

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, jazz music is a vibrant and melodious blend of several eras, cultures, and disciplines. With the American and European interpretation of classical music that is embellished with the influence of West African culture and folk songs, the offerings of Jazz music embrace melody and improvisation, harmony, and percussion; and

WHEREAS, it was first compiled by musicians in African-American communities in New Orleans, La., in the late 19th-and-early 20th centuries. Characterized by blues notes, jazz became the signature dancing music at nightclubs while inspiring improvisation to bring something newer and hipper every time the music evolved; and

WHEREAS, in 2001, Jazz Appreciation Month (JAM) was founded by John Edward Hasse who was a curator at the Smithsonian National Museum of American History. Besides appreciating jazz literally all April long, the event was marked to hold aloft the history and heritage of the genre that has truly enriched our lives; and

WHEREAS, JAM was initially funded by the Ella Fitzgerald Charitable Foundation. It encourages people every April to participate in jazz-related activities, sponsors jazz music releases, and appreciates jazz musicians of all ages, ranging from the art of jazz pillars such as Miles Davis and John Coltrane, as well as Virginia and DC's very own Ella Fitzgerald and Duke Ellington, to modernists and contemporaries such as Herbie Hancock, Keith Jarrett, Christian McBride, and Diana Krall; and

WHEREAS, just as the history of our great city is a timeless marker on the fabric of our country's narrative, so is Jazz to the art of musical expression.

WHEREAS, our arts-loving city has embraced jazz through its own annual Alexandria Jazz Fest (also known as ALX Jazz Fest) for almost 45 years, produced by the City's Office of the Arts, and will continue to provide innovative and exciting concerts celebrating this one-of-a-kind music genre for years to come; and

WHEREAS, this year, the City's Office of the Arts will produce the 45th Annual ALX Jazz Fest in our historic Old Town waterfront, as part of the two-day Portside in Old Town Summer Festival, on June 16th (as well as additional jazz programs later in the year throughout our great city). Included in the June Jazz Fest are performances from several jazz ensembles selected by a panel of professionals from the Smithsonian, NPR, and the Levine School of Music; and

WHEREAS, April is National Poetry Month, and the June Jazz Fest will feature readings from the city's Poet Laureate Zeina Azzam, spoken word poet and teacher Sami Miranda, and two ACPS student poet laureates in a continuation of the city's celebration of the arts.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JUSTIN M. WILSON, Mayor of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, and on behalf of the Alexandria City Council, do hereby recognize the month of April, 2023, as:

“JAZZ APPRECIATION MONTH”

In the City of Alexandria and I call this observance to the attention of all our citizens, and I invite all jazz and poetry enthusiasts of all eras of influence to come visit our waterfront at these early summer events to celebrate these two disciplines of artistic and human expression.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have here unto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Alexandria to be affixed this 25th day of April, 2023.

MAYOR JUSTIN M. WILSON

On behalf of the City Council
of Alexandria, Virginia

ATTEST:

Gloria A. Sitton, CMC City Clerk