

# 3rd Annual New Bedford JazzFest Survival Guide



Famous jazz trumpeter Wynton Marsalis best described the importance of jazz; “Jazz music is America’s past and its potential, summed up and sanctified and accessible to anybody who learns to listen to, feel, and understand it.” I have always liked this quote because it is an eloquent way of contextualizing the rich history of jazz, a music that was born from the American melting pot. Jazz music is the result of many cultures blending together to create a unique and beautiful style of music, and it is this cultural context that makes it very pertinent in a city like New Bedford, which is a cultural melting pot in its own right.

The third annual New Bedford JazzFest is right around the corner, and I had the opportunity to speak with organizer Eric Paradis about the event and why it promises to be a great experience for all who attend. This article will give you the

scoop on all you need to know about the New Bedford Jazzfest.

## **1. Time and Location**

The JazzFest will take place from 2:00 to 7:00 PM on Saturday June 14th. Music will take place at Pier 3 of the New Bedford Waterfront. A large tent will keep out any inclement weather and seating is first come, first serve. Over 700 people attended last year.

Free parking is available next to Pier 3 at 49 State Pier, which is the ferry parking lot. It can be found using a GPS and attendants will also be on hand to usher attendees into the parking lot. Attendees will be given a wristband for re-entry, allowing them to come and go from the event if they would like to peruse Downtown New Bedford's many shops and eateries.

## **2. The Fundraiser**

The New Bedford JazzFest is a fundraiser for Your Theatre, Inc. a 68-year-old, volunteer-based community theatre in New Bedford. Your Theatre produces 5-7 shows each season and also offers an annual scholarship to students pursuing the arts. All proceeds from the festival go towards continuing this long lasting theatre, which is hopeful to one day raise enough funds to secure a permanent home for their workshops and performances.

Organizer Eric Paradis told me that when Your Theatre, Inc. began to put the JazzFest together they expected that it would take them over a year to secure the funding required to facilitate the event. However, Bridgewater Credit Union indicated their interest in JazzFest, allowing them to make the idea a reality. As the key sponsor of the event, Bridgewater Credit Union provides not only funding, but also organizational assistance and volunteer hours. Thanks to this unique partnership the JazzFest is looking forward to a third successful year.

### 3. The Music

When I spoke with event organizer Eric Paradis, he noted that they chose to start the JazzFest as a fundraiser for Your Theatre because despite there being an abundance of jazz talent in the region, not many venues cater to this form of art. He was pleased to announce that this is changing in the region, and is glad that the New Bedford JazzFest has been a part of that change.

This year's JazzFest is featuring three main acts. Etymology will take the stage at 2:15. Etymology is comprised of UMass Dartmouth students who play a mixture of early, modern and Latin jazz. At 3:00 The SouthCoast Jazz Orchestra will be performing. They are a 17-piece jazz group with a classic big band sound and they have performed at every JazzFest to date.

The feature act of the evening will be Shawn Monteiro, an internationally known jazz vocalist. A professor at Hartt University, Monteiro has a family history in the jazz industry as her father performed with the legendary Duke Ellington Orchestra. Monteiro herself spent two years performing with Latin jazz master Mongo Santamaria, whose many accomplishments included composing the jazz standard, "Afro Blue", which was made famous by John Coltrane. While performing with Santamaria, Monteiro took the stage with musical legends such as Stan Kenton, Celia Cruz and Weather Report. Monteiro has performed worldwide for over 40 years.

Monteiro's vocals will be supported by the John Harrison Trio.

John Harrison III is a pianist, arranger, composer and producer who currently teaches at UMass Dartmouth. He will be accompanied by Ron Madhi, a bassist and assistant professor at Berklee College of Music. Madhi has had the distinction of having performed across the globe and has performed with many musical greats such as Kevin Eubanks, Roy Hargrove, James Williams and Chet Baker. On the drums will be Chris Poudrier who is a drum set professor at UMass Dartmouth and frequent

guest faculty member for Berklee College of Music's annual Percussion Festival.

The night will wrap up with a high-energy performance from the MonteiroBots. The MonteriroBots are a local quartet lead by Marcus Monteiro, an energetic young saxophonist who studied with the late Rick Britto and attended UMass Dartmouth. Along with Marcus the MonteiroBots are composed of guitarist Chris Bryant, bassist Mike Lavoie, and drummer Mike Antunes. The MonteiroBots host a jam session at The Pour Farm every Sunday night and they also play at both local and regional festivals.

#### **4. Art and Vendors**

To add to the festival feel of this event, ArtWorks! coordinates an Artists' Colony, which allows local artists and artisans to come display their wares for attendees to view and even to purchase. In addition to the Artists' Colony, other local organizations will be present such as the Standard Times, Destination New Bedford Inc. and the South Coast Energy Challenge. Eric Paradis explained to me that the purpose isn't to make people feel the need to buy anything but rather to connect them with organizations that are local, informative and valuable.

#### **5. The Food & Drinks**

The image of sitting by the water and listening to jazz music is only complete if food and beverage are added into the picture. The New Bedford JazzFest features local and regional food trucks that will provide an array of delicious edible options. Mattapoisett's famous Oxford Creamy will be present with their mobile kitchen and will be serving your favorite summer standards. For those with a taste for fine cuisine, the award winning, upscale food truck, Plouf Plouf will be in attendance. Plouf Plouf specializes in French cuisine with delectable options such as organic duck confit. Those who love sweets will be able to get ice cream and other delicious

desserts from a food vendor called Like No Udder.

For those of you who are 21 or older, the idea of a cold beverage might peak your interest. The event will feature two local breweries; Buzzards Bay from Westport and Goodfellow's Brewing from Lakeville. Additionally a full bar will be available as well as wine and other beer options.

## **6. Tickets**

As mentioned before, this event is a fundraiser for Your Theatre, Inc. and ticket prices are very reasonable. Tickets can be purchased for \$15 in advance by going to <http://newbedfordjazzfest.com/purchase-tickets/>. You can also buy tickets at Bridgewater Credit Union, Symphony Music Shop or Your Theatre Box Office (508-993-0772). Tickets are \$20 on the day of the event. Children under 15 are free when they attend with a paying adult.

It should be noted that coolers and outside food and beverages are not permitted. Attendees are advised to bring a light jacket as it gets cooler near the water during evening hours.

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