

teacher resource guide

**schooltime
performance
series**



**echoes of
"the lion"**

**arts
education
njpac**



about the performance

Echoes of "The Lion" is a film about the life of influential jazz pianist Willie "The Lion" Smith, one of Newark's great jazz musicians. The film stars Kenneth Robinson as Willie "The Lion" Smith alongside an ensemble of musicians. It also includes historic footage during the years following the turn of the 20th century.

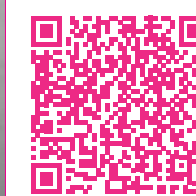
Based on Smith's autobiography *Music on My Mind*, this personal narrative takes you on a journey through Willie "The Lion" Smith's early childhood in the late 1890s and his experiences as an up-and-coming ragtime pianist performing in Newark, Atlantic City and New York City in the early 1900s. It also explores the musician's time as an enlisted soldier in the segregated 15th infantry regiment

during World War I, right up to the dawn of the Harlem Renaissance. The stage play, *Echoes of "The Lion"* was written by Simeon Marsalis with scoring by Stefon Harris. Brandon Dirden directed the film. Jesse Pérez Antigua served as digital archivist, producer and editor on the final film project.

Echoes of "The Lion" is presented by City Verses, a joint initiative with NJPAC and Rutgers University-Newark. City Verses offers a range of programs that celebrate the rich historical connection between jazz and poetry, amplify the authentic voices of Greater Newark and engage a new generation of poets, jazz musicians and teaching artists.

njpac on the mic podcast

Echoes of "The Lion"



Scan the QR code to access the NJPAC on the Mic Podcast & show notes

Part 1: About | *Pre-show audio, 6-9 minutes*

Includes: An introduction to the performance, artists & venue, welcome message

Written and hosted by Dania Ramos

Additional writing by Jennie Wasserman

Sound editing and design by Michael Aquino

Theme and outro music by Lili Masoudi from NJPAC's TD Jazz for Teens program

Additional music performed by NJPAC's TD Jazz for Teens ensemble

Voiceover by Michael Aquino

Welcome message voiced by Jesse Pérez Antigua

Part 2: Connect | *Post-show audio, 8-12 minutes*

Includes: Reflection questions, a look at the development of stride piano-playing during the Harlem Renaissance, a brief selection of vocabulary words

Written and hosted by Dania Ramos

Additional writing by Jennie Wasserman

Sound editing and design by Michael Aquino

Theme and outro music by Lili Masoudi from NJPAC's TD Jazz for Teens program

Additional music performed by NJPAC's TD Jazz for Teens ensemble

"Fingerbuster" composed and performed by Willie "The Lion" Smith

"I'm Just Wild About Harry" composed by Eubie Blake

Opening question voiced by Jesse Pérez Antigua

Part 3: Spotlight | *Post-show audio, 14-16 minutes*

Includes: An exclusive interview with Jesse Pérez Antigua, discussion starters

Written and hosted by Dania Ramos

Additional writing by Jennie Wasserman

Sound editing and design by Michael Aquino

Theme and outro music by Lili Masoudi from NJPAC's TD Jazz for Teens program

Additional music performed by NJPAC's TD Jazz for Teens ensemble

"Fingerbuster" composed and performed by Willie "The Lion" Smith

"I'm Just Wild About Harry" composed by Eubie Blake

About NJPAC On the Mic

NJPAC On the Mic is an audio resource that takes SchoolTime performances to the next level. This podcast series features three exclusive, curriculum-aligned episodes for all of NJPAC's 2022-2023 SchoolTime performances. On the Mic offers students the opportunity to engage their listening skills, deepen their understanding of the performance and learn about the process of bringing a live or recorded production to life. This immersive audio experience features a theme song by students in the NJPAC arts education program.

