

Jazz Fest highlights the achievements of women in the genre

This year’s Jazz fest headlined by Delfeayo Marsalis
by MacClement Guthrie

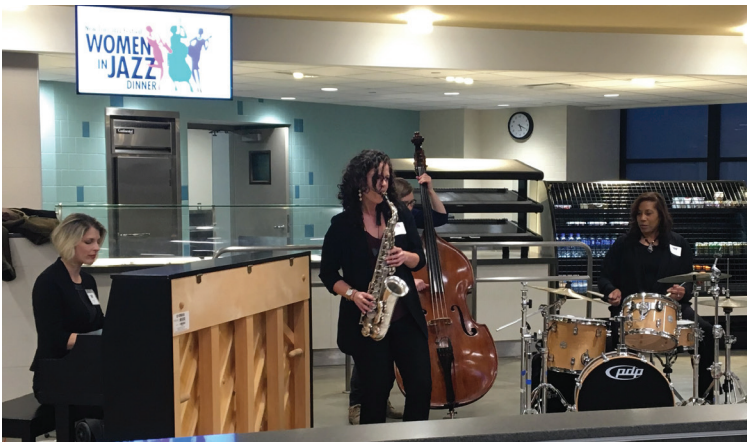
Last Saturday’s Mantooth Jazz Festival marks the school’s 35th year hosting the event, which featured Delfeayo Marsalis and the Uptown Jazz Orchestra, as well as a new Women in Jazz dinner.

Jazz as a genre has diverse roots. Just last year, NT featured Arturo Farrill’s Afro-Latin Jazz Orchestra and many festival-goers couldn’t help and admire the Art department’s portraits of black artists Kara Walker and Kerry James Marshall hanging above so many of the festivities.

This year’s festival highlighted a different part of the jazz mosaic, turning its focus to women in the genre.

This year’s programming featuring women in Jazz was a first for the festival, which has been running since 1983. The festival’s headlining band was Delfeayo Marsalis, legendary jazz trombonist, and the Uptown Jazz Orchestra, described by New Trier as “a who’s who of New Orleans’ most prominent jazz musicians.”

This continues a legacy of notable guest artists performing at the festival including The Chris



Jazz festival turns its focus on women in male-dominant genre | Guthrie
Potter Big Band, The Count Basie Orchestra, Chicago Jazz Ensemble, and more.

The event, held on Feb. 3, had performances from over 40 bands, according to student festival director JP Tucker. After their performances “each band had the opportunity to work with experienced jazz musicians in a clinic,” explained Tucker.

In the clinics, notably this year, bands had the opportunity to work with prominent women in jazz. Female clinicians included Tanya Darby, professor of jazz trumpet at the University of North Texas, Jo Ann Daugherty, Chicago-based pianist composer and conductor, Katie Ernst bassist and guest lecturer at Wheaton College Conservatory of Music, Gayelynn McKinney, Grammy-

nominated Detroit-based drummer and educator, and Alexa Tarantino, New York-based saxophonist of Arturo Farrill’s Afro-Latin Jazz Orchestra.

“They are the types of musicians that our own students don’t often get the chance to interact with,” said Nicholas “Nic” Meyer, director of jazz at New Trier.

The five women performed and shared their experiences and wisdom with the 150 young female musicians in attendance at the Women in Jazz Dinner. Alexandra Riedinger, a pianist and the only woman in Jazz 1, New Trier’s flagship jazz ensemble, had the opportunity to spend the day with Daugherty.

“She fascinated me with her playing, professionalism and

candidness regarding her struggles as a female in the jazz industry,” said Riedinger

“I love meeting other female jazz musicians, because being one is almost like being in a sisterhood, where you all have each other’s backs and help each other through the rough water of this incredibly male-dominated industry,” said junior bassist Lily Fox in press release from the New Trier Fine Arts association.

Riedinger concurred, and said it can be “difficult to find role models and inspiration [in jazz].” Meyer said events like this are necessary as “the young women in our ensembles have many fewer opportunities to see themselves in the musicians they admire.”

Jazz music more than other genres has historically been dominated by male musicians.

“In curriculum work, we’re encouraged to think of ‘windows’ and ‘mirrors.’ While seeking inspiration, our young men have countless mirrors to look into, while our young women may look at these same sources of inspiration through windows. We have an opportunity to provide our young women with some incredible mirrors at this year’s New Trier Jazz Festival.”

Denise Dubravec, Winnetka campus principal who attended the dinner said, “knowing that the area of jazz has so few female performers, I

hope that visiting with the clinicians, the musicians left informed, inspired, and excited about jazz, and about being a female jazz musician.”

The thing that Meyer felt most proud of was “the quality and diversity of the clinicians we bring in, they come from all over the country, every one of them is a highly renowned jazz artist and educator”

This year, the festival was able to offer both visiting and New Trier students a diverse variety of opportunities. There were clinics from students at the University of Miami, classes by members of Delfeayo’s band, and Marques Carroll trumpet summit;

“There was a lot to do all day long,” said Meyer and that visiting band directors remarked “their kids left very inspired.”

The evenings headline concert with Delfeayo sold out and all those that attended left inspired about the future of jazz music.

Reflecting on the addition of the women in Jazz event, Riedinger said attendees left with “the knowledge that woman have and will continue to succeed in male-dominated industries and with the power of knowledge, all young women can become successful jazz musicians.”

According to student director Tucker, “New trier jazz students worked for a total of 22 hours to make the festival happen.”

