



Thirteenth Annual

Las Vegas Jazz Invitational

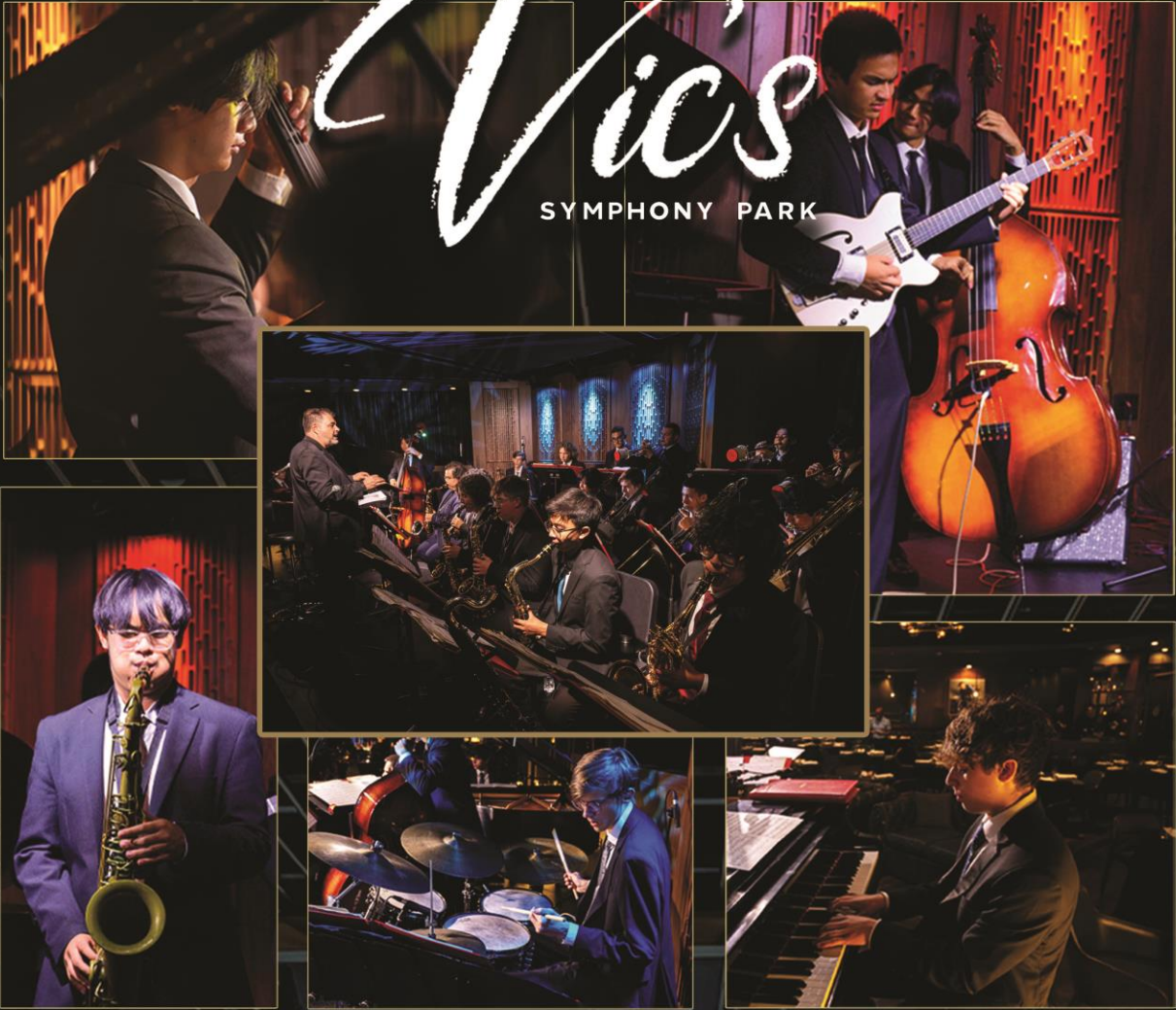
Featuring The Angelo Versace Trio
March 28 & 29, 2025

Las Vegas Academy of the Arts
Lowden Theater 875 East Clark Ave
www.lasvegasjazzfestival.org



