MLK to this day

Majid Khaliq

Generous support for SchoolTime provided, in part, by
New York native Majid Khaliq discovered his affinity for music at the young age of 5, when he demonstrated a serious interest in the recordings of Duke Ellington, featuring Ray Nance on violin, that he heard his father playing at home. Before long, his mother started him on violin lessons. His teacher recognized his talent early on, and placed him in a performance ensemble at the Harlem School of the Arts.

Mr. Khaliq is a Juilliard-trained musician and award-winning composer who has broken the mold. The classically trained violinist uses a wide range of sounds—from classical to jazz to hip-hop. He continues to establish himself as a vital talent in the world of jazz and has been described by jazz legend Wynton Marsalis as having “a unique blend of improvisation, groove and technical sophistication.”

Mr. Khaliq believes in the saying: “Stories of the Past are the Key to Our Future.” For his MLK To This Day performance Mr. Khaliq will present musical selections which reflect that driving principle. Having already led a few jazz celebrations for Dr. King in years past, audiences should expect Mr. Khaliq to change things up once again for this year’s concert. The songs will continue to span generations by including well-known jazz standards with more familiar, contemporary pop and hip-hop selections.

The story of Dr. King, and the importance of his famous “dream,” will be heard throughout this performance. “I have chosen these works,” Mr. Khaliq said, “because of their historical significance and their vivid musical storyline.”
Tell us about your early musical practice. You were very young when you first took violin lessons. Was your affinity for it immediate? Did you ever consider another instrument?

I started playing violin at 5 years of age in Harlem School of the Arts in New York City. My first teacher was Rachel Manovich, a violinist who graduated from Leningrad Conservatory. My first encounter with the violin came when I overheard my older brother practicing. I immediately fell in love with the singing quality of the violin. Ever since I heard the violin, I have only wanted to play the violin.

You’ve accomplished a tremendous amount in the jazz world from a very young age. What do you think is your greatest accomplishment? Why?

My greatest musical accomplishment was completion on my second studio album, Sound of a Flower. Sound of a Flower has small group ensembles, vocalists, rappers and a symphonic orchestra.

You have some eclectic, but very strong musical touchpoints, including Leopold Aura and Itzhak Perlman. How do these classical influences affect your jazz?

Leopold Aura’s inspirational violin playing approach has allowed me to perform in a more holistic way. Itzhak Perlman inspires me to bring the vocal qualities in the violin to the forefront during performance.

Which educators have influenced you the most? With Wynton Marsalis as a teacher, you must have been exposed to a wide world of artists. Who are some of your more modern influences?

The educators that have influenced me most are Dr. Dale Stuckenbruck, Antonio Hart and John Blake, Jr. My more modern influences are Noel Pointer, Kenny Garrett and Kenny Kirkland.

What do you have planned for the MLK To This Day performance? Will you be solo or bring your band?

For the MLK performance, I will be performing music from various periods of time, with the overarching theme of “Civil Rights.” We will be playing some Negro Spirituals, 60’s Civil Rights themes from famous marches and modern day takes on protest songs from both Herbie Hancock and will.i.am.

What message, or reaction, do you hope young audiences will come away with from this celebration? What can they expect to hear?

The threads linking these pieces are struggle and hope. We will be looking to focus on the “Power of Hope” and its ability to shed light on the feelings of despair that are present during struggle.

What does Dr. King’s message mean to you, personally? How important is it for young people to keep his “dream” alive?

