

ONONDAGA HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

Syracuse Jazz Fest photo exhibit opens



Jazz Fest founder Frank Malfitano holds a press conference for the official opening of the Jazz Fest photographic retrospective exhibit at Onondaga Historical Association, 321 Montgomery St. in downtown Syracuse on Wednesday. Michael Greenlar/mgreenlar@syracuse.com

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Onondaga Historical Association has opened a new Syracuse Jazz Fest photographic retrospective exhibit, featuring music industry superstars, jazz legends, local talents and the different venues where Jazz Fest has been hosted.

The photos capture priceless moments from the festival's 35 years, from B.B. King's joyful guitar strumming to Dizzy Gillespie's bulging cheeks, as he blows into his trumpet.

"Isn't this incredible?" said the festival's executive director Frank Malfitano. "OHA did such an excellent job. They sifted through thousands of photos and picked the right ones to tell our story."

The chronological exhibit starts with the 1980s and swings around the museum's second floor. The gallery featured work by Syracuse photographers Michael Davis, Warren Linhart, Jack O. Bocchino, Chuck Wainwright, Juan Junco, Sandy Roe, Dr Jazz, Mitchell Seidel, Sandra Jackson, Mike Greenlar and Harry DiOrio.

"This (exhibit) represents a part of our community's history," said Tom Hunter, the OHA curator of collections. "For 35 years, Jazz Fest fans such as myself have been enjoying the great musicians, singers and especially local talent that have come and played."

Many local jazz musicians also appear in the exhibit: Melissa Gardiner, London McDaniel, Ronnie Leigh, Frank Moser, Mark Doyle, Ronnie France, Larry



Some of the photos on display at OHA's new exhibit dedicated to the history of the Syracuse Jazz Fest. Katrina Tulloch/ktulloch@syracuse.com

Arlotta, Jeff Stockham, Dave Hanlon, Maria & Mario DeSantis, Rocco Barbato, Paulie Cerra, Tom Brigandi, Nancy Kelly, Charlie Bertini, Five To Life, Joe Carello, Joyce DiCamillo. All were invited to the opening.

Syracuse musician London McDaniel laughed at the ferocious shot of himself playing with the Second Line Syracuse Brass Band at Jazz Fest 2016.

"I'm attacking that guitar," he said, grinning. "It's really an honor to be up here with the most amazing jazz musicians in history."

Singer Maria DeSantis found a black-and-white picture of herself on the

wall, from her appearance at the festival in the 1990s. She laughed at her full curls and old photos of Malfitano, when he sported a bristly mustache.

"Here it is, the queen's wall — she deserves her own wall," said DeSantis, finding Aretha Franklin's photos from the 2007 Jazz Fest. (She returned in 2015.)

Malfitano and his guests celebrated the exhibit with coffee and a large, cream-filled Jazz Fest cake. The exhibit will remain open to the public until Oct. 3.

This year's Jazz Fest headliners are Todd Rundgren, Ramsey Lewis and The Mavericks.

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