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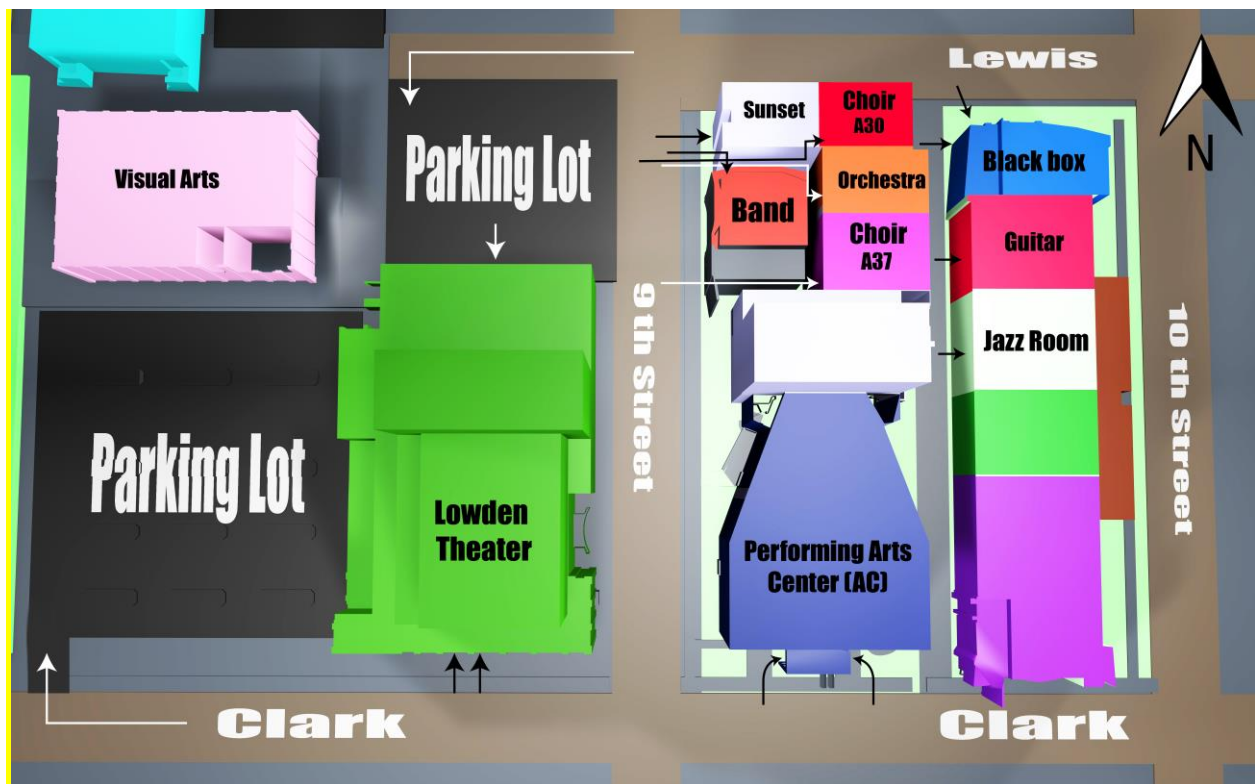
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LIVE JAZZ NIGHTLY | FINE DINING | GAMING | SPIRITS

Las Vegas Academy of the Arts

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Jennifer Shuler
Jenny Valdez
Josh Hager
Patricia Carroll
Kristin Baker
Meaghn Gill
Patrick Bowen
Julian Tanaka
Sue Mirman

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This program is presented in accordance with CCSD Policy and Regulation 6130, Assemblies and Public Programs

Friday, March 28

Warm up rooms will be available 30 minutes prior to your performance time.

