



“NEA GRANT REPLACEMENT CAMPAIGN”: \$25,000 IN 30 DAYS FOR 30 YEARS OF JAZZ.

DONATE NOW!

Your Contribution To This Special “30-Day NEA Replacement Campaign”
Is Greatly Appreciated. Thank You.

Dear “We Always Swing”® Jazz Series Concertgoer, Enthusiast & Supporter:

You may be aware that on May 2 the “We Always Swing”® Jazz Series learned our **APPROVED \$25,000 National Endowment for the Arts “Grants For Arts Projects” request – was “withdrawn by the agency”** due to the Administration’s altered “funding priorities.” This grant was a key financial piece of our 30th Anniversary Celebration and part of the **current FY25 budget, which ends on June 30**. Imagine how excited we were upon receiving TWO distinct NEA emails, one in November 2024 and the other in January 2025, both **CONFIRMING** the much-needed support for the recently completed **BOBBY WATSON/ COLUMBIA JAZZ ORCHESTRA CONCERT** that, on April 30, attracted more than 500 people to the Missouri Theatre.



Set in motion more than a year in advance to take place on the annual UNESCO-sponsored **International Jazz Day**, the concert featured the home-grown 18-piece **COLUMBIA JAZZ ORCHESTRA** performing the music, featuring and under the direction of **BOBBY WATSON**, the highly respected, well-known veteran saxophonist.

As the Jazz Series is wont to do – thinking “big,” creatively and imaginatively – the project as outlined in the NEA application encompassed far more than just a major concert. Given the event’s timing and significance, the **Jazz Series hired professional film and audio crews** to capture the entire concert and augment the story via musician and other interviews. **Now in post-production, the concert film is set to be released with an accompanying full-length publicly screened documentary.**

The Jazz Series, in anticipation of receiving \$25,000 from the NEA, proceeded with the project beginning in January. At this point, the Jazz Series has covered the vast majority of the revised \$60,385 (reduced from \$76,000) budget.

Luckily a few years ago we **launched The “We Always Swing”® Jazz Foundation Fund** to provide financial security, with the goal of eventually having enough capital for an endowment that would continue to fund the Jazz Series in perpetuity. Now our only option is to draw money out of the foundation to fill the hole left by the canceled NEA grant. But that’s where you, our donors, can step in and step up. **During the next month we are looking to raise the \$25,000 we’ll be pulling out of the foundation. When you give, we want you to not only think about the donation as a way to show your support for the project, but also know EVERY DONATED DOLLAR is money that will stay in the foundation.**

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The intentionally condensed fundraising **“30-DAY NEA GRANT REPLACEMENT CAMPAIGN”** timeline **concludes June 30**, the date each Jazz Series fiscal year ends. We hope this also helps spread awareness about the foundation fund’s importance and encourages folks to support it so we can continue to have a hedge or sorts against the uncertainty in funding from public and private sources.

We are asking everyone who appreciates what the Jazz Series has added to the community’s cultural landscape since 1995, who previously contributed during this fiscal cycle, to consider making **AN ADDITIONAL DONATION AT THIS TIME**. If you haven’t contributed in a year or more, then there truly is no better time to do so as your generosity will have immediate impact. Similarly, if you have been meaning to, but have yet to donate to the Jazz Series previously, again, this would be a great time to do so.

A loss of this magnitude greatly impacts the Jazz Series. Throughout the Jazz Series’ three-decade run, the organization has never shied away from presenting the best artists in the world; it has never shied away from producing larger-scale programs such as the Watson-CoJo Collaboration. Other examples abound. There’s “A Night of Jazz & Baseball” (2001); the multi-media Orrin Evans’ Captain Black commissioned tribute to Thomas Hart Benton (2016); and there’s celebrations such as “A Chunk of Monk” (2012) and the “Mingus & Kerouac” program on the occasion of the two legendary figures’ centennial (2022). World premieres – delivered here - have taken place under Jazz Series auspices.

“Losing” \$25,000, particularly after being informed on TWO occasions that we *would* receive it, sent a financial shock wave through the Jazz Series. For the Jazz Series to remain an integrity-driven project, we must continue to successfully walk that pesky fine line and delicate balance, which exists between art and commerce. Simply put, at this time, we need your assistance to maintain such an approach.

While the staff and board of directors serve as Jazz Series stewards, **it is you – the participants** – on whatever level you choose, **who play a significant role in building and strengthening the Jazz Series. It is the collective you** who has kept the Jazz Series humming along for three decades and counting.



DONATE ONLINE NOW!

- If You Prefer Call To Donate: 573/449-3009

- Donate In-Person:

21 N. Tenth St., Columbia, MO 65201.

- Please make checks payable to: “We Always Swing,”® Inc.
- For Information On Planned Giving & Donating Stocks
Please Call 573/449-3009.

Jazz Series Hours: Monday-Friday, 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

**ANOTHER WAY TO SUPPORT THE
CAMPAIGN... PURCHASE TICKETS/ATTEND
THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY CLOSING CONCERT!**

PURCHASE TICKETS HERE!

Annual Dr. Carlos & Laura Perez-Mesa Memorial Concert

HILARIO DURÁN QUARTET

Sunday, June 22, 2025, 7 p.m.

Missouri Theatre, Columbia, Mo.

Thank You For Your Ongoing Support!

We Would Not Be Here Without You.

-The Jazz Series Staff & Board of Directors