



## At a Glance 2025

Celebrating artistry, community and  
Jazz Forum Arts' 40th anniversary!

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# Jazz Forum Arts At A Glance

This document offers a snapshot of Jazz Forum Arts' history and the programs, partnerships and impact during 2025. It reflects the scale of our work, the depth of our community relationships and the role Jazz Forum plays as a cultural home for live jazz in Westchester County and the greater New York region.

Thank you to the artists, audiences, educators, partners and supporters who continue to shape this living community through music.

Jazz Forum Arts celebrated 40 years of artistry, access and connection throughout 2025!

# A Home for Jazz, A Home for Community

Jazz Forum Arts was founded in 1985 by trumpeter and producer Mark Morganelli, growing out of the original Jazz Forum loft clubs in New York City's East Village.

In those early years, Mark hosted performances by major jazz figures, Barry Harris' workshops, big band rehearsals, Brazilian nights and opportunities for emerging musicians. He established the core values that guide JFA today: access, excellence, community and the belief that jazz thrives when people are invited to participate.

Mark launched JFA with free outdoor concerts and festivals in NYC and ticketed events at numerous concert halls and has continued that programming since that time.

After decades of presenting events in various regional locations, Mark and his wife, Ellen Prior, opened the Jazz Forum in Tarrytown in 2017 as a permanent home for live jazz in Westchester. The intimate 85-seat club now presents over 300 performances each year and serves as the heart of a growing ecosystem that includes the free outdoor concerts, along with education programs, gallery exhibitions and community engagement initiatives.

As Jazz Forum Arts celebrates 40 years, it remains rooted in its history while evolving for the future. Our mission continues to be clear: to keep jazz accessible, lift up the next generation and ensure that this music and the community it inspires will always have a home.

# Our Year by the Numbers

## **Every number tells a story.**

A child discovering her voice. A family dancing in the park. A community coming together around music.

- 20,000 people attended live performances at the Jazz Forum Club
- 20,000 more joined us at free outdoor summer concerts across Westchester
- 2,500 youth and families engaged through Jitterbugs: Jazz for Kids, Jazz Forum Student Ensemble, Jazz Forum Lab Band and monthly Jam Sessions
- 300+ live sets featuring world-renowned artists and emerging voices
- Three rotating art exhibitions in the club highlighting regional visual artists, with sales of seven to thirty pieces per show
- 25 years of free summer concerts in Westchester, nearing 1,000 total performances

**These figures reflect the scale and reach of Jazz Forum Arts programming in 2025.**

# Our Programs

Jazz Forum Arts does more than presenting live events. Our programs create a complete pathway that guides people from first exposure to deep artistic participation, connecting audiences, students and artists within one living ecosystem.

## Jazz Forum Club

Westchester's premier jazz venue, presenting over 300 performances annually in an intimate 85-seat listening room. The club brings internationally recognized artists and emerging voices to the same stage, offering audiences a close, immersive experience that honors the legacy and future of the music.

In 2025, featured artists include Joshua Redman, Cyrus Chestnut, David Amram, Ann Hampton Callaway and many others who represent the breadth, history and vitality of contemporary jazz.

## Summer Concert Series

Celebrating 25 years in Westchester County (and 40 years in the NYC region), these concerts have presented nearly

1,000 free performances across towns including Dobbs Ferry, Tarrytown, Ossining, Yonkers and Mount Vernon. These events transform parks into gathering places where thousands encounter live jazz in an open, welcoming environment.

## Jitterbugs: Jazz For Kids

Early childhood music classes for children ages 18 months to four years and their families. Through rhythm, movement and live music, young children experience jazz as play, building listening skills, joy and creative confidence from their earliest years. During the summer concert season, we also offer free Jitterbugs Jams for children of all ages to join us in the parks to play jazz music, dance and jam together.

# Cultivating the Next Generation



## **Jazz Forum Arts Student Ensemble**

Serving 5th through 12th graders, this program introduces young musicians to improvisation, ensemble playing and live performance. Students gain technical skill, confidence and a strong sense of identity through rehearsals and concerts that mirror professional standards.

## **Jazz Forum Lab Band**

A free mentorship-based ensemble where advanced high school students and local professional musicians rehearse and perform side-by-side. The Lab Band bridges the gap between education and professional life, offering real experience, discipline and artistic community. 50 students joined the program each of the first three sessions.

## **Open Jam Sessions**

Monthly gatherings welcoming students, emerging artists and avocational musicians to play alongside professionals in a supportive environment. These sessions encourage intergenerational exchange, artistic risk-taking and shared learning.