Performance Time	Venue	Group	Warm Up Room	Clinic Room
10:00 am	Lowden Theater	Sunrise High School Big Band	Lowden Theater	Black Box
10:30 am	Lowden Theater	Bob Miller Middle School Big Band	Jazz Room	Black Box
11:00 am	Lowden Theater	Canarelli Middle School Big Band	Jazz Room	Black Box
11:30 am	Lowden Theater	Cadwallader Middle School Big Band Even	Jazz Room	Black Box
12:00 pm	Lowden Theater	Lawrence Junior High School Big Band	Jazz Room	Black Box
12:30 pm	Lowden Theater	Arbor View High School Big Band 2	Jazz Room	Black Box
1:00 pm	Lowden Theater	Cadwallader Middle School Big Band Odd	Jazz Room	Black Box
1:30 pm	Lowden Theater	Las Vegas Academy of the Arts Big Band Jazz 1	Jazz Room	Black Box
2:00 pm	Lowden Theater	Legacy High School Big Band	Jazz Room	Black Box
2:30 pm	Lowden Theater	Arbor View High School Big Band 1	Jazz Room	Black Box
3:00 pm	Lowden Theater	Las Vegas Academy of the Arts Combo NOLA	Jazz Room	Black Box
3:30 pm	Lowden Theater	Las Vegas Academy of the Arts Combo Even	Jazz Room	Black Box
4:00 pm	Lowden Theater	Las Vegas Academy of the Arts Combo Odd	Jazz Room	Black Box
4:30 pm	Lowden Theater	Las Vegas Academy of the Arts Combo Prime	Jazz Room	Black Box
6:00 pm	Lowden Theater	LVJI 2025 Faculty Concert followed by Middle School Honor Jazz Band 2		

Saturday, March 29

Warm up rooms will be available 30 minutes prior to your performance time.

Performance Time	Venue	Group	Warm Up Room	Clinic Room
9:30 am	Lowden Theater	Angelo Versace Trio Clinic	Jazz Room	Black Box
10:30 am	Lowden Theater	Amplus Academy Big Band	Jazz Room	Black Box
11:00 am	Lowden Theater	Becker Middle School Big Band 2	Jazz Room	Black Box
11:30 am	Lowden Theater	Thurman White Academy Big Band 3	Jazz Room	Black Box
12:00 pm	Lowden Theater	Johnson Junior High School Big Band	Jazz Room	Black Box
12:30 pm	Lowden Theater	Becker Middle School Big Band 1	Jazz Room	Black Box
1:00 pm	Lowden Theater	Thurman White Combo	Jazz Room	Black Box
1:30 pm	Lowden Theater	Las Vegas Academy of the Arts Big Band Jazz 2	Jazz Room	Black Box
2:00 pm	Lowden Theater	Thurman White Academy Big Band 2	Jazz Room	Black Box
2:30 pm	Lowden Theater	KO Knudson Academy Big Band	Jazz Room	Black Box
3:00 pm	Lowden Theater	Thurman White Academy Big Band 1	Jazz Room	Black Box
3:30 pm	Lowden Theater	Las Vegas Academy of the Arts Big Band Jazz 3	Jazz Room	Lowden Theater
6:00 pm	Lowden Theater	LVJI 2025 Faculty Concert followed by Middle School Honor Jazz Band 1		



***Congratulations to the Middle School
Honor Jazz Band Participants!***

175 students representing 12 schools auditioned for the SNBA Middle School Honor Jazz Bands.

MS Honor Jazz 1 with Jose Diaz

Alto Sax 1: Eli Rosenberg, Greenspun JHS
Alto Sax 2: Evan Bundy, Miller MS
Tenor Sax 1: Aaliyah Borjon, Greenspun JHS
Tenor Sax 2: Arden Nguyen, Miller MS
Bari Sax: Shakira Hernandez, Lawrence JHS

Trombone 1: Lew Hamajima, Miller MS
Trombone 2: Eve Daines, White Academy
Trombone 3: Hayden Darley, Greenspun JHS
Trombone 4: Ellaine Sionosa, Canarelli MS
Bass Trombone: Carter Williams, Becker MS

Trumpet 1: Adalai Weilbacher, Greenspun JHS
Trumpet 2: Kolton Heiss, Greenspun JHS
Trumpet 3: Kai Murata, Lawrence JHS
Trumpet 4: Keith Kramer, Johnson JHS
Trumpet 5: Ezra Layton, Cadwallader MS

Piano: Max Geller, Becker MS
Guitar: Brock Gates, White Academy
Vibes: Errol Tietjen, Garrett JHS
Bass: Dylan Yniguez, Cadwallader MS
Drums: Charlie Gonzalez, Cadwallader MS
Aux Percussion: Ayden Quintanilla, White Academy

MS Honor Jazz 2 with Mike McGrath

Abel Acosta Pineiro, Saville MS
Emmett Jones, Miller MS
Anthony Mike, Greenspun JHS
Layla Johnson, White Academy
Breanna Anderson-Flores, Lawrence JHS

