



The Huntsville Times

Jazz for Peace to host benefit at Butler High

Thursday, April 17, 2008

KAMESHA GRAHAM For The Times

Jazz artist Rick DellaRatta and his group Jazz for Peace will host a benefit concert for the Tennessee Valley Jazz Society at Butler High School's Fine Arts Facility on Saturday.

DellaRatta is considered one of the finest singer/pianists performing today. His unique and original piano playing and composing has been compared to Herbie Hancock, Bill Evans, Billie Holiday and Chet Baker - to name just a few.

This very down-to-earth New York native takes pride in hosting worldwide benefit concerts. The initiative for these concerts began in September 2002 when DellaRatta was invited to lead a band of Israeli, Middle Eastern, European, Asian and American jazz musicians in a concert inside the United Nations for an international audience.

DellaRatta named the band Jazz for Peace.

They have since performed more than 500 benefits to raise funds, publicity and awareness for organizations in need worldwide. In addition, Jazz for Peace performs educational programs bringing music and jazz back into the schools and donates musical instruments to underprivileged children.

DellaRatta said he enjoys the benefit shows.

"We feel that helping those who are helping others is a sustainable path," he said.

"I've been to Japan over six times, Europe at least 15 times, and Switzerland over 50 times, but there's nothing like being home in the United States.

"I'm very excited about coming to perform in Alabama" for the first time, he said.

"There's nothing like performing in your own country and helping out your own even though jazz is such a great export."

Jazz for Peace concerts have featured such notable jazz artists as Paquito D'Rivera, Victor Lewis, Lenny White, Eddie Gomez, Dave Valentin, Ray Mantilla and Rick Margitza.

DellaRatta said his love of music started very young. He studied classical music in school. He soon met and was under the instruction of great American jazz trumpeter, bandleader, singer and composer Dizzy Gillespie.

"That's where I got my first break in music," DellaRatta said.

Throughout his career, DellaRatta has sold thousands of albums, and is set to release his latest project titled "Improvisation" this May. All pieces are solo piano recordings done spontaneously, with more of a classical, mainstream and Brazilian sound.

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GO.24 The Huntsville Times, Thursday, April 17, 2008

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KAMESHA GRAHAM *For The Times*

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Jazz for Peace
When: Saturday, 6 p.m.
Where: Butler High, 3401 Holmes Ave.
How much: \$35;
653-3015;
jazzforpeace.org

There's more.

Today

Rock the Vote, Educate, Engage, Elect!, sponsored by Huntsville Young Professionals, First Fridays, Committee of 100 and Young Professional Initiative, learn about politics and register to vote, hot dogs and chicken, music by Abstract, Historic Huntsville Depot, 320 Church St., 6-9 p.m., in advance \$10, at the door \$15, gethyp.net.

Tax freedom celebration, hors d'oeuvres and music by Acoustic Connection, Huntsville Alive!, Furniture Factory, 619 Meridian St., 6-8 p.m., \$10, huntsvillealive.com.

Multilingual discussion, "The Maltese Falcon" by Dashiell Hammett, part of The Big Read 2008, Natalie Lewter of English as a Second Language class, UAH Union Grove Gallery, 5 p.m., free, 824-6320.

Friday

"Coffee Break" art opening, artist Robert

Friday and beyond

Southern Weekend of Art, Fayetteville, Tenn., arts, crafts and music on the square and at Lincoln County High School, various times, free, bring chairs, 931-433-5650 or floartscenter.com.

Spring plant sale, Huntsville Botanical Garden, 4747 Bob Wallace Ave., Friday and Saturday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sunday 1-5 p.m., free, garden admission \$10, 830-4447 or hsvbg.org.

Relay for Life, fundraiser for American Cancer Society, Madison Academy, 325 Slaughter Road, Madison, Friday and Saturday, 7 p.m. to 7 a.m., 800-227-2345.

Saturday

Earth Day, Hays Nature Preserve, U.S. 431 South just past mile marker 324, birding hike with Drs. Dick Modlin and Marian Lewis at 7:30 a.m., reptile show with Bill Cruger at 10