Dr. King’s message is a statement of human compassion and vision for the future of all people. It is important for young people to take away Dr. King’s central message of human empathy and determination in order to get to a limitless future.
The **P.E.R.F.O.R.M.** activities will enable students to get the most out of a SchoolTime performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TEACHER FOCUS</th>
<th>STUDENT ACTIVITY</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PREPARE for the performance</strong></td>
<td>Prepare your students for the performance by familiarizing them with a mix of jazz and classical music, and discussing the similarities and differences. Using Duke Ellington and Leopold Aura as a jumping-off point, go back and forth between jazz and classical music as each genre becomes more modern. For contemporary jazz, focus on Wynton Marsalis and McCoy Tyner, and how they contrast with classical violinists, such as Itzhak Perlman. Be sure to spend some time with Jean-Luc Ponty and jazz fusion and the samples used by Nas and Ludacris.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>EXPERIENCE the performance</strong></td>
<td>Take your students to the performance and encourage them to listen closely for all of Mr. Khaliq’s influences melded into one unique sound. Encourage them to be open to “feeling” the music.</td>
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<td><strong>REFLECT, RESPOND and READ</strong></td>
<td>How did the performance make your students feel? Which of the various pieces resonated with them most strongly? What came to mind as to what the performers were doing, saying or feeling? How did the performance reflect the theme of the Power of Hope? How was the performance a celebration of Dr. King and his message?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>FOCUS on JAZZ</strong></td>
<td><strong>Jazz is everywhere.</strong> Have your students use their own musical tastes to explore the roots of improvisation in music. How did the evolution of Jazz reflect Dr. King’s message?</td>
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<td><strong>ORIGINATE</strong></td>
<td>Now it’s time to play musician. Arrange students in small groups to create a new song, using elements of each group member’s influences – the more diverse the better. Lyrical content should focus on the peaceful civil rights messages of Dr. King.</td>
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<td><strong>REHEARSE</strong></td>
<td>Each member of the group will have to take responsibility for creating the music. Everyone should help write lyrics, perform vocals, and keep the beat.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>MAKE magic</strong></td>
<td>Make a fun show out of the performances. Have each group or band recite/perform in front of the class. Remind everyone that mistakes can often make magic in improvisational jazz.</td>
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### NJ ARTS STANDARDS
#### NATIONAL ARTS STANDARDS

**NJ Arts Standards**
- 1.1 The Creative Process
- 1.2 History of Arts & Culture
- 1.3 Performance
- 1.4 Aesthetic Response & Critique

**National Arts Standards**

1. Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.
5. Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.
6. Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.
7. Perceive and analyze artistic work.
8. Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.
11. Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.

### NEW JERSEY STUDENT LEARNING STANDARDS

**English Language Arts**
- SL 6-12.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions
- SL 6-12.2 Interpret information presented in diverse media
- SL 6-12.4 Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas
- RL 6-12.7 Compare and Contrast

**Social Studies**
- 16.1.12.D.13.a Determine the impetus for the Civil Rights Movement and explain why national government actions were needed to ensure civil rights for African Americans.
- 6.1.12.D.13.b Compare and contrast the leadership and ideology of Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X during the Civil Rights Movement and evaluate their legacies.

### FIND THE STANDARDS

For more detailed information on the standards, visit these websites:

- **NJ SOCIAL STUDIES STANDARDS** – http://www.state.nj.us/education/cccs/2014/ss/
- **NATIONAL ARTS STANDARDS** – www.nationalartsstandards.org

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### RESOURCES

#### BOOKS
- **Why We Can’t Wait** by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (1963)
- **Child of the Civil Rights Movement** by Paula Young Shelton (2009)
- **Jazz: My Music, My People** by Morgan Monceaux (1994)
- **Bud, Not Buddy** by Christopher Paul Curtis (1999)

#### VIDEOS
- Majid Khaliq performs Rihanna’s **Diamonds**
  www.youtube.com/watch?v=by_IBO3bwJ0
- Majid Khaliq and the AmalgaNation performs McCoy Tyner’s **Inner Glimpse**
  www.youtube.com/watch?v=rd0z1LqBZc
- Duke Ellington, featuring Ray Nance on violin

#### WEBSITES
- www.majidkhaliq.com/
- www.wclk.com/dr-martin-luther-king-jr-importance-jazz#stream/0
- www.wyntonmarsalis.org/news/entry/on-martin-luther-kings-legacy

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Itzhak Perlman performs Tchaikovsky’s **Violin Concerto in D**
www.youtube.com/watch?v=CTE08S58fNk

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Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s connection to jazz music runs deep. His name alone has been used in the title of countless compositions. And his inspiration served the creation of many more. And although he only made one public remark about the music form, it made a big impact.

Dr. King displayed a deep appreciation for jazz and understood its symbolic role in the struggle for civil rights. And in September of 1964, he spent two days in what was then called West Berlin, Germany. During this visit, he met with the organizers of Berlin’s very first jazz festival, where the civil rights leader was invited to write a foreword for the festival’s program.