Dean Streets, Becker MS
Natalie Abad-Yoe, Lawrence JHS
Emmanuel Diaz-Matlock, White Academy
Ryan Kim, Miller MS
Erik Richards-Ellison, Lawrence JHS

Henry Vasquez, Becker MS
Cruz Fuentes, Cadwallader MS
Shayna Mae Gavilo, Canarelli MS
Wyatt Williams, Becker MS
Bill De Valencia, Becker MS

Sonya Stevens, White Academy
Kristian Sumampong, Knudson Academy
Giancarlo Zamora, Greenspun JHS
Johan Moreno, White Academy
Jonathan Mims, Greenspun JHS
Samuel Cheney, White Academy

Co-sponsored by the Southern Nevada Band Directors Association
Co-chaired by Zach Williams, Becker MS; Steven Moya, Robison MS; and Tyler Pawl, Cadwallader MS
Special thanks to Becker Middle School for use of their facilities for rehearsals

Las Vegas Academy Jazz Music Faculty



Patrick Bowen has been the Director of World Jazz Studies at Las Vegas Academy of the Arts since 2001 and Director of Percussion since 1993. Under his leadership, LVA's jazz bands have performed at prestigious events including the Midwest Clinic, Monterey Jazz Festival, Reno Jazz Festival, Brandon Jazz Festival, Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival, and the Jazz Education Network Conference. The school has received 12 Grammy Awards—an achievement unmatched by any other high school in the nation—and has earned 21 DownBeat Awards from DownBeat Magazine.

Bowen is the Principal Percussionist for the Las Vegas Philharmonic and has performed with Celine Dion, Tony Bennett, Lady Gaga, Garth Brooks, Harry Connick Jr., Seth MacFarlane, Usher, Elton John, Clint Black, Sheila E., Wynonna Judd, Lionel Richie, Stevie Wonder, Don Henley, Andrea Bocelli, David Foster, and many others. A sought-after clinician and adjudicator, he has worked with jazz festivals across the U.S. and Canada, including the Con Brio Music Festival (Whistler, Canada), Hank's Jazz Festival (El Paso, TX), Reno Jazz Festival (Reno, NV), and the Utah All-State Music Festival.

He holds a B.M. in Music Performance (Cum Laude) from the Hartt School of Music, an M.M. in Music Performance from the University of Montana, and a Teaching Certificate from UNLV. His jazz mentors include Jackie McLean, Nat Reeves, Jaki Byard, and Alexander Lepak. Bowen is endorsed by Crescent Cymbals, Grover Pro Percussion, Regal Tip by Calato, and Toca Percussion.



Julian Tanaka is a clarinet/saxophone player, composer, and educator based in Las Vegas. He teaches at Las Vegas Academy of the Arts and the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, where he directs the Contemporary Jazz Ensemble and teaches jazz composition. A graduate of UNLV and the Eastman School of Music, Julian has performed with Postmodern Jukebox, BoyzIIMen, NAS, and numerous Strip productions. He's composed and arranged for a wide range of ensembles, from big bands to pops orchestras. Julian's mentors include Bill Dobbins, Charles Pillow, Joe Lano, and Walt Blanton.

Clinicians and Guest Artists



Jazz pianist **Angelo Versace**, a native of Indiana, Pennsylvania, has served as the director of jazz studies at the University of Arizona since 2014. He earned his bachelor's degree from William Paterson University, where he studied under jazz legend Mulgrew Miller, and later completed his Master of Music and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees at the University of Miami. While in Miami, Versace taught at the Superior Academy of Music, as well as at high school jazz programs that excelled at the prestigious Essentially Ellington competition. After moving to Arizona, he joined the faculty of the Tucson Jazz Institute, a two-time Essentially Ellington competition winner.

Versace has performed on 12 studio albums, including two as a leader and 10 as a sideman. Highlights include *Jazz Hymns* with guitarist Jerry Hahn and *Kristian 3.0* with Khristian Dentley of Take-6. He has shared the stage as a sideman with prominent artists such as Lewis Nash, Warren Wolf, Marcus Printup, Brice Winston, and Roxy Coss.

