



THE RENO JAZZ ORCHESTRA Northern Nevada

Annual Report 2020

Keeping Jazz Alive and Vibrant!

On behalf of the entire Reno Jazz Orchestra and staff, I sincerely thank you and all our fans who have donated to our organization and continue to support our local programs.

When a small group of the finest showroom musicians in town founded our organization in 1997, we initiated a mission to provide our community with exceptional big band jazz performances. Since then, our mission has expanded to include a robust jazz education program.

We would not be where we are today without the financial support and in-kind services that have been generously donated to enhance all our initiatives over the past twenty-three years.

2020 was such a tumultuous year, and it was through your support that the RJO was able to continue its mission online and plan for the future. Last summer we decided to record the Earth, Wind, and Fire program we had intended to perform live. That project brought the singers and musicians, by section, into the Tanglewood Productions studios to record their parts. We are finishing up the project and intend to have the album available for our 2021 concerts. We thank board member Michael Eardley and his wife Catharine for making Tanglewood available to us. I want to thank our staff for diligently working, primarily online, to successfully foster our mission. They are passionate about our purpose, professionally talented, and fully dedicated to our mission and future success.

I am honored to have been a member of the RJO since its inception in 1997 and equally honored to present you this Annual Report. Thank you again for helping us keep jazz an integral part of Northern Nevada today and for years to come!

Chuck Reider, Executive/Music Director



History & Mission

The Reno Jazz Orchestra is a 17-piece contemporary big band based in Northern Nevada. The band was formed in 1997 by musicians who have performed and traveled the world with such legendary performers as Frank Sinatra, Sammy Davis Jr., Elvis Presley, Natalie Cole, and Luciano Pavarotti.

Our mission is to build a greater appreciation of jazz in Northern Nevada by providing outstanding big band performances, promoting the artistry of Reno Jazz Orchestra musicians through a variety of ensembles, and supporting jazz education through a mentorship program in middle schools, high schools, and colleges. All combined, we contribute to the vibrancy, diversity, cultural vitality, and quality of our community's artistic life.

Educational Programs

Jazz in the Schools

The Reno Jazz Orchestra's annual Jazz in the Schools (JITS) event occurs each February in the Department of Music's prestigious Nightingale Concert Hall at the University of Nevada, Reno. The program is supported through grants and private contributions. Hundreds of young jazz musicians in Northern Nevada hear other jazz ensembles, receive feedback from nationally recognized clinicians, and hear a concert by the Reno Jazz Orchestra.

This past year, thirteen middle and high school jazz ensembles from the area performed and received feedback from clinicians Mike Steinel, Josh Murray, Josh Reed, and Tina Raymond. All are nationally recognized jazz educators brought in by the RJO for this event. A total of 17 large ensembles performed and received feedback, and for the first time, this included two jazz choirs.

Five combos also performed and received feedback from UNR Jazz Faculty members Andy Heglund, Peter Epstein, Ed Corey, Adam Benjamin, and Hans Halt. This year's featured artists were Peter Epstein, Josh Reed, and Adam Benjamin, performing a tribute to Oliver Nelson. During the afternoon clinic, students were invited on stage to observe the RJO musicians perform up close. Between songs, students were able to ask questions about what they heard and saw. The RJO also continued its two-day in-service program for area band directors, led by Mike Steinel.

Thanks to the outpouring of local financial support, there is no charge to the schools, students, or band directors to participate in any portion of Jazz in the Schools. Over 300 students and parents were involved in Saturday's activities.



Reno Jazz Orchestra Mentor Program

The Reno Jazz Orchestra Mentor Program is in its tenth year of providing support to jazz education in our area schools. It continues to evolve with the help of funding from the EL Cord Foundation, City of Reno, State of Nevada, Healing HealthCare Systems, and private contributions. Participating schools this year were:

Billinghurst Middle School

Carson Middle School

Carson High School

Damonte Ranch High School

Incline High School

McQueen High School

Reno High School

Swope Middle School

Truckee High School

Despite schools being closed due to the Covid-19 pandemic for most of 2020, ten jazz mentors worked with nine school jazz ensembles to provide 33 in-person sessions and 15 online sessions serving over 200 students. This year our mentors included Karl Busch, David Gervais, Dylan Coleman, John Bennum, Hans Halt, Josh Reed, Chris Clark, Cami Thompson, Julien Knowles, and Andy Heglund.