How to listen to this episode of NJPAC On the Mic

Scan the QR code above or visit: njpac.org/education-program to access the podcast and the following show notes:

inspired ideas in the classroom

Teacher Focus

Student Activity

NJ Student Learning Standards

P

<p>Prepare for the performance</p>	<p>If you have... 15 minutes: Introduce the concept of jazz and the American jazz composer, Willie “The Lion” Smith, who was raised in Newark, NJ. Watch this video (3 minutes) and discuss Smith’s definition of jazz: “Jazz comes from anywhere a human being has a soul and has a heart.” 25 minutes (or more): Watch a video on Harlem Stride (1 minute), a style of piano playing made popular during the Harlem Renaissance. Discuss key points brought up in the narration: orchestral piano, war-like names and cutting contests (piano battles). Instruct students to start Activity Sheet 1: Soundtrack of My Life in class, time permitting. Students may complete Activity Sheet 1 on their own time, or return to it as they get ideas throughout the performance.</p>	<p>Watch the videos on Willie “The Lion” Smith’s life and Harlem Stride. Consider the following questions: 1. What does jazz mean to you? How is Smith’s definition of jazz similar to or different from other styles of music? 2. Where have you heard ragtime music before? How does that genre make you feel? 3. Harlem Stride is a style of piano playing that is often referred to as “orchestral.” What might that mean? 4. Think about the names that artists during the Harlem Renaissance gave each other: The Bear, The Beast, The Lion, The Warrior, etc. Why do you think they chose these names? 5. Some musicians participated in piano battles called “cutting contests.” In what ways do performers artistically battle now? Begin Activity Sheet 1: Soundtrack of My Life, and fill in the blanks with your favorite music. The activity does not have to be completed all at once.</p>	<p>English Language Arts NJLSA.R7. NJLSA.SL2. Visual & Performing Arts Anchor Standard 7 Anchor Standard 11 U.S History 6.1.12.HistoryCC.8.c</p>
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E

<p>Experience the performance</p>	<p>Before the film: Ask students to look for historical events they’ve previously learned about and listen for how the music evolves over time. After the film: Break up the class into small groups to fill out only column 2 of Activity Sheet 2: Then and Now. Discuss the responses as a class, allowing groups to correct their timelines if necessary.</p>	<p>As you watch the film: Look for historical events that you may have learned about before. Listen for ways that the music evolves over time. After the film: Separate into groups to fill out column 2 of Activity Sheet 2: Then and Now. Follow the instructions and see where each event or term fits for each period of Smith’s life.</p>	<p>Visual & Performing Arts Anchor Standard 7 Anchor Standard 8 Anchor Standard 11 U.S History 6.1.12.HistoryCA.14.c</p>
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R

<p>Reflect, respond and read</p>	<p>Show students the following videos and articles that correspond with a specific time period. After each video/article, ask students to reflect on what they saw and write down the words that come to mind in column 3 of Activity Sheet 2. 1900s: History of Blackface (CNN, 4 minutes) and Origins of the Cakewalk (2 minute read) 1910: Jim Crow Laws (Daily Dose, 3 minutes) 1910s: “The Entertainer” by Scott Joplin (3 minutes, play while students reflect and write) 1916: “How Black WWI Vets Fought Back Against Racist Mobs” (History.com) 1920s: If We Must Die by Claude McKay (orated by Ice-T, 1 minute)</p>	<p>Your teacher will show you videos and articles that correspond with a specific time period. After each video or article, take a few minutes to write down any words that come to mind in column 3 of Activity Sheet 2. These can be feelings, nouns, verbs, or any other words that convey your response to what you just saw. These words will be used as prompts later on. Compare column 1 (Willie “The Lion” Smith life events) with column 2 (social and political climate of the day). What did it take for Smith and his family to persevere?</p>	<p>English Language Arts NJLSA.R7. Visual & Performing Arts Anchor Standard 7 Anchor Standard 8 Anchor Standard 9 Anchor Standard 11</p>
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F