In addition to his performing career, Versace is a dedicated educator, traveling annually to Taipei, Taiwan, where he serves on the faculty of the Fu Jen University Jazz Camp in collaboration with the American Institute of Taiwan Jazz Outreach Program. He is also a member and board director of the Tucson Jazz Collective, which performs throughout Southern Arizona. Most recently, the group appeared at the SAACA Jazz Legends Concert alongside vocalist Becca Stevens. Versace continues to balance his roles as a performer, educator, and advocate for jazz in the community.

Legendary drummer **Lewis Nash**, universally recognized as one of the greats in jazz history, has built an illustrious career spanning over four decades. A native of Phoenix, Arizona, Nash moved to New York City in 1981 and gained international recognition as a member of vocalist Betty Carter's trio. Since then, he has toured, recorded, and performed with jazz icons like Oscar Peterson, Dizzy Gillespie, Sonny Rollins, McCoy Tyner, Ray Brown, and many more. His extensive discography includes over 500 recordings, 10 Grammy-winning albums, and numerous Grammy nominees.



Nash holds the unique distinction of appearing on Grammy-winning albums in both the "Best Jazz Vocal" and "Best Jazz Instrumental" categories in two separate years: 2004 with Nancy Wilson and McCoy Tyner, and 2010 with Dee Dee Bridgewater and James Moody.

In 2012, his hometown honored him by establishing The Nash, a jazz education center and performance venue that has become a cornerstone of Phoenix's jazz scene. He has been a vital educator, serving on The Juilliard School's inaugural jazz faculty, the Vail Jazz Workshop for 20 years, and, since 2017, at Arizona State University as the Bob and Gretchen Ravenscroft Professor of Practice in Jazz. In 2021, ASU created the Lewis Nash Scholarship Endowment to support jazz students.

Renowned for his drumming and educational expertise, Nash continues to inspire audiences and students worldwide through performances, masterclasses, and workshops.

Philip Kuehn is a distinguished bassist, arranger, composer, and educator with a career intertwined with some of music's most notable names. He has performed with luminaries such as Harry Connick Jr., Wynton Marsalis, Jon Batiste, Branford Marsalis, Roy Hargrove, Cyrille Aimée, and Khristian Dentley of Take 6. His bass lines are featured on the Grammy-winning Disney/Pixar film *Soul*, and he collaborated with Quincy Jones to create a celebrated arrangement for the Beethoven Orchester Bonn's 250th Anniversary.



In December 2022, Kuehn performed with Jon Batiste at the White House for President Biden's State Dinner, a highlight of his career. Formerly the regular bassist for Batiste's ensembles, including the "Stay Human" band on *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*, Kuehn contributed five arrangements to *Christmas with Jon Batiste*, which reached #3 on the Billboard Jazz chart and #1 on the Heatseeker's chart.

Kuehn's musical journey began in Pittsburgh, guided by his musician parents and esteemed mentors like Dwayne Dolphin and Roger Humphries. By 12, he was immersed in the Pittsburgh jazz scene, performing with a trio alongside childhood friends Joe Saylor and Angelo Versace.

Now based in Eastern Pennsylvania, Kuehn continues to inspire audiences and honor the mentors and experiences that have shaped his career, crediting his success to their support and divine providence.



Dr. Isrea Butler, Director of the School of Music at the University of Nevada Las Vegas, holds degrees in trombone performance from the Eastman School of Music (BM, MM) and Rutgers University (DMA). His mentors include renowned artists such as Dr. John Marcellus, Ralph Sauer, and Weston Sprott.

Dr. Butler is the lead trombonist for the Legendary Count Basie Orchestra and a founding member of the Gateways Brass Collective. He has performed with top New York jazz ensembles, toured with leading orchestras like Cab Calloway, Duke Ellington, and the Mingus Big Band, and played in eight Broadway productions. In the classical realm, he has performed with the Orchestra of St. Luke's, Rochester Philharmonic, Buffalo Philharmonic, and the Gateways Music Festival Orchestra.

As an educator, Dr. Butler has held leadership roles at Valdosta State University, North Carolina Central University, and the University of Maryland Eastern Shore. He has also taught at Jackson State University, Eastman School of Music, Juilliard MAP, and Rutgers University. His students have advanced to prestigious institutions such as Indiana University, Berklee, and Eastman.

Dr. Butler has conducted ensembles like the Harlem Hellfighters WWI Experience Band, UMES Wind Ensemble, and Eastman Trombone Choir. A Conn-Selmer clinician and performing artist, Dr. Butler continues to inspire through his multifaceted career as a performer, educator, and conductor.