“This Is Us” new season gives all the feels



Viewers appreciate this show for its authentic take on families | NBC.com

NBC’s hit new show starts its second season

by Danielle Kurensky

A TV drama set around a family and the issues they face in their lives is far from an original idea. Yet, despite the common plot, NBC’s “This Is Us” manages to stand out from the rest. The unique structure of “This Is Us” is able to differentiate it from other shows with a similar plot.

The structure, which isn’t revealed until the end of the pilot episode, uses series of flashbacks. The flashbacks, which can span decades, add complexity to the characters as viewers are able to see the situations they faced growing up that shaped who they are currently. While the majority of the flashbacks are during the Big Three’s childhood, played by Justin Hartley, Chrissy Metz and Sterling K Brown, there are also occasional flashbacks to Jack (Milo Ventimiglia), and Rebecca’s (Mandy Moore) childhoods and their relationship before children.

This structure allows for more depth in the characters as acts that initially appear one-dimensional are given context and backstory through flashbacks. This style allows for the

show to avoid clichés. Often larger characters like Kate, are given minor roles of a humorous friend. Kate’s storyline does not ignore her weight, but instead explores how this issue affects how she views herself and how it affects her relationships with others, most noticeably her mother, played by Moore, and her romantic interest Toby (Chris Sullivan).

Kate is not the only character with this level of depth and dimension, all of the characters are given intricate backstories that add to their characters, making it challenging to cast any main character as simply good or bad. Instead the characters emulate real, flawed people.

“This Is Us” provides a refreshing dose of authenticity often missing from current television. Unlike other hit shows with town serial killers on the loose or showing the lives of the extremely wealthy, “This Is Us” is genuine and raw. The show tackles many difficult and timely issues from racism to blended families. Initially some of these issues can appear forced, thrown into the plot just to tie in another issue, but often flashbacks reveal aspects of a character’s past that makes the issue appear deliberate and purposeful.

This authenticity would not be possible without the wonderful performances from the cast. In its first season “This Is Us” received five

Emmy nominations, and Brown, who recently gained recognition for his role in “American Crime Story”, beat Ventimiglia for Outstanding Lead Actor Drama. Instead of trying to gain attention by casting Hollywood stars, the show focused on the best actor for the role. In fact Metz had 81 cents in her bank account when she booked the role of Kate.

Those that watch know, beware of spoilers ahead, that “This Is Us” is at its best when flashbacks help provide context for why a character makes a certain decision. By withholding information about Jack’s death, the show is unable to provide these crucial flashbacks. While the uncertainty revolving Jack’s death does leave viewers wanting to continue watching to piece together how he died, it can also ruin Jack’s scenes. Instead of being able to enjoy how the scenes enrich other character’s plots, you are stuck looking for anything that could be a clue into Jack’s death. The feeling of death constantly lurking takes away from Ventimiglia’s performance.

While the show’s strength is the deliberate choice of what information is shown and what is hidden, stretching out the details surrounding Jack’s death takes away from further development of other character’s plots. The death of Jack, the beloved patriarch of the family, clearly had an immense impact on all of the other characters. But without information about Jack’s death, viewers don’t get to truly understand the effect it had on the characters and how it continues to affect them.

The ability of “This Is Us” to honestly communicate modern families and their issues, allows the show to appeal to all ages, many even watch “This Is Us” with their own families. So if you are looking for a show about real life with breathtaking performances than “This Is Us” is the one for you, just make sure you grab the tissues first.

Mars finesses Grammy’s



Cardi B and Bruno Mars perform at the 60th Grammy’s | AP
Singer wins four awards

by Hans Schmit

While Bruno Mars’ music may have made less of a political statement than his fellow nominees’, he dominated a large part of this year’s Grammys. Mars won Record of the Year, Album of the Year, Song of the Year, and Best R&B Performance. He was able to beat out popular rap artists Jay-Z and Kendrick Lamar who both had chart-topping albums in 2017.

Mars made history on Jan. 28, being one of the four R&B artists to win Album of the Year. He is one of only nine artists to win six awards in one night, tying Beyoncé and Quincy Jones.

Jay-Z and Kendrick Lamar’s albums covered several controversial topics. Jay-Z’s album, “4:44”, covers racism, stereotypes, and issues “he never talked about before.” He received a Grammy Award nomination for Album of the Year, Song of the Year nomination for the title track, and a Record of the Year nomination for “The Story of O.J.” Despite the numerous nominations, Jay-Z was shut out.

Lamar won Best Rap Album, Best Rap Song (Humble.), Best Rap Performance (Humble.), and Best Rap/Sung Collaboration.

In addition to the more political album nominations, Madison Square Garden was filled with celebrity

statements. Kesha and Lady Gaga wore roses to support the “Time’s Up” movement, standing up against sexual assault. Logic, Khalid, and Alessia Cara performed their hit “1-800-273-8255,” Hillary Clinton read ‘Fire and Fury,’ and Lamar performed, supporting the “Black Lives Matter” movement.

A topic that raised attention before this year’s Grammys was how infrequently women win awards. Kesha had a powerful performance in the beginning, advocating for women’s rights, but that performance was followed with Alessia Cara being the only woman to win an award as Best New Artist. Recording Academy President Neil Portnow said that women need to step up in order to win awards and that “there are opportunities.” Yet only 9.3% of women were nominated for major awards from 2013 to 2018.

Over the course of the event there were some strange moments: Ed Sheeran didn’t show up, John Legend handing out best rap/sung performance winner, people talking loudly in the concourse during the “Tears in Heaven performance, and James Corden’s fake introduction for Barack Obama which is actually the academy president Neil Portnow.

Finally, artists Eric Church, Maren Morris, and Brothers Osborne singing Eric Clapton’s “Tears in Heaven,” which was sung to commemorate the victims Las Vegas shooting and the Manchester bombing.