<p>Focus</p>	<p>Discuss the quote from the beginning of the film: “Until the lion learns how to write, every story will glorify the hunter.” Refer to the prompts in the student section. Next, as whole class, brainstorm a list of current events, social/political issues and major trends in music. Post the list for reference in the next step. Have students return to their small groups and select four topics from the list as a group. Instruct groups to add their topics to the header of each square in column 4 of Activity Sheet 2. Give students ten minutes to create word banks for their selected topics.</p>	<p>Discuss the quote from the beginning of the film: “Until the lion learns how to write, every story will glorify the hunter.” As a class, brainstorm a list using the following prompts: 1. What current world events have been on your mind? 2. What has gotten you angry or given you hope? 3. What are some major trends you’ve noticed in music lately? Return to your small groups and choose four topics from the list. Add these topics to the header of each square in column 4 of Activity Sheet 2.</p>	<p>English Language Arts NJLSA.SL1. Visual & Performing Arts Anchor Standard 1 Anchor Standard 2 Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills 9.4.8.GCA.2</p>
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O

<p>Originate</p>	<p>Read or listen to the poem <i>Willie “The Lion” Smith</i> by Afaa Weaver from the film as a class and discuss its content and structure. Next, brainstorm types of spoken word for groups to refer to when drafting their original works: prose, dialogue (scripted), poetry, hip hop, rhyming structure (AABB, ABAB), blank verse, etc. In groups, students may use Activity Sheet 2 (pages two and three) to create their spoken word piece. See Activity Sheet for instructions.</p>	<p>What is the poem <i>Willie “The Lion” Smith</i> by Afaa Weaver mainly about? What do you notice about the author’s writing style? In your groups, you may follow the steps on page two of Activity Sheet 2 to write an original spoken word piece. Please make sure at least one idea from everyone is included in the group’s final product.</p>	<p>Visual & Performing Arts Anchor Standard 1 Anchor Standard 2 Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills 9.4.12.CI.1 9.4.12.CT.1 9.4.8.GCA.2</p>
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R

<p>Rehearse</p>	<p>Now the groups can stylize and practice their spoken word pieces. Have students organize their performance so that everyone who wants to orate will be heard. Encourage groups to practice or even memorize their lines. See the student section for tips on how groups may “stage” their performance.</p>	<p>In your groups, determine who will recite which section of your piece. Practice reading the work, adding inflection and tone. Include gestures and facial expressions to make it interesting. If there is time, try to memorize your lines. To take the performance to the next level, consider the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there any lines that would have more impact if recited by two or more voices? • How can you say a word or phrase to best convey its meaning? • Why is each line/sentence important to you? • Why do you need to tell this truth? </p>	<p>English Language Arts NJLSA.SL1. Visual & Performing Arts Anchor Standard 1 Anchor Standard 2 Anchor Standard 3 Anchor Standard 6 Anchor Standard 10 Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills 9.4.12.CI.1 9.4.8.GCA.2</p>
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M

<p>Make magic</p>	<p>It’s showtime! Allow each group to perform for the class. Audience members can share positive and constructive feedback in response. Feedback can start with phrases such as: I liked, I noticed, I wonder, etc.</p>	<p>Now it’s time to share your art and your truth! Be proud of your work, because you did an amazing job! When other groups perform, remember to give full attention and abundant applause. When sharing feedback, good vibes only please.</p>	<p>Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills 9.4.12.CI.1 Visual & Performing Arts Anchor Standard 6</p>
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curriculum standards

NJ Visual & Performing Arts Standards

- 1: Generating and conceptualizing ideas.
- 2: Organizing and developing ideas.
- 3: Refining and completing work.
- 6: Conveying meaning through art.
- 7: Perceiving and analyzing products.
- 8: Interpreting intent and meaning.
- 10: Synthesizing and relating knowledge and personal experiences to create products.
- 11: Relating artistic ideas and works within societal, cultural, and historical contexts to deepen understanding.

common core state standards

English Language Arts

NJSLSA.SL1.

Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

NJSLSA.SL2.

Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

NJSLSA.R7.

Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills

9.4.12.CI.1

Demonstrate the ability to reflect, analyze, and use creative skills and ideas. (12th grade benchmark)

9.4.12.CT.1

Identify problem-solving strategies used in the development of an innovative product or practice (e.g., 1.1.12acc.C1b, 2.2.12.PF.3).

