

Celebrating the Culture and Legacy of Central Avenue Jazz Festival

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sy smith - central ave jazz

Ricky Richardson August 1, 2018 at 10:13 pm

the 23rd Annual Central Avenue Jazz Festival was held on Saturday, July 28th and Sunday, July 29th.

Central Avenue Jazz Festival flyer: Courtesy of the Office of City Councilmember Curren D. Price Jr.

*Los Angeles – The 23rd Annual **Central Avenue Jazz Festival** was held on a hot weekend, Saturday, July 28 and Sunday, July 29, 2018. The event was held on Central Avenue between King Boulevard to the north and Vernon Avenue to the South, from 11:00am-7pm, both days.

Back in the day, Central Avenue was the hub of jazz in Los Angeles. Many of the legendary icons of jazz performed on Central Avenue in it's heyday. The 23rd Annual Central Avenue Jazz Festival consisted of audience members who were fortunate to have experienced the amazing energy of Central Avenue. Thanks to Los Angeles City Councilmember Curren D. Price Jr., The New 9th, along with the Coalition for Responsible Community, the festival allowed attendees to re imagine and celebrate the culture and legacy of Central Avenue. The festival consisted of seasoned jazz musicians as well as rising jazz performers who is keeping the flame of jazz alive and moving forward. Entertainment was held on four energetic stages, the Etta James Stage, Tito Puente Stage, inside the lobby of the Dunbar Hotel and the Jazz Improv Stage.

Central Avenue Jazz Festival Artist Line-up: Photo Courtesy of the Office of City Councilmember Curren D. Pirce Jr.

The LAUSD Beyond the Bell All-City Jazz Big Band got the show underway with an amazing set of jazz standards. Salute to the youth for showcasing their talents on the Main stage.

Vocalist, Pianist Betty Bryant was next to grace the Etta James Stage. The band consisted of Betty Bryant-vocals/piano, Richard Simon-bass, Robert Kyle-sax and Kenny Elliott on drums. The group was on point with their set of jazz and blues which was fun and entertaining. Their set featured the tunes "He May be Your Man, But He Comes to See Me Sometimes," "I Remember You," "St. Louis Blues," "Exactly Like You," "Catfish Man," and "I Got Rhythm."

Betty Bryant: Photo Credit, Ricky Richardson

Yes, ladies and gentleman, boys and girls, the Blues is alright. Zac Harmon got down in the gutter with some smoking hot, down home funky blues to the delight of the audience.

Zac Harmon: Photo Credit, Ricky Richardson

TC Carson is a jazz vocalist, voice over artist and actor that is best known for his portrayal of the debonair Kyle Barker on the hit sitcom "Living Single." He took it up a notch fusing his vocal stylings to several jazz and pop standards that left the crowd wanting more.

TC Carson: Photo Credit, Ricky Richardson

The entertainment on the Tito Puente Stage was cooking with the beautiful sounds of Brazil and the contagious, infectious rhythms of Latin Jazz and Salsa.

Katia Moraes and Brazilian Hearts allowed the audience to go on a musical journey through the beautiful country of Brazil with the sounds of Samba, a tribute to Carmen Miranda and a mixture of other wonderful sounds of Brazil. Their set list consisted of the songs "Falsa Baina," "Moits Cariocas," "Boco de Siri," "Palpiti Infeliz," "Batendo a Porta," "Men Radio e Meu Mulatto," "Como Que Roupa," and "Feira de Mangaio."

Katia Moraes: Photo Credit, Ricky Richardson

Katia Moraes and Brazilian Hearts: Photo Credit, Ricky Richardson

The heat was turned up on the burners throughout the fiery set presented by Boogaloo Assassins. Southern California Salseros were rewarded with an hour long set of tunes consisting of "Mi Jeva," "Right On," "Creation," "Arana Negro," "No Te Vuelvo," "Diablo," "Para Mi," "Bomba," "Be My Baby," and the popular arrangement of the reggae tune "No, No, No" by Dawn Penn.

Boogaloo Assassins: Photo Credit, Ricky Richardson

The slow burner was working at full capacity as the Pete Escovedo Orchestra took the stage. The band performed material from their latest Cd "Back to the Bay" with guest vocalist Sy Smith. They opened their tight set with "In the Stone," followed by "Don't You Worry About a Thing," "Let's Stay Together" featuring Sy Smith. They continued with "What You Won't do for Love" featuring keyboardist/vocalist Tracy Carter. Father and sons-Peter Michael and Juan Escovedo stretched on the tune "La Cuna" followed by "Angel in Disguise," and concluded their set with "Whatcha Gonna Do."

Pete Escovedo and Sy Smith: Photo Credit, Ricky Richardson

Sy Smith: Photo Credit, Ricky Richardson

Peter Michael Escovedo: Photo Credit, Ricky Richardson

Juan Michael Escovedo and Pete Escovedo: Photo Credit, Ricky Richardson

The entertainment continued on the Tito Puente Stage on Sunday with the Francisco Torres Latin Jazz Band and the Spanish Harlem Orchestra, plus Havana Jazz Project on the Jazz Improv Stage.

The entertainment continued on the Etta James Stage on Sunday with Connie Han Trio, Ernie Andrews, Roy Gaines Tuxedo Blues, Tierney Sutton Band and Myron McKinley Trio.

The 23rd Annual Central Avenue Jazz Festival featured four pavilions with information and activities for community members. Balfour Beatty Youth Pavilion, Grow Annenberg Health & Wellness Pavilion, Arts Pavilion and The New 9th Business & Job Pavilion.

The 23rd Annual Central Avenue Jazz Festival was presented by Councilmember Curren D. Price Jr., The City of Los Angeles, the New 9th, in conjunction with Coalition for Responsible Community Development, in partnership with Concerned Citizens of South Central Los Angeles and Department of Cultural Affairs City of Los Angeles.

Ricky Richardson is a Southern California based music reviewer, writer and photographer. Contact him via: liltampared@netzero.net

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