

The New York Times

Arts Beat

The Culture at Large

OCTOBER 16, 2013, 12:31 PM

Jazz & Colors Returns to Central Park

By [NATE CHINEN](#)

The sounds of jazz will waft throughout Central Park again this fall, as [Jazz & Colors](#) returns for a second year. The concert, free and open to the public, will take place on Nov. 9, according to a press announcement scheduled for release on Thursday.

Featuring 30 ensembles in as many locations, from the Merchant's Gate to the Harlem Meer, Jazz & Colors is designed to mesh with the park's usual Saturday-afternoon hum, [but in a subtly transformative way](#). "Central Park is Central Park, and we're just dropping in 30 bands," said Peter Shapiro, who created the event and produces it in partnership with the New York City Parks Department and the Central Park Conservancy.

"The idea was to put music throughout the park, wherever you went," said Mr. Shapiro, the proprietor of Brooklyn Bowl and the Capitol Theater in Port Chester, N.Y., and the owner of Relix magazine. "But the key to that was no tickets. No seats. No V.I.P.s. That's where I had to make a decision to fund it myself."

The booker for Jazz & Colors is Brice Rosenbloom, best known for conceiving and producing the Winter Jazzfest. Many of the artists are making a repeat appearance, including the Yosvany Terry Quartet, ELEW, and the Wayne Escoffery Quartet with Carolyn Leonhart. Among the first-timers this year are Yard Byard, Arturo O'Farrill and the Afro-Latin Jazz Orchestra and the Gregg August Quartet.

In a signature twist, all of the bands will simultaneously play the same two sets of jazz standards, from noon to 4 p.m. The list of songs includes Wayne Shorter's "Footprints," Chick Webb's "Stomping at the Savoy" and Thelonious Monk's "Bemsha Swing."

Mr. Shapiro declined to publicly disclose the budget, but said it was modest for the scale of the undertaking, partly because he does no advertising and keeps the production costs to a minimum. The musicians receive a nominal

fee. “Everyone’s being paid,” he said, “but they’re doing this because they want to be there.”

Because of its openness, it’s impossible to know how many people were reached by Jazz & Colors in its inaugural year. But the response was overwhelmingly positive, from passersby as well as jazz professionals.

“Programs like this are critical to show people how accessible America’s greatest contribution to global culture really is,” said Greg Scholl, executive director of Jazz at Lincoln Center, which will furnish a group again this year. “New Yorkers deserves to have Jazz & Colors become a permanent fixture in Central Park each autumn.”

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