9.4.8.GCA.2

Demonstrate openness to diverse ideas and perspectives through active discussions to achieve a group goal. (8th grade benchmark)

FIND THE STANDARDS

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

NATIONAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS STANDARDS

corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy

NATIONAL SOCIAL STUDIES STANDARDS

socialstudies.org/standards

NATIONAL CORE ARTS ANCHOR STANDARDS

nationalartsstandards.org

U.S History

6.1.12.HistoryCA.14.c

Determine the influence of multicultural beliefs, products (i.e., art, food, music, and literature), and practices in shaping contemporary American culture.

6.1.12.HistoryCC.8.c

Identify the conditions that gave rise to the Harlem Renaissance and assess the impact of artists, writers, and musicians on American culture.

vocabulary

Blank verse

Verse without rhyme, especially that which uses iambic pentameter.

Cakewalk

A dance created by enslaved people to mock the stiff dance moves of their oppressors. Over time this became a carnival game in which contestants would compete for a prize cake.

Dialogue

Conversation between two or more people as a feature of a book, play or movie.

The Great Migration

The Great Migration was the relocation of more than 6 million African Americans from the rural South to the cities of the North, Midwest and West from about 1916 to 1970. Driven from their homes by unsatisfactory economic opportunities and harsh segregationist laws, many Black Americans headed north, where they took advantage of the need for industrial workers that arose during the First World War. (history.com)

Harlem Renaissance

During the 1920s and 1930s; during The First Great Migration, many African Americans migrated north for economic and creative opportunities. Within their communities, creative expression became an outlet for writers, musicians, artists and photographers, with a particular concentration in Harlem, New York. (Library of Congress)

Hip Hop

A cultural movement sweeping up music, poetry, dance, art, fashion and political philosophy. (Musical Dictionary)

Iambic Pentameter

A rhyme structure that combines unstressed syllables and stressed syllables in groups of five, resulting in ten syllables per line of poetry.

Jim Crow Laws

Jim Crow laws were a collection of state and local statutes that legalized racial segregation. Named after a Black minstrel show character, the laws — which existed for about 100 years, from the post-Civil War era until 1968 — were meant to marginalize African Americans by denying them the right to vote, hold jobs, get an education or other opportunities. Those who attempted to defy Jim Crow laws often faced arrest, fines, jail sentences, violence and death. (history.com)

Minstrel

Historically, minstrels were performers in medieval Europe who sang or recited lyrics over music. In the late 19th to the early 20th century, minstrels were typically white performers who would paint their faces with burnt cork or shoe polish (blackface). The minstrel caricature was a racist, grotesque and dehumanizing mockery of African Americans.

Poetry

Literary work in which special intensity is given to the expression of feelings and ideas by the use of distinctive style and rhythm; poems collectively or as a genre of literature.

Prose

Written or spoken language in its ordinary form, without metrical structure.

Ragtime

A genre of musical composition for the piano famed for its syncopation and rhythm; originating in the Midwest in the early 1900s by jazz legends like Scott Joplin, ragtime quickly became popular around the world and is still used in our culture today.

Rhyming Structure

The pattern of lines in a poem or song.



resources

Videos

Willie "The Lion" Smith, Fingerbuster*

youtu.be/KDMOkG5dy3E

Harlem Stride Piano, WTLS with narration

youtu.be/86w2F__-1Bw

History of Blackface, CNN

youtu.be/QgghxGYCwxM

Jim Crow Laws and the Segregated South, Daily Dose

youtu.be/rYynBR7heVQ

"The Entertainer" by Scott Joplin

youtu.be/fPmruHc4S9Q

"If We Must Die" by Claude McKay

youtu.be/NIEM-EbXMu8

TedX Talk on Blackface

youtu.be/5NvLnjuMLXU

CBS, Blackface special

youtu.be/pqID-eZm1ck

Montage from *Bamboozled*, film by Spike Lee

youtu.be/C45g3YP7JOk

Deep dive crash course in Plessy v. Ferguson

youtu.be/nbZUGGPMTjk

Plessy v. Ferguson summary

youtu.be/vsDTqiyiNZk

History of Blackface in North America

youtu.be/AXpLkt1TPjU

Cakewalk Origins

youtu.be/lbKHrzoKbva

"Echoes of Spring" by Willie "The Lion" Smith live, 1958

youtu.be/cmlWKSBAUbK

BBC Live full show 1965

youtu.be/sBhbCjSnemE

What is Ragtime in 2 minutes

youtu.be/TXHHi3RF5ds

Wynton Marsalis on Ragtime

youtu.be/bo8W9a2jVBM

Willie "The Lion" Smith talks about and plays

Scott Joplin's "Maple Leaf Rag"

