

Dallas Jazz Educator To Receive Prestigious National Award



Bart Marantz, head of jazz studies at Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts since 1983, will be awarded the National John LaPorta Jazz Educator of the Year award by the Jazz Education Network and the Berklee College of Music during its annual conference Jan. 4-7, 2012 in Louisville Kentucky.

Nominated by Dr. Lou Fischer, president and co-founder of the organization, he was recommended for the recognition by the Vice President of the Thelonious Monk Institute, Dr. J. B. Dyas, Vail Jazz Workshop Executive Director, Howard Stone and Monterey Jazz Festival Executive director, Robert Klevin, as well as the publisher of DownBeat magazine, Frank Alkyer and fellow educator and International Association of Jazz Educators Hall of Fame member Jamey Aebersold.

The award is funded by the Berklee College of Music to honor its late and distinguished professor, John LaPorta who played a pivotal role in the earliest stage of formalized jazz education. The award recognizes an outstanding high school, middle school or elementary school educator whose focus is jazz education and who also represents the highest standards and qualities of teaching in the nation. This educator results in the classroom must have brought distinction to their institution and their students over the career of this educator. Mr. Marantz is only the sixth recipient of this prestigious honor.

In congratulating Mr. Marantz on his selection, the retired Vice President of Berklee College, Steve Lipman said, *“John LaPorta would be honored to know you carry on the tradition at the highest plateau. I’m delighted that you are the sixth recipient. You make the world a better place by filling it with exemplary music.”*

DownBeat magazine describes Mr. Marantz, saying, *“Marantz’s brilliant instruction attracts serious student musicians and inspires them to excel in jazz fundamentals from improvisation to composition. This is a teacher who understands how to get the best from young people.”*

The Booker T. program has won 221 DownBeat magazine student achievement awards, more than any other middle school, high school or college program in the country since his arrival in 1983. Ten of its graduates - including Roy Hargrove, Erika Badu, Norah Jones, Tim Owens, Eric White, Aaron Comes, Frank LoCrao, Shawn Martin, and Robert “Sput” Searight have earned recording contracts with prominent record labels. The student musicians have been invited to perform at the Montreaux Jazz Festival in Switzerland, the Monterey Jazz Festival in California, the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC, the Grammy’s (various locations) and multiple performances before the jazz educators’ professional organizations such as the International Association for Jazz Educators Conference and the Jazz Education Network Annual Conference.

Mr. Marantz came to Dallas after a professional career that included performing with Ray Charles, The Glenn Miller Orchestra, Gladys Night and the Pips, Nancy Wilson, Frankie Valley and others. He attended Indiana University and earned his undergraduate degree at the University of Miami (Florida). He earned a master’s degree in Afro-American Jazz Music from the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston where he was the assistant to the jazz studies department teaching ensembles and jazz improvisation. He has also taught at Lake Sumter

Community College (Florida) and Jones County Junior College (Mississippi) before coming to Dallas.

Bart has been a Selmer/Bach clinician since 1988 and plays Bach/Selmer trumpets and flugel horns, exclusively. He has been a visiting guest artist at the Brubeck Institute, on the faculty of the Stanford (University) Jazz Residency, and appeared as a clinician at the University of Texas at Austin and Arlington, Northern Colorado University Jazz Festival, Texas Tech University, Louisiana Tech University and Southern States Jazz Festival, the Oklahoma All State Jazz Contest and recently served as director for the Tennessee All-State Jazz Ensemble. In 1986 he was selected as one of ten Fulbright Scholars from the US teaching and performing in South Africa. In 1989 he was one of 10 American directors invited to the Montreaux Jazz Festival in Switzerland.

A frequent author of articles in professional journals and consumer jazz publications, his original music and arrangements for combo and big band are available through Northern Colorado Press. In 1995, he was invited to perform with a professional quintet in Russia where he held master classes at the Moscow Conservatory and performed with the Saratov Symphony Orchestra in a performance of one of his original works, "Ballad for Mom" heard by over ten million people on live Russian radio.

In 1990, he was one of 70 American teachers featured in a book, "I Am A Teacher" which led to a video commercial filmed in New York for "The Power to Teach" airing on national television. In 1993 he was honored with the International Achievement Award in Jazz Education by DownBeat magazine. Last year, he was one of 18 teachers named to the International DownBeat Jazz Education Hall of Fame.

In describing his teaching philosophy, Mr. Marantz says, *"I have considered myself a coach, of sorts, to young artists who are committed and dedicated to an art form that is a gift from the Lord.... There have been the exceptional few who have come through this program that have changed the jazz and commercial world, but I'm equally proud of the hundreds of young musicians who are not "stars" that perform and write at a high level of excellence with a continued commitment to this wonderful art form."*

Two of those young musicians are his sons, Luke, a piano student at the New England Conservatory of Music and an artist for Red Piano Records, and Matt, a saxophonist, who has performed with Billy Taylor at the Kennedy Center and at the White House for President George W. Bush and has an active performing career in New York and around the world. Matt's new CD release, "Offering" received three and a half stars out of five in "DownBeat" magazine. The musical family includes their mom, Sara, who is also a graduate of the New England Conservatory, and is an adjunct faculty member and choral accompanist at Dallas Baptist University. She also is a pianist for Hillcrest Baptist Church in Cedar Hill, TX.