As everything moved online in 2020, we supported our directors and schools with the creation of our Mentor Video Library. RJO Mentors recorded 12 jazz education videos that focused on improvisation, music theory, and practice techniques. Directors are able to access these to aid in their hybrid and distance teaching formats.

This program continues to be a beneficial and rewarding way to keep jazz alive and robust in our public schools and community.



Educational Programs (cont.)

Reno Jazz Orchestra Jazz Workshop

Our Saturday Jazz Workshops for middle and high school students continued in an online format throughout the pandemic. Students focused on jazz improvisation, ear training, and rhythm with instructor Dylan Coleman. Over the course of eight sessions, guest instructors Tim Gay (saxophone), Tyler Cravines (drums), and Chris Clark (saxophone) were able to do breakout sessions with students to give more individual instruction.

During these sessions, students worked on two jazz standards and remotely recorded their parts and improvisation. The recordings were then layered together by GPG Music and Our Virtual Ensemble to create virtual ensemble performances.

The culminating event was our Education Program's first virtual ensemble videos.



Reno Jazz Orchestra 2019 Performances

Jazz in the Schools

February 8th (Reno, NV)

Nightingale Concert Hall

Approximately 350 in attendance

Carson Valley Arts Council Concert Series

March 13th (Minden, NV)

Carson Valley Improvement Club Hall

Approximately 250 in attendance

Student Jazz Workshops, Spring Semester

March 14 – May 23, 2020 (Virtual)

Nightingale Concert Hall

Remote instruction

Twelve students served

Mentor Program Masterclasses

May 7, 14, & 21, 2020 (Virtual)

Featuring Julien Knowles, David Gervais, and Hans Halt

Approximately 175 in attendance

Earth Wind & Fire Virtual Ensemble Videos released

June – July, 2020 (Virtual)

Remote big band recordings of arrangements

for future CD

Over 11,000 views to date

Private Trio Concerts

August 8 & 9, 2020 (Reno/Lake Tahoe)

Approximately 20 in attendance at each event

RJO Trombone Quartet at Reno Empty Event

September 26, 2020 (Reno, NV; Virtual)

Live-stream from Pioneer Center Plaza

Earth Wind & Fire Recording Project

September – February, 2021 (Reno, NV)

Tanglewood Productions

Recordings for future CD

Student Jazz Workshops, Virtual Ensemble Videos released

September, 2020 (Virtual)

Public release of student ensemble performances

Student Jazz Workshops, Fall Semester

October 3 – December 5, 2020 (Virtual)

Remote instruction

Eight students served

Holiday Concerts

Two small-group concerts live-streamed

from the Good Luck Macbeth Theater

Over 1,000 views to date

Diamond

Anonymous

Emerald

Anonymous

Eleanor and Bob Preger

Susan Mazer and Dallas Smith

Crystal

Sandra Cath and David Contis

Dent N. Hand, Jr.

Julie and Craig Rauchle

Silver

George Foster

Steve and Lillian Frank

Lois and Don Smaltz ~ In Memory of

Leonard Neidhold

Bronze

Suzanne and Matthew Booher

Bob Conrad

Ruthie and Jim Garaventa

Lauren and Joe Gorman

Lana and Stephen Hardy

Alicia and James House

Mary Ann and James Kidder

Martha and Bruce MacKay

Charlotte and Dick McConnell

Jane and Jim Nichols

Danne Polk

Candy and Chuck Reider

Nancy Rose

Irene and Steven Self

Bronze (cont.)

Gloria and Dean Smith

Linda and King Won

RJO Partner

Sara LaFrance

Diana and Jeffrey DeMatei

Patty Engels and Dick Medland

Ginnie Kersey

Karen Traynor

RJO Band Fan

Theresa Angermann

Theodore Arbuckle

Anne Bacon

Bernard Bronov

Elinor and David Bugli

James Cavanaugh

Valerie Chappel

Kim and Dion Clancy

Amanda Colbert

Lynn and Richard Cusac

Elisia Drake

Kim Driggs

Mike Eardley

Steve Falcone

Susan Fittinghoff

Rona Foster

Rose Fox

John Fullerton

Priscilla and Nate Gordon

Ruth Gregory

Brian Hadar

RJO Band Fan (cont.)