youtu.be/NwQXW4uBugs

Who is Scott Joplin, Hoffman

youtu.be/ZDddxRUwIFc

"Willie 'The Lion'" rare, in-depth documentary

youtube.com/watch?v=q3b1xt3V4H8

Websites

Echoes of "The Lion" NJPAC resources

njpac.org/arts-education/teacher-resources

NJPAC's Arts Education programs

njpac.org/arts-education

NJPAC | About NJPAC

njpac.org/about

"Origins of the Cakewalk" article by Nina Renata Aron
timeline.com/the-cakewalk-was-slaves-mocking-white-people-147929db57cf

Red Summer of 1919: How Black WWI Vets
Fought Back Against Racist Mobs

timeline.com/the-cakewalk-was-slaves-mocking-white-people-147929db57cf

Cakewalk: Southern Plantations & The Dance Used To
Mock White Slave Masters
blackthen.com/cakewalk-southern-plantations-and-the-dance-used-to-mock-white-slave-masters

Appropriation and Parody | Minstrelsy and Cakewalks
digitalgallery.bgsu.edu/student/exhibits/show/race-in-us/african-americans/appropriation

The Cake Walk: The Story Behind

The Carnival Game's Racist Past

wideopeneats.com/cake-walk/

Additional Podcast Resources

City Verses

njpac.org/series/city-verses

NPR Music | Willie 'The Lion' Smith - Stride Piano Master*

npr.org/2008/06/11/91365108/willie-the-lion-smith-stride-piano-master

Musicians' Guide | Willie the Lion Smith Biography*

musicianguide.com/biographies/1608004818/Willie-the-Lion-Smith.html

The Jazz History Tree | Harlem Stride - 1925*

jazzhistorytree.com/harlem-stride

History.com | The Great Migration*

history.com/topics/black-history/great-migration

History.com | Harlem Renaissance*

history.com/topics/roaring-twenties/harlem-renaissance

Wikimedia Commons | "I'm Just Wild About Harry"*

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Eubie_Blake_-_Just_Wild_about_Harry.ogg

Poetry Foundation | The Harlem Renaissance*

poetryfoundation.org/collections/145704/an-introduction-to-the-harlem-renaissance

NAACP: naacp.org/about* | The Crisis Magazine*

naacp.org/news

*Accessed August-October 2022

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Natalie Dreyer
Director of Arts Integration

NJPAC Arts Education performances team:

Randal Croudy, Natalie Dreyer, Rosa Hyde, Danielle Vauters. On the Mic is an NJPAC Arts Education production, produced in partnership with CM Studios. NJPAC and CM Studios are located in Essex County, New Jersey, situated on the traditional territory of the Leni Lenape people.

the arts in your school

In-School Residencies: NJPAC teaching artists come right to your school to teach the performing arts to your students. Our super-flexible in-person or virtual residencies are designed to meet your needs, and you'll have a dedicated program manager to help you every step of the way. It's the perfect program to keep your students creating, connecting and expressing themselves through the magic of the arts.

Professional Development: Calling all educators! Expand your teaching skills, deepen your curriculum and give yourself a creative boost in NJPAC's forward-thinking professional development workshops. Our virtual PD programs are for teachers all the way from pre-K to high school, and include hip hop, dance, storytelling, theater, music and more. Not only will you learn something... you'll also have fun and be inspired.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, please email our education sales team at artseducation@njpac.org. Or visit njpac.org/education

Major support for SchoolTime provided by



Generous support for SchoolTime provided, in part, by



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+ deceased

Major support for City Verses provided by



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Additional support provided by
TD Charitable Foundation and Women@NJPAC

study the arts at njpac

Saturday Programs: NJPAC's 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 hip hop, jazz, theater, 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.