

MCC jazz ensemble takes the stage

By **Auriya Mofrad** - April 2, 2018



MCC Jazz Ensemble being conducted by Paul Brewer during the Feb. 28 performance. (Auriya Mofrad/Special to MyNewsMesa.com)

Mesa Community College's Jazz Band has left a tide of successful performances. The band has performed across the United States at various festivals and concerts. Valley residents continue to flock to the Performing Arts Center to attend their performances throughout the school year.

While the theater was not completely booked, there was a sizeable and diverse audience who attended the Feb. 28 performance. The opening act, which lasted for one-third of the show, was performed by the Latin Jazz Band. It consisted of three musical pieces, "I'll Remember April", "Recordame" and "St. Thomas."

The Latin Jazz Band eased the audience into the *pièce de résistance*, the final part of the show. This act, consisting of five upbeat and lively pieces, was performed by MCC's very own Jazz Ensemble. Each piece had different musical arrangements which kept the audience engaged. The Jazz Ensemble performance was conducted by the MCC Director of Jazz Studies Paul Brewer.

He believes that jazz is great for attracting a diverse audience. "You're talking about a style of music that, like America, is a true melting pot. Pretty much every race and religion has contributed to the evolution of jazz in America."

Brewer also said that jazz's popularity has gone down. "Many of the audiences tend to be over 60 in the Phoenix area... We receive a lot of support from the surrounding retirement communities."

The majority of the audience at the Feb. 28 showing were indeed senior citizens, yet that does not hold back Brewer and his ensemble. "At MCC, we love to bring jazz to the younger demographic in hopes of generating more interest in this awesome art form."

The Feb. 28 jazz performance was one of multiple performances throughout the year.

"We usually have between six and seven jazz performances a semester," Brewer said. "We have seven jazz combos and two big bands in the MCC jazz program."

According to Brewer, the two big bands are split between daytime students including music majors, while the other is for professionals around town, officially known as the Mesa Performing Arts Jazz Ensemble (MPJE).

"The jazz combos and the daytime big band have anywhere from nine to 12 rehearsals between concerts. Rehearsals last for an average of an hour," Brewer said. "MPJE usually has around five rehearsals between concerts."

He noted that this does not include the time students put into practicing outside of the classroom. Together, the students often get together to discuss their performances and also practice together.

Several performances are coming up, including a second performance of the Jazz Ensemble and Latin Jazz Band on April 17. For the complete list of upcoming events and ticket information, visit the MCC Performing Arts Center website at www.mesacc.edu/pac.

– Auriya Mofrad is a Mesa Community College journalism intern for MyNewsMesa.com.

Share this:



Related

MCC spring 2018 arts season
announced

January 31, 2018

In "Entertainment"

MCC unveils fall 2016 arts
season

September 23, 2016

In "Entertainment"

MCC announces spring 2017
arts season

February 3, 2017

In "Entertainment"



Auriya Mofrad