# The Living Room of Westchester

The Jazz Forum is more than a venue. It is a hub where generations gather, where jazz and community flow together and where the environment feels like home.

Our partnerships with Montefiore Einstein, ArtsWestchester, NYSCA, and local schools expanded our reach, helping us serve tens of thousands of residents.

Together, we made world-class performances, free concerts, and youth education possible, both inside and beyond the Jazz Forum club.

# Investing in Our Community

We believe trust begins with transparency. **Nearly 70 cents of every dollar** we spent went directly to programming. Your support made it possible for us to invest in world-class performances, free concerts, and meaningful music education for Westchester and beyond.

- **Revenue:** Club (incl. tickets, food & beverage, special events); Programs (incl. tuition, art sales, merchandise); Contributed (incl. corporate, foundations, government, individual donations and memberships).
- **Expenses:** Club Operations (incl. musicians' fees, staff, food & beverage), Summer Concerts & Other Programs (incl. musicians' fees, educators, artists' payments, production).

**“Learning at the Jazz Forum was a substantial jump in my musical experience. The program fostered my first learning of improvisation as well as introduced challenging pieces.” – Jack, music student**

# The Next Chapter

As Jazz Forum Arts marks 40 years, we build on the feeling of home and belonging that Mark Morganelli and Ellen Prior have cultivated for decades. Their care, consistency and vision shaped a space where artists and audiences feel connected, comfortable and valued.

In this next chapter, we are carrying that spirit forward through deeper investment in education and intentional audience growth. By strengthening pathways for young people and families and inviting more to feel part of the Jazz Forum Arts experience, we are continuing to extend that sense of home beyond our longtime patrons and into new parts of the community.

Our focus is not on changing what makes Jazz Forum special, but on expanding our audience, awareness of our programs and appreciation of jazz. Through thoughtful programming, outreach and relationship-building, we are ensuring the Jazz Forum continues to feel like a shared living room and JFA welcomes the many people who call this region home to a deep relationship with the music.

# Stories of the Year

**Everything in this report points back to real people.**

A parent told us about her daughter's first Jazz Forum Student Ensemble solo: "She was glowing with pride as she sang her first scat solo. This program gave her confidence we didn't know she had."

A student spoke about the Jam Sessions: "I never thought I would share the stage with professionals. At the Forum, I found my community."

And for one longtime patron, the Club itself is a refuge: "Friday nights at the Forum are my reset button. The music, the food, the warmth; it is where I remember who I am."

Together, these voices remind us that Jazz Forum Arts is more than an organization. It is a gathering place, a classroom, and a home for our community.

# What's Happening at Jazz Forum Arts

- Installation of new professional lighting and sound at the Jazz Forum Club, supported by New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA)
- Expanded Jitterbugs semesters from six to eight sessions and two sessions per week
- Jitterbugs Jam expanded to Tarrytown as second Free Outdoor Summer Concert location
- Expanded free Jazz Forum club tickets for student musicians, deepening access for young performers and listeners
- Launch of the Jazz Forum High School Lab Band, providing a free advanced ensemble experience for students and emerging musicians

**These changes reflect our commitment to growing with our community and making jazz accessible in new ways.**

# Building Together

Jazz Forum Arts is strengthened by partnerships with organizations and institutions that support access, education and cultural connection across the region.

In 2025, we received support from and collaborated with the following entities:

**Montefiore Einstein · NYSCA · ArtsWestchester · KeyBank · Chase Bank**

**Village of Dobbs Ferry · Village of Tarrytown · Village of Ossining**

**Village of Sleepy Hollow · Lyndhurst**

Individual donors, members and family foundations provide the balance of our donations. These relationships help our programs reach people in schools, parks and shared community spaces as well as in the Jazz Forum space, Westchester's "home for jazz". All this support and activity keeps jazz present, accessible and integrated with everyday life.

We are grateful to the partners and supporters who make this work possible and help sustain Jazz Forum Arts as a cultural haven for our community.

# Thank You to Our Supporters



## Presenting Sponsor:

Montefiore Einstein – whose partnership has touched tens of thousands of lives across Westchester.

## Foundation & Government Support:

ArtsWestchester · New York State Council on the Arts · New York State Assembly · New York State Senate · Westchester County · Municipalities of Dobbs Ferry · Tarrytown · Sleepy Hollow · Ossining and others whose generosity sustain our programs.

## Individual Donors:

To all our donors and members at all levels who gave this year, thank you. Your generosity keeps Jazz Forum Arts thriving with the music playing and the doors open for all.



# Be Part of the Music

CONNECT WITH US



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Keep jazz accessible.

## Join

Become a member.

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Partner with us to nurture new audiences.