Pianist and composer, **James Miley**, has taught at Willamette University since 2009, where he presently serves as coordinator of the Jazz and Improvised Music program, directs the Ford Hall Digital Music Lab and Recording Studios, and teaches courses in composition, improvisation, music theory & history, and music/sound for visual media. He is a founding member (along with composer/arrangers Patty Darling and the late Fred Sturm) of the Radiohead Jazz Project, and his music for jazz big band has been performed internationally, as well as by many of the top high school and university big bands throughout the United States. As an improvising pianist, Miley can be heard with the jazz chamber group Bug (featuring saxophonist Peter Epstein), the Hashem Assadullahi Sextet

with Ron Miles, and Dan Cavanagh's Jazz Emporium Big Band, all on Origin Records. His most recent recordings include the free improvisation collective Trio Untold, featuring Mike Nord (guitar/electronics) and Ryan Biesack (drums/percussion), available on PJCE Records, and an album of original music with pianist Dan Cavanagh and Grammy-nominated drummer/composer John Hollenbeck, released in November, 2022, on S/N Alliance out of Tokyo, Japan. He holds degrees in Music from Occidental College, the University of Arizona, and the University of Oregon, with additional coursework in jazz studies and composition at CalArts and the University of California, Santa Barbara.



José Antonio Diaz, recently featured in the National Endowment for the Arts *American Artscape Magazine*, is the founder and artistic director of the award-winning Diaz Music Institute in Houston, Texas. A celebrated music educator, Diaz has been a Grammy Nominated Music Educator Top 10 Finalist, inducted into *DownBeat Magazine's* Jazz Education Hall of Fame, and honored with numerous accolades, including the Berklee College of Music John LaPorta Jazz Educator of the Year Award and the Mayor's Hispanic Heritage Award.

Under Diaz's leadership, the Diaz Music Institute has gained international recognition for its Latin jazz and salsa programs, highlighted by the annual *Noche Caliente* at the Miller Outdoor Theatre, featuring the Institute's ensemble, Caliente, alongside Latin music legends like Eddie Palmieri and Poncho Sanchez. Diaz's jazz ensembles have performed at prestigious events, including the Midwest Clinic and Jazz Education Network conferences.

As an artist, Diaz has performed with luminaries such as Arturo Sandoval, Patrice Rushen, and Miguel Zenon. He has also received multiple Houston Arts Alliance grants to support his compositions in Latin, jazz, and contemporary music.

A graduate of the University of Arkansas and Texas Christian University, Diaz serves on the board of The Midwest Clinic and is a member of JEN, NAFME, TBA, and Phi Beta Mu. He co-authored *Middle School Music Expressions™* and composed music for *Freddie the Frog and the Invisible Coquí*.

9th Annual LVJI Service to Jazz Education Award

JoBelle Yonely serves as the jazz vocal instructor for the UNLV Division of Jazz and Commercial Music, bringing extensive expertise as a jazz singer, songwriter, studio artist, and voice actor. Born into a show business family in Chicago, Yonely grew up surrounded by music. Her father, “The Great Yonely,” was a celebrated musician and comedian, and her mother was a singer. Family gatherings featured legendary musicians like Louis Armstrong and Al Hirt. Jo Belle performed at Chicago’s top jazz clubs alongside icons such as Ira Sullivan, Von Freeman, Willie Pickens, and Howard Levy. Her illustrious career spans performances at jazz festivals nationwide, nine recorded albums, and collaborations with artists like Red Rodney, Claudio Roditi, and Rufus Reid. She even performed for President George H.W. Bush alongside Lionel Hampton. A co-founder of the Brazilian/jazz group Chizil, she remains a versatile artist. Parallel to her jazz career, Yonely thrived as Chicago’s top studio singer and voice actor for over 20 years, recording for brands like McDonald's, United Airlines, Hallmark, and HBO. After working in New York City, she settled in Las Vegas, joining the UNLV faculty. She continues to perform at festivals, concerts, and venues, sharing her passion for jazz.



JoBelle Yonely

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*Students completing 6th grade may participate with approval from the Camp Directors; please email lmcc@unr.edu.

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Thanks for all you do and good luck from all of us at the Music & Arts family.

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