Jazz Festival Forward written by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

God has wrought many things out of oppression. He has endowed his creatures with the capacity to create—and from this capacity has flowed the sweet songs of sorrow and joy that have allowed man to cope with his environment and many different situations.

Jazz speaks for life. The Blues tell the story of life’s difficulties, and if you think for a moment, you will realize that they take the hardest realities of life and put them into music, only to come out with some new hope or sense of triumph.

This is triumphant music.

Modern jazz has continued in this tradition, singing the songs of a more complicated urban existence. When life itself offers no order and meaning, the musician creates an order and meaning from the sounds of the earth which flow through his instrument.

It is no wonder that so much of the search for identity among American Negroes was championed by jazz musicians. Long before the modern essayists and scholars wrote of racial identity as a problem for a multiracial world, musicians were returning to their roots to affirm that which was stirring within their souls.

Much of the power of our Freedom Movement in the United States has come from this music. It has strengthened us with its sweet rhythms when courage began to fail. It has calmed us with its rich harmonies when spirits were down.

And now, Jazz is exported to the world. For in the particular struggle of the Negro in America there is something akin to the universal struggle of modern man. Everybody has the Blues. Everybody longs for meaning. Everybody needs to love and be loved. Everybody needs to clap hands and be happy. Everybody longs for faith.

In music, especially this broad category called Jazz, there is a stepping stone towards all of these.

Quotes by Dr. King:

Dr. King was a great orator. He believed in the power of the spoken word. He used his gift of speech as a form of nonviolent protest.

“Nonviolence is a powerful and just weapon which cuts without wounding and enables the man who wields it. It is a sword that heals.”

“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.”

“We must learn to live together as brothers or perish together as fools.”
**vocabulary**

**Bowling** – a violin bow is moved across the strings, causing a vibration which the instrument sends out as a sound; the bow is occasionally called a *fiddlestick*.

**Classical** – music that was produced, or is rooted, in the traditions of Western music; it is noted for its highly complex and sophisticated forms of instrumental music such as the concerto, symphony, sonata, and opera.

**Composition** – an original piece of music, the structure of a musical piece, or the process of creating a new piece of music. People who practice composition are called a composer.

**Fusion** – a modern jazz style that combines improvisation with electric rock music.

**Groove** – the sense of a propulsive rhythmic “feel” created by a band’s rhythm section (drums, bass); often used to describe music that makes someone want to move or dance; the term was taken from the groove, or track, cut into a vinyl record.

**Improvisation** – creation of a spontaneous musical composition while it is being performed.

**Jazz** – a musical style created mainly by African Americans in the early twentieth century that blended elements drawn from African music with the popular art traditions of America.

**Lick** – a stock pattern consisting of a short series of notes that is used in solos and melodies; in jazz licks are usually original short phrases which can be altered so that they can be used over a song’s progression and may be performed during an improvised solo, either during an accompanied solo chorus or during an unaccompanied solo break.

**Rhythm** – the timing and organization of silence and sound in time; a band’s rhythm section usually refers to the drummer and bass player, but all instruments can be played rhythmically.

**Swing** – a rhythm made with triplets instead of standard 1/8 notes that makes the listener want to dance; the sense of rhythm created by the musical interaction between the performers, especially when the music creates a visceral response such as feet-tapping or head-nodding.

**Tempo** – the rate of speed or pace of the music reserved only for the most exceptional dancers of their generation.

**Vamp** – a short passage with simple rhythm and harmony that introduces a soloist in a jazz performance.
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Assemblies: NJPAC presents engaging school assembly programs that are presented by professional artists that invite students into the enchanting world of live performance. NJPAC’s assembly series promotes cultural awareness and invigorates learning by presenting works that are connected to your’s school's curriculum.

STUDY THE ARTS AT NJPAC

After School and Saturday Programs: NJPAC’s after school and Saturday programs are geared towards students at every level—from those who dream of starring on Broadway to those who are still learning their scales. Students work with professional artists to build technique and develop their own creative style in chorus, contemporary modern dance, hip hop, jazz, musical theater and symphonic band.

Summer Programs: Want to begin to explore the arts? Or immerse yourself in the study of one genre? Then join us at NJPAC next summer in one of seven programs that spark the creativity in every child through the study of music, dance and theater.

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