Deborah Hamlin

Francis Hawbolt

Diane Jankiewicz

Patty and John Jansen

Sandi and Ken Joyce

The Koch Family Trust

Joan and Hal Kraft

Mary and Frank Marfisi

Elaine Moser

Peter Neumann

Linda and Steve Newberg

Lee Ragonese

Joanne Ray

Richard Ray

Roz Reynolds

Julia and Steve Rubin

Vern Scarbrough

-In memory of Buell Ford

Jane Schwenk

Kaye Shackford

- In memory of Joe Shackford

Chris Shea

Ann Silver

Larry Simcoe

Geraldine Taylor

Scott Thunder

CJ Walters

-In memory of Larry A. Walters

Kathleen and Andrew Woodard

RJO Friends

John Bennum

Patricia Bertz

Lynn and Gary Buchell

Michelle Cotton

Lois Crocker

Elisia Drake

Maryann Dresner

Mary Holman

Scot Marshall

Erika Paul

Melanie Rudnick

David Shintani

Janet Staub

Corporate Sponsors

Absolute Music

A Master Mechanic

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City of Reno

E.L. Cord Foundation

For the Love of Jazz

Good Luck Macbeth Theatre

KUNR

Reno Youth Jazz Orchestra

Nevada State Parks

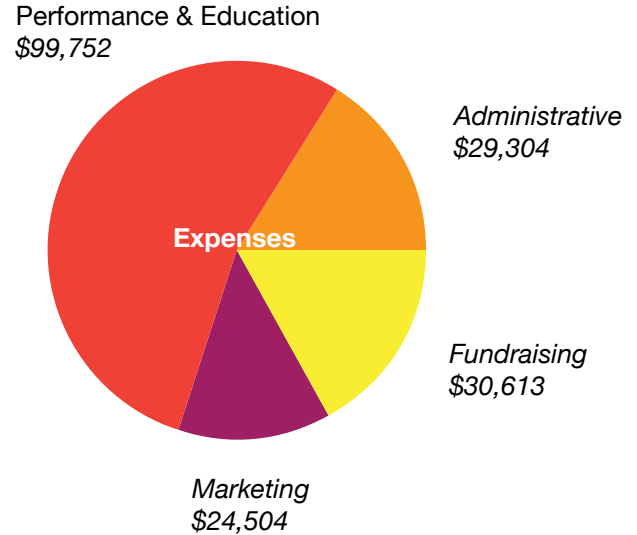
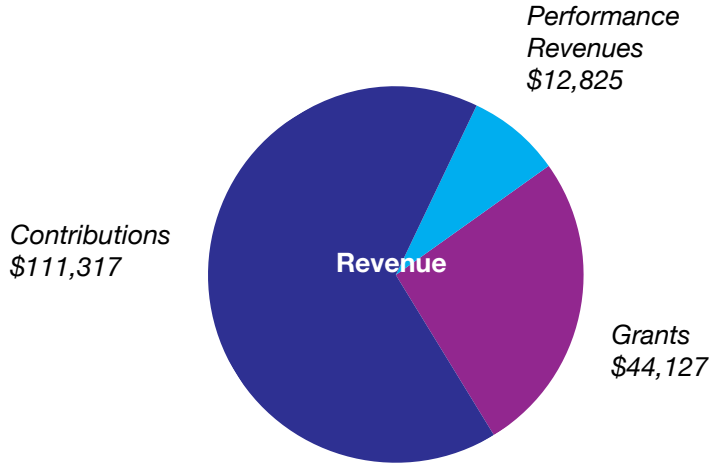
Nevada Arts Council

National Endowment for the Arts

This Is Reno / Local News & Events



2020 Financial Highlights



54% of expenses went directly toward Education and Performance
Please note: statistics reflect the unprecedented year of the COVID pandemic

2020 Board of Directors

Dallas Smith, President
Chuck Reider, Executive/Music Director
Steve Self, Vice President
Scott Thunder, Treasurer
Joe Gorman, Secretary
Bob Conrad, Member
Cindy Davis, Member
Mike Eardley, Member
Scot Marshall, Member
Linda Newberg, Member
Shari Pheasant, Member
Vern Scarbrogh, Member
Andrew Woodard, Member

2020 RJO Staff & Associates

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Like us. Follow us. Share your love of Jazz.

