensembles in your area. And, of course, once you’ve been playing a while you can get involved in NYJO and our training bands. Find out more at www.nyjo.org.uk

Playing a solo

We’ve all sat there for hours on YouTube listening to a track over and over again just to hear that solo that sounds so good. The challenge is knowing how to create one just like that so people listening are amazed.

Jazz musicians like to do a lot of transcription, which is writing down or learning a solo from your favourite player. Rosie thinks it’s very important to think about the shape of your solo, taking the time to really say something through your improvisation.

Challenge: choose a solo you love, take a small phrase from it and practicing it as part of your 20 minute a day practice routine. See if you can play it on your instrument after a week!



6 Jazz Playlist

It's impossible to play jazz if you don't listen to it. Most young players spend hours and hours copying their favourite players and learning from them. If you liked the music played today, check out our [Youtube Playlist](#), for some more inspiration. Click on the song titles to view the tunes!

- 1) [Kamasi Washington – The Magnificent 7](#)
Jas loves mixing jazz and hip hop together. Kamasi is a famous jazz saxophonist and also produced 'To Pimp a Butterfly', Kendrick Lamar's best selling album.
- 2) [Duke Ellington – C Jam Blues](#)
This is a very simple tune, it only uses two notes (C & G), but really swings! Try playing/singing along.
- 3) [Dinosaur – Living, Breathing](#)
This band is led by British trumpeter, and ex-NYJO player, Laura Jurd. They've just been nominated for the Mercury Music Prize alongside Stormzy & Sampha.
- 4) [Ella Fitzgerald – Blue Skies](#)
Listen out for how Ella uses blue notes in her scat solo.
- 5) [Esperanza Spalding – Sunny Side of the Street](#)
Esperanza plays double bass and sings at the same time! Here she plays her brand new version of a very old jazz standard. Look out for some famous faces in the audience.
- 6) [Eliot Mason – Sunny Side of the Street](#)
This is Joe's favourite version of this standard as it shows the wide range of sounds a trombone can make. Try following the music and sing along with the solo!
- 7) [Stevie Wonder – Do I Do](#)
Jack thinks Stevie's band is the grooviest around! This live version is brilliant.
- 8) [Michael Dease – Blues on the Corner](#)
Joe thinks this solo is the perfect example of how to play blues. His favourite aspect is how the trombonist bends the notes.
- 9) [Laura Mvula – She](#)
Chelsea really likes the layering of textures in this tune and the mix of jazz, pop and classical music. It demonstrates that music doesn't need to be pigeon holed into one genre, and good music is good music!



- 10) [Duke Ellington – Caravan](#)
This is one of Jas’s favourite tunes and it inspired her to play in a big band.
- 11) [Clark Terry – Blues for Smedley](#)
The NYJO Jazz Messengers love this tune. He’s the original version by American trumpeter, Clark Terry
- 12) [Joshua Redman – Hide and Seek](#)
Joshua has been one of Chelsea’s favourite players since she started learning saxophone. She loves the percussive nature of the intro on this track.
- 13) [Jaco Pastorius – Bass Solo](#)
Arthur loves this as it was the first time anyone had put the bass guitar in the spotlight as a solo instrument. Jaco's undeniable skill and use of harmonics make the bass sing.
- 14) [Thundercat – Them Changes](#)
Arthur loves Thundercat's dress sense and groove in this video. *“He's not afraid to do what he wants and show his personality. The band are super funky too!”*
- 15) [Ambrose Akinmusire – Confessions to my Unborn Daughter](#)
Jack thinks Ambrose is one of the most original improvisers around – although the *“whole band is on fire”!*
- 16) [Quincy Jones – Boogie Stop Shuffle](#)
Here’s a very famous version of a tune you may have heard before. Quincy Jones started life as a jazz trumpeter but went on to produce most of Michael Jackson’s hits....jazz musicians really do pop up everywhere!
- 17) [Freddie Hubbard – Little Sunflower](#)
Trumpet players love Freddie Hubbard! Here you can really hear how Freddie has been influenced by Miles Davis.
- 18) [Buena Vista Social Club – El Cuarta De Tula](#)
This tune is very simple, and very groovy. Plus, it’s amazing when Ry Cooder plays the guitar behind his back!
- 19) [Herbie Hancock – Watermelon Man](#)
This is a really funky tune! It has lots of simple riffs on top of each other which makes it groove. How do you think the sounds at the beginning are made?

You might also like to hear more of NYJO:



- 1) [Feelin' Good](#) – this is a classic tune, made famous by Nina Simone, but sung here by Emma Smith
- 2) [Rockin' in Rhythm](#) – NYJO played this classic Duke Ellington tune at the BBC Proms in the Royal Albert Hall
- 3) [MBadgers](#) – a funky tune that was written for NYJO by Julian Siegel and played on our latest album, NYJO Fifty.
- 4) [That Old Black Magic](#) – this is a swinging tune. Try to clap along on beats 2&4

Obviously, this is just a small sample of the huge world of jazz music that is out there! We hope you enjoy the music and are inspired to explore more jazz on your own.

How to listen?

Listening to music is actually very hard. Real listening means being calm, sitting still and quietly and concentrating on the sound of the music without getting distracted. Try doing this exercise to develop your “listening muscles”:

- Stay absolutely silent for 30 seconds! This is harder than it seems...can you really make no sounds? If you fidget this will make a sound...!
- Do this again but while you are doing it listen to what sounds are going on around you. What did you notice? Can you make a list of all the sounds you can hear around you?
- Now listen to something from the playlist...but only for 1 minute...can you describe what you heard: the instruments that played, whether the music was loud or soft, if it sounded smooth or detached, was it fast or slow? The more you ask these questions the more you will notice!

