

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Photos available upon request.

The party starts early for the 20th annual Berks Jazz Fest

READING, PA -- January 20 -- A 20th anniversary is certainly something to celebrate, and the VF Outlet Berks Jazz Fest, presented by the Berks Arts Council, is starting the party early, with a full schedule of events counting down to the biggest, best festival yet.

Concerts, educational programs, films and jazz jams are just some of the events slated to celebrate the 20th annual Berks Jazz Fest.

Saturday, February 20, 8 p.m.

The Manhattan Transfer is performing a pre-festival concert at the Sovereign Performing Arts Center. For more information and tickets, visit www.sovereigncenter.com.

Sunday, February 21, 4 p.m.

As part of their Downtown Performing Arts Series, the Miller Center for the Arts is presenting the **Hot 8 Brass Band**. The Miller Center is located on the Reading Area Community College campus in downtown Reading.

Hot 8 is a New Orleans-based brass band that blends hip-hop, jazz and funk styles with traditional New Orleans brass sounds.

For more on this concert, visit www.racc.edu/MillerCenter/events.html.

Sunday, February 28, 5 p.m.

Anyone seeking spiritual enlightenment can get his or her fill at the **Gospel Jubilee** at Glad Tidings Assembly of God Church in West Lawn. Featured are the mass choir, youth choir and local musicians. Good-will offering.

For more information: www.gtaog.org/.

Saturday, March 6, 1 p.m.

Free community concert

VF Outlet is once again title sponsor of the festival, and is joining in the celebration with **Berks Jazz Fest Day at the VF Outlet Complex**. Shop the complex and enjoy the *20th Anniversary Preview Concert* featuring **Swing House** with opening act **GAMUT** at 1 p.m. at Designers Place. For more information: www.vfoutlet.net/.

Wednesday, March 10, 6 p.m.

Free community event.

Prepare to be inspired.

The Miller Center for the Arts is hosting a screening of the documentary "**CHOPS**," followed by a special **Berks Jazz Jam** with guest musicians Larry McKenna, Larry McKenna on tenor sax, Tony Miceli on vibes, Dave Brodie on bass and Dan Monaghan on drums. Hosted by Mike Eben, the jam is open to anyone. Bring your instruments and join in, or come to learn!

"**CHOPS**" tells the story of a group of kids with extraordinary musical ability who learn to make the most of their gifts in an acclaimed public school jazz program in Jacksonville, Fla. You follow their musical journey from Florida to New York City, where they compete against the top high school jazz bands in the nation at the prestigious Jazz at Lincoln Center's Essentially Ellington Competition and Festival.

Friday, March 12, 8 p.m.

With the festival a week away, what better way to get in the mood for great music than a high-energy *Tribute to Tower of Power*?

Join **Dance Hall Docs** and special guest **Brent Carter** at the Inn at Reading as they bring down the house with TOP's legendary tunes. A former TOP lead singer of nearly 6 years, Brent Carter promises to touch the hearts and souls of all who attend. The Dance Hall Docs are a 10-piece band that performs in a style reminiscent of the horn bands of the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s.

Get more info here: www.berksjazzfest.com/docstowerofpower.htm.

Gerald Veasley's Jazz Base at the Crowne Plaza Reading will play host to several shows before the fest, all on Thursday nights at 7 p.m.:

- January 28: **Maria Damore & Friends**, featuring Andy Roberts, Tom Strohman, John Fundyga, Marty Bonk and Jim Miller
- February 4: *The Music of Johnny Mercer* with **JaLaLa**, featuring vocalists Janis Siegel and Laurel Masse of Manhattan Transfer and Lauren Kinhan of New York Voices
- February 11: **West Chester University Faculty Group**, featuring David Cullen, Terry Klinefelter, Chris Hanning, Greg Riley, John Swana and Peter Paulsen
- February 18: **Steve Smith's Vital Legacy**, featuring Steve Smith, Vinny Valentino, Baron Browne, Andy Fusco and Mark Soskin
- February 25: **The Art of Strings**, featuring John Blake, Jimmy Bruno and Gerald Veasley
- March 4: *WEEU Big Band Night* with **The Last Big Band**, directed by Lee Southall, Roger Morgan and Jimmy Zoller
- March 11: **Dave Posmontier Quintet**, featuring David Cullen, Bob Howell, Erick Johnson, Chico Huff and Dave Posmontier
- March 18: **Guitar Summit: Remembering Les Paul** with Bucky Pizzarelli, Howard Alden and Frank DiBussolo

For more information on Jazz Base shows, visit: www.geraldveasleysjazzbase.com.

Saturday, March 13, 7:05 p.m.

Berks Jazz Fest Night at the Reading Royals

Watch as the Royals take on the Toledo Walleye at the Sovereign Center, and hang around for the post-game auction of player-worn jazz-themed jerseys.

For more, visit www.royalshockey.com/.

For updates on 20th Anniversary countdown events, visit www.berksjazzfest.com/countdown2010.htm. Stay tuned! Information on a vintage film series is coming soon, and more events are in the works.

The VF Outlet Berks Jazz Fest is proud to bring fans 20 years of great music and lasting memories. Join in the celebration!

The 20th annual VF Outlet Berks Jazz Fest, presented by the Berks Arts Council, runs March 19-28, and features an expansive array of musical styles featuring contemporary and traditional jazz and blues artists. Over 130 events at major venues, clubs and restaurants throughout Greater Reading make this a truly unique music festival. For more information, including ticketing, artist bios and archived releases, visit www.berksjazzfest.com. For more information on the Berks Arts Council, a nonprofit arts organization dedicated to promoting the arts in Greater Reading, visit www.berksarts.org.

To order tickets:

Visit the Sovereign Center box office, Seventh and Penn streets, Reading.

Call Ticketmaster at 1-800-745-3000 to charge by phone; or visit ticketmaster.com.

Order online at berksjazzfest.com.

For a complete schedule of concerts, visit www.berksjazzfest.com

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